

This is a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mr. Ferenc Weiss on August 15, 2016, in Brooklyn, New York. Thank you very, very much, Mr. Weiss, for agreeing to speak with us today.

You're very welcome.

I'm going to start with the most basic questions. Can you tell me what was your name when you were born?

7 19, '24. 7 17, 1924.

So your date of birth was July 17, 1924. And what was your name when you were born?

Ferenc, F-E-R-E-N-C.

How do I pronounce it? "Fer-enz"?

Pardon me?

Do I pronounce it "Fer-enz"?

Ferenc. F-E-R-E-N-C.

OK. And where were you born?

I was born in Satu [INAUDIBLE] Hungarian.

Was this a small town? Or was this a larger city?

It was a big town, a very big city.

Mhm.

And there was more non-Jewish people living there. We were there probably by 25 families, which means 25 of us, maybe 30, 32, but I don't know exactly. I was too small to describe then.

OK.

But that town and the non-Jews was probably about 50,000.

Wow.

That was a very big city.

So you were in a place where Jews were really in a minority. Not many Jews at all?

Well, accordingly, there were a lot of Jewish people. Because 25 or 30 families, 30 persons, or you call it family, that probably could be a month, but an average by, let's say, say four kids, or four in the family. That was probably amount by 75,000. Yeah. Figure out.

OK. I'm a little confused by the numbers. Excuse me for a second. Can we cut?

Sure. Sorry, Mr. Weiss. There were things I weren't hearing. Are you saying 35,000 families?

Thousand, yeah.

Well, that's a difference.

Yeah.

That's a difference.

I tell you the truth, I didn't count them exactly, all of them.

You didn't go around counting. In every family, about three, four kids in the family. So you put that together, it amounts to a big amount.

That's right.

Yeah.

That's right. We could say probably, at least, 100,000 people.

Yeah, sure.

Yeah. Remind me of the name of your town again. Because I didn't hear it. What's the name of the town you were born in?

I didn't tell you the name because you didn't ask me for it.

Sorry. Where were you born, that was the question.

I was born in that state I just said. And the name was-- should I repeat the name again? I repeat it three, four times.

Because it was Hungarian Romania, Hungarian back again. Because the Germans take away from the other country. And they gave it for this country. So otherwise, we speak both languages.

Because you were confused. You were by 10, 15 years in two different countries. And we spoke both of the languages at that time.

So you spoke which languages with--

German, Hungarian, and then that was the standard language in the land. And what we spoke, we could spoke Yiddish. We spoke Hebrew, maybe, and the other languages.

But both language why I mentioned is a two different language, Hungarian and Romanian. Because the Hungarians with the Romanians, they were fighting for for ten years [INAUDIBLE] before. And some of them won. And some of them didn't.

But when the Germans came, they wanted to be nice to the next county they should be quiet, keep quiet. So they take your life in this country about for 10, 15 years. And it was a generation, I mean, kids, and they only know two languages when they spoke. So we spoke Romanish and Hungarian.

Because we went through a certain time. But we was leaving and facing both countries. Not in the same time--

Yeah. Yeah.

--it was probably by then 15 years, at least, different time.

It can get confusing.

It get confused. But when the Germans decided something, they didn't ask about confusing.

[LAUGHTER]

They dissolved that language.

Yeah.

But anyway, this is what I was. So I remember very good the Hungarian time and very good the Romanish time. I could tell you all different it was.

The Romanians, they walked with rubber shoes. Not exactly rubber shoes, shoes what you suppose you got in 10 pieces-- how you say it-- a Has four wheels, right?

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Not wheels, I mean,

With the rubber, the tire?

The rubber was round. This I remember very good. I'm not talking about the rich people, but every people, just every day, walked with the-- with the--

Rubber soles?

Rubbers. Yeah, yeah. That was so old-fashioned. And that's what-- didn't have but to shame you. But their whole life was shame.

Well, so, like many people who were poor.

Were rather poor.

Yeah.

And they walked with the Jews, I remember. That was the Romanian. The Hungarian was a more high standard. And even they were poor at that time.

And what the middle class, which faced the world, life, they tried to behave differently. But those people who were unable to sign their names, or because by us was not a new thing that people were able to sign their names. Because the old-fashioned life was terrible.

The Hungarians hated the [? Romanians ?] not everybody went in school right away.

Yeah, yeah.

And I remember even our people, which they called yeshiva, they were a little more high standard. But it came through-- they came to your community. Because suppose I was in a different time in my life. I was never at home when I became, let's see, 13 years.

Oh, so you moved? When you were 13-years-old, you moved to a different town.

I did. They took me. I didn't moved.

Who took you?

Because I was-- my parents, my father, I suppose. I had to buy a ticket and go there to the next town. Now the town was so behind that they wanted to know for everybody's existence who they are, more or less, not every more or less.

Yeah. They took a census.

So we went-- we lived in a different town. They were very strict. They had registered "we" not "they." When I say "we" not "they," had to register by the police station. So as we arrived in the same day, and what name is us and so and so. Because the only connection we could have-- there's no such a thing. Call up my father, should leave, because average people did not have telephones.

Of course not. Yeah.

When you wanted to make a telephone call, either way, you had to go up to the post office, which was a big building. And then you came there, we had to wait about probably half hour connection. We were told we were the next, because even the telephone company didn't have a lot of telephones to give service for the people. So we had to wait for a while to be connected. When we were already in that particular city, which I just said that we had to go and register by the city. I don't mean by the police, but the city.

Tell me the name of that place you went to when you were 13 years old. What was the name of that city?

Baia Mare.

Yeah. That's Romania.

In Roma-- and how far was it from your hometown?

Oh, probably about 50 miles.

And tell me again. Because my hearing is bad, the name of your hometown.

Mine is bad too. [INAUDIBLE]

[LAUGHS] The name of your hometown because I don't remember catching.

Szatmárnémeti.

Szatmárnémeti

Two names.

OK. Satmar is S-A-T-M-A-R. Satmar.

OK. Yeah. When you-- all right, maybe you wanted to read it in Hungarian language. You had put a-- [NON-ENGLISH]

Dash.

A dash?

A dash.

OK. And That means a Satmar.

Ah.

Then otherwise, you wouldn't be able to read it. And so right away, two parties had to come to the post office.

OK.

Speak to each other not at home--

Yeah.

--but on the telephone line. This is the way it was like at that time. We were standing by the post office, both of us, supposed you want to speak to the telephone. Either the fellow who was home in the other town.

Yeah.

Either-- not either, both of them. And the party, the second party, which was a different-- another name already, another family, wanted to talk to them, the post office will connect to him, and he was standing by.

So if I understand it right. Let's say you're in a town, and you want to speak to someone in another town.

Another town.

You go to the post office.

The post office. The post office will connect you--

To the post office in that--

To the post office.

And they send someone--

To both post offices.

Yeah.

Not to individual-- because the individual-- both of them didn't have no telephone.

Right.

They were not able to talk to each other.

OK.

And a lot of time, half we didn't understand because the mechanical system was lousy. I don't know how you spell lousy.

L-O-U-S-Y.

All right. Next time, I write it down. And so-- but my parents or somebody else in the family were not able to talk to me on the telephone. Suppose I went away to that school.

Uh-huh.

Right. Because I was-- mainly my life was yeshiva. I don't know what is it, yeshiva. It means for you a Jewish school.

OK.

Right away, my father was very religious. And he spent his life with slavery work that I remember. I don't know. I don't want to jump. You wanted to--

I'm going to ask a lot of questions, but my first one right now was when you were sent away to that other town was that to attend a yeshiva?

Yeshiva.

OK. That was the purpose of your going?

And the government expected that you should go-- register wherever you go.

Yeah.

That was the system.

That was the system.

It was the system.

Because otherwise they would not know about us.

Exactly.

So speaking about education, writing was to follow the-- I wouldn't say the average people, but a lot of people who came from a very nice family, and they didn't know how to write either Romanish--

OK.

Either Hungarian.

And there was one language, Yiddish language. Sometimes you have to interpret it. A lot of people from us, they know Romanish or, I suppose, Hungarian. Right? And they would be connected with the government.

Yeah.

And some people were not able to cooperate with the language, where we were, because we were in Hungarian or Romania. So right away, this is the only one what the government wanted to know-- really where you are, where you came from. So how would we do it? Some kids who were not able to go, the reason was not able to know what language or one language is for some simple reason, because money again.

Yeah.

Money again. You were not able to do a continuation with the regular language because it was very-- not very-- today money would be nothing.

But there it was expensive.

There, money was a terrible thing. So instead--

So somebody didn't have the money to know both languages.

Instead-- yeah. Correct. Instead of give education for that money, they would feed the children.

Yeah.

It was true all the time because to have-- buy bread or milk was-- average people was something--

It was a hardship.

--to write in the history.

Yeah.

Because sometimes it happened that not both child would have milk, would say you'll have it tomorrow.

Was that in your family?

This is-- no.

No.

My family was followed because we were a family of 13 children.

Wow.

There were 13 children. My father, himself, is the only one to support the whole family.

Wow.

And again, I can't go in depth, because it hurts me very much.

It hurts. So let's talk about other things right now.

It's a matter of fact, in this case-- you should remind we. We have to, because--

Yeah. I'm going to go back a little bit.

Yeah. Yeah.

I want to go back to the beginning, because we feel-- and we talk a little bit ahead. We come back.

Yeah. And I forget.

We'll fill in the story. It's OK. But what I want to do is see if I've understood you correctly. So what I'm going to do is repeat what I think you told me, and you tell me if I'm right or not. You lived in a town called Sat--

Szatmárnémeti.

Yes. Szatmárnémeti.

I could spell it to you if you want.

Yeah. I guess I do. I do.

Let's start from the beginning. But what was it both ways. If you spell it both, Hungarian and Romanian, it's already--

Different.

Different.

That's OK.

So Szatmárnémeti is follows-- S-Z--

OK.

A--

OK.

T--

Uh-huh.

M--

Mhm.

N-- I'm sorry.

N.

N.

Uh-huh.

N like nothing.

OK. [CHUCKLES]

E--

OK.

M--

OK.

E again--

OK.

T-Y.

OK.

But the difference, it's when I say T-Y in the top you have to make--

A little sign.

A dash.

A dash. That's how to write your name to read it from the very beginning.

OK.

So when I say Nemety--

Mhm.

And on the E need the--

Mhm.

Again, after the T-- Nemety was N-E-M-E-T, but you wanted to know to read the T, also Nemety--

Mhm.

You have to put again--

A little sign.

A little sign.

Well, you know, it may sound simple to you, but for us it's very important. Because the people who are going to be listening to your interview and who will be writing a summary for it, they will want to know specifically where you came from, and you just told them. You just spelled out the name so there can be no mistake about it. And that's-- and the other thing that I find interesting that you tell me is that your birthplace, like many others in the region-- you could be born and grow up in the same place and never move and be living in several countries. You could be part of Hungary.

No, you couldn't--

Or Romania, because the borders change.

Yeah. You couldn't only if you register wherever you go.

Yeah.

They were very--

Oh, that's true.

They were very strict.

--strict.

Why were they very strict? Because they themselves couldn't have a cooperation with the two parties, only if you register in the town where were you-- where you are. Not where you're born.

But where you're living.

Where you're leaving now. This is the only way.

Yeah.

They were very strict in that.

I can imagine because there are-- when two countries want the same territory, they usually don't get along very well.

Correct.

You know, and so they want to know who is one of us and who is not.

More. More. It's a matter of fact, if you would not register where you go--

Yeah.

--even in the same country, you will get a penalty, a penalty when they caught you.

Yeah.

Because otherwise they don't know you.

Now, tell me, was your family from this place for generations, or had they come there from someplace else?

They didn't come. They come-- they were born in Romania, which I just said was Hungarian and Romania.

Yeah. So your father grew up and your mother grew up in--

No. My father grew up in a different town, a different country, Hungarian. At the time, when he was Hungarian, then we were Romanian. As a matter of fact, we didn't have any connection with them, only if you spend a little money and go to the country and see them because one time was Romania, one time Hungarian.

OK.

So the border-- for instance, I-- it's very funny. When I was over 13 years, if I wanted to go to the other border, my father wanted-- I mean, never when I was small-- later one, when I grew up, and they were very strict, he could come and go to my city where I was born because it was that town where we had to be. But-- when I was-- when my parents was Hungarian, I was not able to go to them. But that time, I was-- I wasn't born yet.

Ah yeah.

But when-- probably when he wanted to come to the country where I was born before. He wasn't able to go, only with the passport, make-believe.

Yeah.

With a passport. So anyway, make the story short, when I wanted to go in one city where he was born, he was legally already in a different state, Szatmárnémeti.

Szatmárnémeti.

Yeah. He became Romanian before he was Hungarian.

So he was born in the Hungarian-- the Austro-Hungarian Empire? When he was born, it was the Austro-Hungarian Empire? That's what I understanding.

Yeah. Then I didn't-- I was born.

You wouldn't know. You weren't born then.

I wasn't born. But it came at a time when my parents wanted very much that I should go to the Hungarian where he was born to learn there.

Ah.

So the only way-- they didn't let us, anybody, go ahead and go into town in a strange country, wherever you wanted.

Of course.

It took time. It took money also to travel.

Yeah. Yeah.

But I was climbing on the field, I remember. When I was about 15 years old, 14, I was especially ashamed to say it, but there was a special man who would take you over to other border, to one border to the other when I grow up there.

So does that mean-- was it legally?

No.

No. It was illegally.

No. It's illegally. Illegally because there was a lot of complications to be lived there.

OK.

Because when I went to live there, I went to live there at least for one year. And it was a terrible loss in all the interactions. If you wanted to stay there, go to a strange country. It wasn't so easy at that time.

No.

So I'm ashamed to say it, but I have to say it. Probably my parents-- I mean my parents-- I was small that time.

Of course.

And I remember I was climbing in the middle of the night on the floor with the man who--

On the fields?

On the field, correct. As a matter of fact--

You weren't alone. So many people were smuggled.

Maybe four or five people from parents together. As a matter of fact, it happened to me one day-- well, not one day, in the middle of the night, it was very funny that I was walking the night with the people-- with that man who told us where to go. And all of sudden, he got very, very scared. What happened? Some-- [INAUDIBLE] Yiddish, English, [YIDDISH].

Of Yiddish. What is it?

[YIDDISH]

It's an animal.

I mean a rabbit?

An animal, yeah.

A rabbit maybe?

A rabbit, a rabbit.

Yeah. Yeah.

Jumped out in the field in the middle of the night and scared him. It was terrible.

[LAUGHTER]

All right. So much for this.

So let me-- let me understand something. I want to ask about-- you said your father-- you had 13 people in your family.

Yeah.

That means your mother, your father, and how many children?

I had-- we were together. We were seven brothers.

OK.

Four sisters.

Seven brothers and four sisters. And where in that list were you? The youngest? The oldest? The middle?

I was the fourth one.

The fourth oldest?

Yeah.

OK. And were you-- did you have an older brother?

I had one brother older.

OK.

And the other ones were sisters.

And why-- were all of the boys going to be sent to yeshiva? Or was it just the older children?

Only when they get old.

OK. But all the boys are to go to the yeshiva?

More or less. It wasn't so easy, because of the money.

OK.

To keep up and all this.

How did your father support this family?

That was our life all the time.

What was his business? What did he do?

That's also a funny thing. We had some cows.

OK.

All right. Four or five cows, I don't know. And the time-- they feeded them of course. They have to feed them for milk throughout their life.

OK.

And they-- at that time, they gave us milk. The cows gave milk.

Sure.

And I still remember-- I don't know-- they did it. When I went to smaller school, all right--

OK.

When I stay home, my father told us, he organized that we should go and help my sisters. No way it would happen today. Would go a girl, 18 or 20 years old, and schlep a can of milk.

That's right. That's right. How many cows did you have?

No. Wait a minute.

OK. OK. I'll wait.

Well, it was probably four or five cows.

OK.

And I had to do it. My brothers had to do it. My sisters had to do it every morning. You could think about--

Had to help each other.

Help. I helped my sisters. My sisters did what the parents told them, because they were a little bigger. They used to schlep that in the city and give everybody in a can.

So you used to deliver fresh milk?

Before I went-- fresh milk. Before I went-- before I went into school in the morning, let's see. It had to be in the morning 9 o'clock in the school. We had to wake up at 6:00, 7:00-- whatever it is. You can imagine that I do that. But the difference is-- the difference is he had no child would do it, even your father would tell you 10 times.

Yeah.

But the difference is the respect was so high with the parents that we do everything-- everything what they told us to do. Soon after I finished with my sisters, we were three-- three brothers who helped the sisters, schlepping it everywhere. I don't know how I did it, how we did it. The respect would be so high that we had it do it. After we finished, we helped our sisters.

Deliver it, huh?

Deliver it and give for everyone, whatever they wanted. You went in the school.

And only then-- only then you went to school?

Only then, yeah, we did. But I remember we did it a couple years.

Mhm.

This was the life.

So your fa-- so what it was is that you--

No, I didn't finish.

OK. OK.

So you-- I'm sorry.

It's OK.

You were asking me--

You're the storyteller.

You were asking me how did they make--

A living?

--a living from the four cows.

Yeah.

Which is 11 and 13 with the family kids.

That's right. My father was a very handy man, and the handy man's knowledge forced him to do whatever he could.

OK.

He was a glazier, cutting glasses, glasses for somebody who has a broken window, somebody-- he didn't-- he didn't work for everybody. It was a very big city, who did it-- the storekeepers.

OK.

But he did it privately. And whenever he find out that somebody needs a broken window, he would schlep. You could figure just to get out-- you ever carry glasses [INAUDIBLE], how heavy that is?

They're very heavy. Did he have any-- any horses or anything?

At that time was not such a style to go ahead and bike, a bicycle. Or go ahead make four wheels.

Yeah. Yeah.

Something to carry it. Because it was money.

Yeah.

With that money he would buy food for the kids. That's the style of life. So he'd better struggle. We could-- we could do the same thing, what I just mentioned. My sisters schlepped with the--

Milk.

Milk with the thing. And they wouldn't have to schlep it with their hand. And they did it with the hand because with that money you could buy--

Food.

So he did-- he did-- he went to place to place wherever somebody needs a window. He didn't put an advertisement or something. That was too expensive. You had to go to place to place.

Hard work.

Hard work.

Very hard work. And you carried-- did he carry the glass with him?

Yes.

Did it-- did it break as he was carrying it?

It happened sometimes, it could break.

Yeah.

Because if you weren't able to schlep so much. But don't ask. So what I want to come to this conclusion. When I grow up, I became-- I became by 13 years old. I became a little more thinkable what's life.

Yeah.

And I see how my father--

Worked.

Worked. And I couldn't take it. And I decided that I would learn a trade or something maybe I could help my father. But my father was very strict.

Mhm.

He was religious. He definitely wanted all the children-- well, it was by 9-- it was by 7 boys who had already grow up big.

Yeah.

He wanted they should have them all education, not to work, only in Hebrew education. Don't ask. To tell my father this, it hurts me very much.

Yeah.

I wasn't able to tell him because I know he's going to tell me it's not your business. There is a God. He takes care. He was afraid that I would get spoiled. Like today, some education goes into hell.

Yeah.

Excuse me my English.

It's OK.

Because when they became updated, modern, they spend their money for nonsense things, they become-- morale, everything is throwing away. This way it looks like today, the killing and shooting that is connected with that-- with this and with my parents' problem for the Germans, what the Hungarians did to them. God pays back. But I don't want to go in--

We'll go in-- we'll do that later.

This conversation, this is what happened. Life is so up morale, not-- not normally killing and shooting. It don't mean nothing.

Of course.

But in my life, what we read in the newspaper that somebody killed somebody, it's all very-- with the newspaper, would stay in newspaper in the headlines couple of months.

Yeah.

Killing. A killing? No such a thing, no way.

Nobody heard of such things.

Nobody heard of such.

Nobody did such things.

Besides, the people were not educated, and that was good too. Because if you take an average kid, even a 20-year-old, today the kids from 15 years know how to shoot. That's what happen incidentally. They shoot their own mother. Because they know-- they don't know exactly what a small child-- they see their father has a gun. He is wondering to see how it works.

Yeah.

So suppose he does-- by mistake he shoots his own father.

Yeah. Yeah. These things they didn't exist at that time.

No. No. They didn't. There was no such a thing. People could-- I mean you should see in the paper how one killed each other.

Yeah.

Oh my goodness. We're talking about weeks. So what do you want to bring it out altogether? I don't know if we got away.

OK. It's OK. But I will-- you're telling me one-- you're telling me exactly what I want to know. It's just we're going sometimes a little forward, a little back.

Correct. So--

So your father--

So my father did struggle a couple years. He carried merchandise by hands. And slowly they know him, knew about it. They did not call because we didn't have telephone. But somehow, they-- we would know it. So they would call him, come fix a window, you know?

Yeah, yeah.

So this is the way we knew it.

So he-- so he--

So it bothered me very much.

So did you--

That he's schlepping every day.

Did you tell him you wanted to learn a trade?

I decided that I must tell my father-- not my father-- in nature with the mother you walk, you talk much closer than with a father.

Mhm.

The father's, by general nature, strictly.

Yeah.

Strict. We did not. So I couldn't go ahead and tell my father I want to learn a trade deal to help you a little bit.

Yeah. But did you tell your mother?

I decided for my mother I can tell it.

Yeah.

I could tell it. So I went to tell her. I says, this is my thinking.

Yeah. And I was already then fourth, fifth child. I was much younger. I was about 17, 18 years old. And I told my mother she should live in peace, live in peace. Who knows what they did. But anyway-- that I would like to learn a trade. Because I can-- I can look at every morning my father just schlepping such heavy glass all day because the milk-- what my sisters, and me, and brothers helped was not enough for-- for so many persons to support, to survive. So he did both jobs to this way--

Of course.

--maybe he could--

Did anybody of your older siblings help him?

That's the problem with my-- my sisters helped with milk. That was enough.

I see.

My brothers-- I would gladly do it. My older brother would gladly do it. But he didn't want we should spend our daily time only with working.

He was a very generous father.

He was.

He wanted more for you.

Not only him. That was the style. Respect him. I would never say to my father, not even that word "you," no such a thing. I would go around and say, maybe my father, if you wanted, I could do this or do this. But to tell my father, this what I want to do it. I wouldn't ask him permission. Mind your own business. No such a thing.

We would-- like I just said, my mother decide-- I decided that I'll tell my mother, and my mother will tell the father that this man, your son, has in mind. She told me, listen. She was very surprised that a boy like me thinks like this.

Yeah.

[SNORTS] She felt sorry for me. She says, I would do it gladly, but you know your father's going to tell me you-- you're not the supporter. Or I'm not a supporter. God is supporter. He was very religious, you know?

Yeah.

So I don't know how he did it, how he-- he doesn't tell me every daily life. It's not my business. I wouldn't ask him. But she says, all right, I'll tell daddy. What don't expect that I am going to be with success.

Yeah.

Of course, she would not bargain with him either.

Of course.

That was another life. And finally, she decided she'd tell my father-- look at your son. He has such a good idea. Maybe he was-- you let them know-- let them know that he should get the idea that-- I don't know how to say it.

That you'd learn a trade.

That I'd learn a trade. So he said, what do you think about? I wasn't there when he told my--

Mother.

--mother. What he said-- when my mother came back, he says, I should not-- she should not worry about it because he's struggling in school. There is a God in the world. He'll-- He'll give me--

Help.

Help. He'll give me-- every day, the daily life, I'll find something-- always find something to help for the children. And that [INAUDIBLE]. And she said, you were screaming at me. When she came back, she told me, your father was a little screaming at me. There is a God in the world. I shouldn't worry about it. And that was finished. When he said no, respectable.

OK.

They didn't fight each other. And I came back. I didn't give up. I finally-- I went to my aunt. My aunt was a widow. And she struggled, of course. Maybe she just struggled like my father, because she had an open business. She became a widow. The little business before he died--

OK.

Her husband. And of course, maybe they helped-- they did help-- for the parent, for the father.

Mhm.

They sold wood for fire in winter. In Europe, it was the style at that time, if you wanted to be-- there should be heat in the house, you would buy a bunch with wood.

Mhm.

And make a fire out of it. In winter that would give you--

Heat?

Heat.

Yes.

No such a thing, steam.

Yeah.

Maybe the very, very modern state.

So did you heat by wood or coal?

By wood.

OK.

And later on, I remember I grew up, we did it with coal too.

OK.

Yeah.

OK.

But not like this that you were heating with the steam.

Yeah.

You would have a little, something-- whatever you call it. You would make a-- put it on the fire with that. And you would throw it in the oven.

Mhm.

And that was longer heating than a regular-- wood with fire would very fast too.

So your aunt supplied your family with some wood from her business? Is this it?

From her business.

OK.

She used to sell it, and they would put it on-- on an oven, whatever it is. And sometimes, you'd have to watch for cooking very long because--

Right.

--slowly heating.

Well, sometimes you have to have different types of wood. Some type of wood burn slow. Sometimes burns fast.

Well, I got news for you.

What?

They-- when they had the farmer, when the farmer had the wood, it did that put on to-- under waterproof, dependable roof.

No.

Was a plane in the backyard.

OK.

It was fire-- he would get from the wilderness and bring it home. And either the owner would have cut it himself piece by piece. And sell it--

That way.

Sell it. Wood. Some wood very, very wet.

Yes.

It didn't-- you asked me that question.

Yeah.

How-- he had to struggle-- the owner had to struggle if the wood was wet, the owner of the wood had to sell it for cheaper. Because they were suffering too.

Yeah.

Till they get the little-- some of the people who could afford it-- to buy such a wood and dry one--

Right.

Would-- that the guy would have it some place. Build up something against the wa-- the water, or the wetness. And he would sell that wood that would burn right away.

Yeah.

So you would have--

Yeah.

Everything was money, money.

Yeah. Yeah. And the quality of wood, how it burns, how you use it, and so on. Now, a few things I forgot to ask. What was your father's name?

Samuel Weiss.

Samuel Weiss.

Yes.

And your mother's name?

Geta Weiss.

Geta Weiss. And what was her maiden name?

The funny thing is everybody asks this question.

We are-- we were-- me and my wife were cousins.

Really? OK.

In Europe, they did not make a particular thing like here.

Yeah.

And it was legal. And the funny thing is not only it-- the maiden name was also Weiss.

For your mama?

For mama, yeah.

OK. So her maiden name was Weiss. And-- and-- so it's Weiss.

Right away, I have to change the idea. She was-- I don't know. How did it happen? That because she was actually Neuman. Her name was Neuman.

Neuman?

Neuman.

OK. N-E-U-M-A-N.

Neuman. Mhm. Neuman. OK.

Yeah. Neuman.

OK. Neuman.

But uh-- how was it then?

OK. So now, since we're on the question of names, so your father is Samuel. Your mother is Geta.

Geta.

Your oldest brother or sister, what was their name?

Oldest brothers-- Rachel.

Rachel.

Rachel was her name.

OK. Then?

And the oldest was brother. I have to spell it.

OK.

Lajos.

Lajos.

Lajos.

OK.

It's L-A-J like--

Yot. Yeah.

O-S.

Lajos?

Lajos.

I've never heard that name before.

I didn't hear it neither before.

Is he the only one who had it? Did you ever meet another Lajos?

No. No. There was never a different name in the family.

OK. So we have Rachel, Lajos, then?

Then?

Who comes after that in siblings? Brothers and sisters?

Brothers and sisters.

Yeah. All your brothers and sisters. I'd like to know their first names.

Oh, you'll-- I'll break my feet-- teeth. But I don't have my teeth already.

Well, you could have fooled me.

What?

You could have fooled me. Those look like your teeth.

Yeah. But you know, it was a good dentist.

[CHUCKLES] OK. So after Lajos, who's next?

After Lajos was Gloria.

Gloria. Oh, what a lovely name. OK. So Rachel, Lajos, Gloria, then you?

Then me.

OK. Ferenc. Then after that?

Then after that, not after that because there was a younger brother for me. After that, I was the one, which I mentioned before, Ferenc Weiss.

OK.

I said Weiss.

Ferenc.

All right.

That was a Hungarian name. And in English it would be. Frank?

Francis.

Francis. OK. I had so many names that I don't-- I could pick it up any time a different name.

[CHUCKLES] And then after Francis, who comes next? After Francis comes Morris.

Morris.

Yes. OK. And after Morris?

After Morris, after Morris-- that was--

You're Ferenc, then Morris.

I'm Ferenc. Then, Morris.

Then--

Then, then, then comes-- a girl again.

OK. And then after her?

After her is uh-- I'm confused already.

OK.

Wait a minute. After-- not after her, before her was-- was a name like-- Xander. Xander was a boy.

Xander was a boy.

A boy. Yeah.

OK.

After her-- after him comes her name.

OK. And do you remember your-- that sister's name?

His sister's name.

So there was Rachel, Gloria, and she would be the third sister. She would be the youngest.

OK.

I don't know what. She-- I'd say Feigel.

Feigel. Feigel is fine. All right. So Feigel. So then there was Xander and Feigel.

Yeah.

And then after Feigel, who was there?

After Feigel comes a boy already.

All right. And what was his name?

Uh. Xander.

OK. After him?

And after him, after him comes-- see, I'm not a joker. How many times do I call him today? After him, did I-- wait a minute. Did I-- did I say Moses yet?

You hadn't said Moses. You said Morris, but not Moses.

Morris.

OK.

Morris was--

OK.

So shy. Xander I said.

You said.

I said. Now I had girls.

Yeah.

Sister.

Feigel.

Yeah. But I had another one.

OK.

I had another one. Smaller, already. Gladys.

Gladys. OK. So I'm up to-- I need three more.

Of course, Gladys is English.

OK. Yeah.

But we call her different.

How did you call her?

Call her Feige.

Feige?

Feige.

Uh-huh. OK. And then three more children. Three more children. The youngest children, who-- what were their names?

The youngest children was-- I said Feige.

You said that, yeah.

The youngest children was-- one was born-- one was very, very young. One was very young.

Mhm.

And not so easy.

OK. We can leave that. But you know, at least I know the names of some of your siblings and your father and your mother's name. That's good.

Yeah.

That's good.

Was I named after one?

Huh?

Was your daughter named after any of your brothers and sisters?

Didn't you have a Suri?

Was there a Suri?

Suri.

That's me. That's one of the younger ones.

Sara.

OK. So Sara. Sara was the youngest sister maybe.

Yeah. OK. Sara. OK. So your father was a glazier and your sisters delivered milk to clients. And--

Yeah. Plus my brother-- plus brothers.

Plus brothers.

Plus brothers.

Yeah. And then sometimes your aunt, who had a little business-- she was a widow. She helped out by supplying wood.

Yeah. But I didn't continue.

OK. Please tell me about her.

I figure that she is the one who more involved already in daily life. Because she-- since her-- her husband died--

Mhm.

So I had to go to her. When you saw you had to go, it's only 20 mile. There's no such a thing. You go-- be there. Yeah.

You had to figure out. Go by train or take a day.

Yeah. That's right.

20 miles.

That's right.

It wasn't so easy. Plus paying.

Mhm.

The dues. So I went to her, and I said, yeah. And it was very funny. I went to visit, and that adds nothing to this story. But she was modern, like I said, more updated. And I was old fashioned, I believe, because according to my parents, I had such long-- I don't know how you say it. I'm sure it doesn't have an English word.

Peyos?

Huh?

What was the word? What's the word?

You say it already.

Was it peyos?

How do you know it?

[CHUCKLES]

OK. So I had long ones all the way down. And she was modern. She was saying, why do you need that long-

Peyos. Uh-huh.

Tell my aunt it's not your business. There was no such a thing. There was no such a-- such a language on my Hungarian language, or any language. I would bend down my head and say to my aunt, I had decision that I'm not going to do it anyway. But I didn't say one word. We became friendly, so believe one side.

And she-- I didn't say a word. Not your business.

Of course.

Or my father wanted strict. I didn't say one word. And I looked down my face, you know. This my aunt told me. She comes with-- one daughter of hers comes already with the scissors. And she cuts it off. And I was very disappointed. I says, what's my father going to say?

Yeah.

And it happened. She cuts off-- talking. We're talking. She didn't have your provision. She decided she cut it off. In the meantime--

That's a shock.

Shock. And I was-- I just say everything that happened. Meantime, I'm supposed to meet my uncle. He was

also religious. He used to cut the chickens.

Oh. He used to-- was a kosher butcher.

Kosher butcher. Correct.

OK.

And that week, that day, that night, whatever it is-- was a remembering for a certain man, which was my help-- helper of my father, his help. Was a title or something, [NON-ENGLISH].

An honor.

An honor.

An honor. OK.

When I was a small child--

OK.

He was the one that carried my-- the child to-- to that other who was-- I wasn't there. I was there, but I-- I was three months--

Yeah.

Two, three months old. Even less. I can't figure--

So what was the-- he carries a small child for what purpose?

It's a Jewish tradition. I was born then. It's a Jewish tradition. He handled to my father.

Are you talking about a bris?

Was it a bris?

Bris, yeah.

Ah, OK.

Just say what it is.

OK. All right.

So I don't remember. I was there.

Of course not. Of course.

I still don't remember. That night was an anniversary for that rabbi.

Ah. OK.

An honor.

Yahrzeit

And I--

A yearzeit. OK.

Yearzeit. And I was small child-- small still. For the [INAUDIBLE]. Anyway, we should-- we supposed to meet there, you know. He told me at night to come there. And you're going to be there by the--

By the aunt?

By the aunt. And-- yeah, yeah.

OK.

I had my cut off. He says, what did you do? Who cut your deal? I couldn't-- I couldn't tell her it's my sister, your sister who did it because there was an aunt. They were brother and sister. I'm just saying original stories.

OK.

And of course, you know, it was-- I started crying.

Oh. Oh.

I didn't do nothing. I didn't say a word. My aunt did it, which is we wouldn't say your sister.

Of course not. You wouldn't say "it was your sister." You would say "my aunt."

My aunt.

Yeah.

"I'll give her hell." And anyway, all kind of-- I'll take care of her. And there was a rabbi standing by. It was devastating for him. And he felt very sorry and started crying.

Aw.

And I didn't say nothing. So at that time, when I was small, I was a-- I had a good voice. That's what the people say. I was singing. I was praying my life by 20 years for the synagogue. But all right. He finally says, him. He said don't cry. Don't cry. You know, you're going to sing for us tonight.

Oh.

So really it was sing--

OK. Singing and crying.

--crying. Don't ask. Don't ask. This was forgiven.

OK.

Forgiveness. We became friends. All right. That was that story. Forget about it.

But what did you-- why did you want to go to your aunt as far as learning the trade? You said you didn't give up when your mother said--

Correct. Because-- thank you for reminding me. Because I knew that she's modern-thinking.

She was real modern-thinking.

She would go ahead and tell my mother the worry I have in my mind.

OK.

Because I was hoping that-- I tried everything I could.

Yeah.

It bothered my life.

To see him work so hard?

Yeah. So when my father asked me who did it, I didn't-- I couldn't do it because I figure psychologically it's not nice to say something wrong about your aunt, you know. So I went to my uncle, the one who screamed "you cut it off." And I told him, I didn't say your sister. I said my aunt-- again, we didn't say--

Not direct. Nothing direct.

No. No.

OK.

My aunt did it.

OK.

I'm going to give her hell, I go back. When I go-- anyway, that was-- she was a modern day of modern. So I thought that she's going to-- I tried everything to learn a trade and help money-wise. So I figure she's modern. She's going to talk to him.

She also said, all right. I'll talk to you-- to your father. It was for him-- for her sister.

OK. So your aunt was your father's sister.

Father's sister.

And you had-- and he had another brother who was the one you went to and who said, who did this to you?

Correct.

And I said her name.

OK. OK.

I didn't say your sister.

You said my aunt so-and-so.

My aunt-- your people can't understand.

Yeah.

That was life then. That's only way you could control your children. You know-- you know that as a limit, you could talk to your father, and that's it.

That's right. Well, in many European languages, in German I know that you have two words. There's du und Sie. And you know, you never would refer to your father as du.

No.

Never, never, never, never.

No way. No.

No.

I just-- you said it yourself.

Yeah.

There's no way. Everything respect. A child or a 10, 15-year-old boy or a girl didn't know otherwise. We went in a train. You travel in the train, you see an old lady or an old man standing, she would say-- he would say you want to take my seat. You know, it was very natural.

Yes.

We never said-- even an older man, we didn't say you.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So your aunt said she would speak with your father. Did she?

She did.

And what happened?

Because she felt very sorry for me.

Oh.

That I am think about.

Yeah.

And was there a different reaction?

She give me a lot of respect. She said, don't worry about it. I'll talk-- and I'll be successful.

OK.

Of course, he give her also hell.

[CHUCKLES]

Don't ask what she said.

[MUTTERS] So it was--

[NON-ENGLISH]

Yeah.

Finally, her sister-- she became also a widow.

OK.

In a different town.

OK.

Her husband has a binding business, book binding.

Oh.

Yeah. And I knew-- I learned that trade, and I went in business for this trade finally, you know. And this is a trade I learned there, which--

From the second sister?

From the second sister.

Well, it has something to do with learning.

I figure-- and I was still learning.

Yeah.

And I figure she is going to help me.

OK.

But I didn't give her an idea what I have in mind. You help me or you help. Your aunt help.

Yeah.

My aunt helped me or you help. Again, I went back-- she went back. She didn't care that she got help from--

From your father. Yeah.

She went back again and says-- now, she says, we are-- the time is terrible bad. The Germans walked in in my town. And it became very different in the laws and everything. And Jewish people get fired. They wasn't able to work. They take away their license.

So my father probably saw already what's going on, so she went to him. She says, "Listen. My husband died. I want to take in a boy-- somebody, a man, a boy, he must help me. I-- I can't do it alone, or I can't do at all. But I'll do it. And you-- you help me. Give me the OK that your son would help me, and I'll-- of course, I'm going to help him out too. I'm going to pay for him, whatever." I don't know what kind of agreement--

Yeah, yeah.

--they had. He says, you go-- tell her. He says, I give-- let him go to work.

OK.

To you, but I disagree with her.

Ah.

I'm not going along. Disagreeing is no good, again, because not giving the respect to my father. And this is the way he died. He disagreed.

And that saddens--

I was working there maybe-- maybe three years.

So let me see if I understand this correctly. You didn't even go to the second aunt to ask her help.

No. I did not go.

But he already knew--

The old-- already, the other sister--

Had already-- ah.

--told her. This is you-- this-- this-- my name, they called me Ephraim.

Ephraim. OK.

My Hebrew name. But he says, he wants to help his father. She said, maybe we'll go together. We'll speak with him. And they did. They went together, both. They told him this is the situation. You want it. You need maybe money, a little help. And she needs assistant.

Help.

She's going to pay money for a strange man. Why don't you let him do it? He says, let him go, but I disagree. I told him my opinion of it. And this is the way he died. I was working. I was working by my aunt. I did everything. I don't know whether he paid for my father also. And that way was a lie that she said I promise you he's going to go every day to pray in the synagogue. I'm not going to let him be bad-- a bad boy.

Yeah.

She said, she told my father, said let him go help, so you-- but I disagreed with him.

Do you remember saying goodbye to your father then when you went to your aunt's house?

No. My father is family-- with my family. I was working for my aunt. Right?

Yeah.

When the Germans already came.

Already? They had already been there when your aunt went to your father? That's what you said.

When I went to my father.

And this-- excuse me-- I'm going to-- I'm going to interrupt for a second because I want to understand. At that point, you were in Romania? Everything was Romania, not Hungary.

Correct. Yeah.

So-- so it was-- what-- do you remember what year this must have been?

Huh?

Do you remember about what year this must have been when the Germans came to Romania?

I wouldn't-- I was so small.

It's OK. It's OK. I just wanted to get a sense that you're in Romania, and this is the German invasion, the Nazi invasion of Romania.

Romania.

OK. And so you're at your aunt's. And-- you said this was in a different town?

A different town definitely.

What was the name of the town?

Mátészalka.

Mátészalka.

Yeah. And from there they took me, the Germans.

OK. OK. But you were-- and your aunt's name, who at the bookbinding shop, what was her name?

Farkash.

Farkash. And that's her last name?

Her-- that was her name too, because her husband was--

Farkash.

Farkash.

And her first name?

Weiss.

Weiss. I know, but her-- was she-- her first name as a--

So she ran the business like Farkash.

OK.

It was just as a name. Somebody dies. Widow.

She was a widow.

Widow Farkash.

Farkash.

Ah, OK.

Widow Farkash was her-- because she wanted continue the name from the binding.

Of course.

Whatever she did. And she had to register by the city, because they were-- she was working for the city.

Oh, so she worked for the city. So this was one of her clients.

My uncle--

Uh-huh.

--did also work for the city. So when he was working there, I would say 75% the city gave her wherever they need some jobs, books.

OK.

Empty pages.

Did you like the work?

Well, of course, I liked it.

Well, there's work, and there's work. This sounds like interesting work.

Yeah. Better we was binding-- I don't know if you ever see binding.

Never saw it. So that's why I'd like to hear about it.

The thread.

OK.

When the printer-- we got it from the printer.

OK.

And the printer-- printers give it for us--

OK.

--to bind.

OK.

But the bills, whatever it is, went to the city-- to the city. That's where we get paid.

OK.

And-- all right. What else?

Well, it was-- I was asking you about-- what-- how does-- what is involved with binding a book?

Binding a book is, even today, if you want to make a hand one. Where today is a stitcher machine. It will stitch together every--

All the pages?

Yeah. All the pa-- not the whole bunch. Slowly, let's say five or 10 sheets at a time. You bind the book with a thread with all other parties. They become-- you get a cloth. You cover on the other side. But when I became a little bigger, and my widow was working, she was working different. We would get from the printer the sheets.

Yeah. Became a little more modern, you know.

OK.

And we would sew with a sewing machine, the sheets together.

OK.

No more by hand.

OK.

That was already when her husband died.

OK.

That you had that machine. She had that machine.

Yeah. She had the machine. I don't know how she handled it. And the books-- book is already sewed.

OK.

Then, we would take-- we would put it on something, take and glue it up.

OK.

Glued the back.

Was it cardboard?

Cardboard on the top.

OK.

Every book had the cardboard with covers.

OK.

Cloth.

Cloth covers.

Cloth covers.

OK.

That's today.

That's as it is today.

Yeah. It's outdated.

OK.

Before also we weighed cloth.

Yeah.

But I did it by hand.

So how do you do it by hand? What do you do?

Well, when I get tired with this hand, I did the other one.

But what is it that you do? You have the book cover. You put the cloth. Is it gluing? Is it ironing it? Is it heating it?

The cloth-- the-- well, the book is already sewed--

OK.

--together.

OK. Now, you have to cover it with the cloth.

OK.

Before you did it. And the cloth is very simple. You take a piece of cloth--

OK.

--how big the book is. You cover it with the glue.

Yeah.

And that glue sticks together the cover-- and the cloth-- and it's very good to save-- maybe for two, three years, because the cloth is not paper.

Yeah.

It's cloth. And we had to size every book, how thick she is. If it's thin, we take a thinner cloth. If it's thicker, we had to take a thicker cloth.

OK.

And we would say-- I would say on every book-- the book had on both side before you want to glue it up had the sheet sewed together with the book. When we saw the book--

Yeah.

--we saw a blank sheet--

OK.

--on both side.

OK.

And then we would take a brush--

OK.

--or a glue. A modern machine today, they have a machine for it in the big cities.

OK.

But my aunt didn't have that. She had a hand one, hand, and I had to [INAUDIBLE] each book.

OK.

The paper on both sides.

So that's become part of the cover?

Huh?

The paper becomes part of the cover?

Part of the cover of the book.

OK. OK.

So when we glued it on, we glued it on-- we glued it on both side.

OK.

It was cloth. It was strong enough that wherever we finished gluing the cloth, it would stick it together to the cover, depending how big the book is.

OK.

That's the size cloth I did. And they became automatically a book.

And so did you do the process--

There was a press.

OK.

There was a press. She would press every book.

OK.

After smearing--

Yeah.

--after gluing.

Yeah.

This way, this-- [MUTTERS] I forgot already. I going to know from you. Whether you glued both side--

Yeah.

A ready-made cover was waiting for that book--

OK.

--according to the size. And stick in the book.

All right.

And sticking in the book, she already is covered from both side. The size in the book--

Right.

Whatever you need, you put together-- stick in the book in the cover.

OK.

And we glue down before.

Right.

And we put it in a press on a metal steel bread. Turn around and squeeze it very hard. It would stay there maybe 10, 5 hours.

Oh wow.

Not-- less. I didn't say it right.

OK. But--

I would say average by a half hour.

OK.

You would press. You already smeared the book with the brush.

OK.

To stick in the book.

In the book-- OK, in the cover.

To the cover. And you press-- it comes out press, the heavy press. You turn the press metal half hour. And first of all, she makes very neat, very nice, straightened out with the book together.

OK.

And this way it would stay a half hour.

OK.

And take it out from the press, and it's a book, a ready-made book. You could do anything you want.

How cool.

And that will hold the book with the book cover.

What a wonderful-- what a wonderful process. I mean, what a wonderful business to make a book.

Yeah, yeah. I learned this.

You know. And so each book is kind of custom made. Each book was--

Each book is cut. If it is same size maybe, sometimes 20 book samples.

OK.

We'd cut with a cutter where you were able-- a paper cutter, you call it.

OK.

And that paper you would take the cut of the size.

Mhm.

You were a cutting machine, which was--

You had a cutting machine.

Yeah. A cutting machine and that was cut to the size in the very beginning. And we have the supply, like I said. You put it in then on the cover, and you had to watch to put the size of both sides should they fit. And turn-- turn with the press. That would press it down. And was very strong, and that will squeeze out the glue, which is on both sides.

All the bubbles might--

All the bubbles.

Bubbles. Yeah.

All the bubbles.

OK.

Don't tell nobody.

I won't. I won't. [LAUGHS] It's a trade secret.

Yeah.

OK. So did you-- what kind of books did you get? I mean was it all one kind of books, or was it different--

All books. Like I said before, she works for the city--

City. OK.

Would take blue sheets sewn together.

OK.

And had to make size in the cover. The cover according to thickness.

Right.

According to the size. And you made it like I said before. But you had to glue by hand each book on both side papers.

Yeah. Yeah. And--

Fit it in. Fit in the book.

Did you ever look at the content of the books as to what you were-- what you were making a book out of? What the subject matter was?

That happened a lot of times.

Yeah?

But this one, what I'm talking about was blank before. Was not written, was not used. Nothing. It came from the printer.

Really?

From the printer. Then the government would write in it, names, and all the [INAUDIBLE].

Oh, I see. So these were like ledgers.

A ledger, yes. Something like.

You were making things like that.

And that was a good job because you get it from the government.

Of course. Of course. So this is the sort of product that you could have many different uses for. It wasn't just a book to read.

No, no.

It was a--

Then people would come in to buy-- whatever you call it, to--

Order books or to order something?

They would come into 10 books or five books, sometimes individual people would come and say, Miss, would you bind me that book? Could you-- so whatever was the prize, a surprise.

OK.

But sometimes people came in with 10 books. The books were already old.

Yeah.

They used it. It was written there, whatever, the printer, whatever. Of course, we want-- you could buy a book, a reading book, a library book.

Oh yeah.

Like a library book. She had a li-- 10, 15 library books. And that was already used.

Yeah, yeah.

And she'd want to get the old book. She want to try to get out of it a new book.

So to repair it?

Repair it. Yeah.

To repair it. OK.

But the main living was--

That government contract.

Government contract.

Yeah. You said that she came to your father when the Germans had already come into Romania.

Yeah.

So that meant that the three years--

He bent probably a little bit. I didn't ask my father's-- his thinking or deciding. But make believe that he let me go. He looked away. Let's put it this way.

OK.

He looked away. And he liked my idea probably. I wouldn't ask my father maybe he had a few dollars. You know what I mean?

Yeah. So did you send whatever you earned back to your home?

Back.

OK.

Back.

Did you visit your family during this time?

I wish it. I think once.

Sorry.

I did visit, yeah.

Excuse me.

You did visit? Yeah?

I did visit, but he wasn't so-- he still didn't agree with me.

Yeah.

But there was a diplomacy.

OK.

So he wasn't angry with you?

Huh?

He wasn't angry with you?

I hope so.

Yeah. Yeah. It was-- I mean it was-- you were doing it out of a good heart. You wanted to help him. But you were saying that there was already a German occupation in Romania.

In Romania, yeah.

Did that affect your aunt's business?

Well, of course.

OK.

Right away, in a couple of days we got a letter that "sorry, we can't help you. Can't give you the job."

From the government?

From the government. Yeah. Oh, yeah. [TSK] That became very to problems-- big problems.

OK.

Life changed, everything.

Tell me how it changed.

Not only me.

Yeah.

Not-- for the whole city. It took away a lot of-- a lot of other things. Even my father wasn't able to work. I don't like to talk--

OK. We won't talk about that. We'll talk about other things.

Two-- what was it? Two months.

Mhm.

Two months I don't speak-- I already forgot. Six, eight months.

OK.

They called in my father, slave work. This is what they started. They didn't care if he had 11 children. Here, if somebody called from the government, he has a nice wage, get a nice check every month.

Yeah.

They give-- they feed the family. It was terrible.

Was he moved to a different place? Or did he stay in the same place?

I stayed there in the last minute.

OK.

Like I said, they didn't assist. Didn't-- they didn't have nothing but 11 children.

Of course.

German law. I went-- I never did it in my life. Going to ask money from people. I'm ashamed to say. I did it. I never did it, but I was already a big boy. I don't know what-- I know what happened. They called in my father, like I said--

Yeah.

--to slave work. And they took him away to a different town.

OK.

And finally, I find out where he is. I went to my rabbi, where I was at yeshiva before.

OK.

And I said to him, maybe he could--

Help?

Help me with a paper to write my situation. I have help-- my father sending a pekel every week, every month. Maybe they let me send. I don't know. I didn't know the Germans wouldn't let you do it. But anyway, in my stupid head, I asked myself I do something, which I didn't do in my life.

He gave me a piece of paper. Listen, this boy is very troubled. 11 children with him. My brother they called in also.

Yeah.

Forced work.

Oh, so they took your brother too.

My brother, they called him because he was that age--

Yeah.

--already.

And of course, my fa-- but he was Hungarian army and a German army. They mixed both. And at least, I know he make-- he survived because they give him to eat the very beginning when the Hungarians and the Germans worked together. But probably the government took care of them.

But anyway, my father, they called-- they wouldn't have nothing, help, nothing for my parent's children. And I know this hurts. Big, big family at home. And they took away the uncle, my father should live in place. He was not allowed to work anymore even if he had papers.

Yeah.

But that time, he wasn't able to work because they called him with no excuse how he going to survive the family.

Right.

Or something. They were not interested at all. And good enough, I went to-- I went to strange people, mainly Jewish people. I wasn't able to talk because--

It was so hard.

Yeah, hard. And I put down the paper on the table. They was-- I went to rich people. Rich, at that time they had money. But in a couple days they took away from them the money. They didn't know it. Nobody know it.

Yeah.

Maybe it would-- what could you do? I don't know. What you were able to do. They did it to 11 countries.

Yeah.

Jewish people. I don't have to tell you. And anyway, I put down the-- wherever I went. I wasn't able to speak to them. And the rabbi wrote, "Please help him, because he's in a bad situation, the kid. And he wants to have either for the children, either for the family."

So did people give some money?

Some people gave. What happened?

Did you take-- were you-- did you do this in the town you were born or in the town that you lived in with your aunt?

I did it-- I did it in the town where I was born.

OK.

That's correct.

And there were very rich people there. It was a gold mine there.

Ah.

It was a gold mine, and it was a lot of lawyers--

OK.

Engineers. And I went there. He send me to a place. Finally, I made a package.

OK.

I made a nice package. And I-- I had to find out the traveling to my father-- should leave in peace-- to give him the package. I went there.

Yeah.

I was away from my town. And finally, I arrive there with the bus.

Yeah.

And I find-- I ask people do you know this name.

Samuel Weiss.

Samuel Weiss. I cried. Finally, they showed me where he is. And I-- he did labor work, but anyway, finally I arrive there. It was very terrible.

What did you see?

Nothing. I saw my father working, slave work. He says-- I showed. I have a package for you. He says-- which was not true-- he said, "don't give it to me. Go-- go back to the town, where you live. Give it for your mother."

Aw.

"She loves you. She should give it to the children." [SOBS] My father-- and I-- I walked to his place. I-- thank you. I couldn't talk to him. He laughed in my face. He said, "how are you-- what are you doing here?" I couldn't tell him that I bought a package in the beginning, that he should use it.

So he said to me, laughing. "I have been off here." Which I can tell you, my father, the words is not true.

Yeah.

But he didn't-- they didn't-- they handle it very bad, the Germans. They have different laws. I says, I brought you some old suits. Half new, half old. I brought them. I wasn't able to talk but to put it down.

In the package was some old suits--

Old suits and foods.

And food.

Food.

OK. But I couldn't tell the words from my father. I showed him what I have here. So he says, "why don't you just bring it to your mother?" He was laughing. He was laughing. [SNIFFLES] He says, "I have enough. I don't need it." It was not true.

Yeah.

I could tell my father, it's not true.

Did he look very different from when you had last seen him?

No. No.

OK.

No. So he said, "Bring it to your mother." I picked the package. I put it back in my bag. I started crying. Please take it. He said no and was laughing. Do you think he was laughing at me?

No. He was doing it to try to make it easier for you.

He says, "I have enough. They give me enough. Give me enough." You don't have no idea what they-- but they handle all these people with slavery work. And not to give for the family a penny.

Yeah.

My parents were already poor. Finally, I struggled until I took back. I told my mother, should be in peace. Thought he didn't want to take the merchandise. Do me a favor. Listen to your father. He wants you should eat it. You should give the children. Do me a favor. Keep the promise. I promised my father I'm going to do it.

And this I arrived. That was almost a year, slavery work.

That he was doing?

That he was doing. Nothing. Nothing, like I said, help. Just probably they gave food to eat so you're able to work there.

That's right. That's right.

And finally, I went back. What was it?

You went back to your mother, and you gave her the package.

I gave her package.

Package.

She took it. All right. Thank you. Your father wants-- I have no idea how she survived. I don't ask. This was not normal how she survived. And all right.

So did you go back then to your aunt's house? To your-- after you gave the package--

I went back to--

You went to the-- to your aunt.

--my aunt.

Yeah. I didn't tell her. I only ask her permission. I want to go away for a couple big days.

Yeah.

And this is what happened. Oh, it was the worst.

Did they release your father?

Huh?

Was your father ever released? Was he ever let go from this labor?

Yes. They let him go because within one week they had to deport people with whole families. Everybody in the city.

So they--

He had to come home because he had to take care of his family, help packing. Everybody could pack a little package. Nothing, nothing but food or something, a little package. But you're not allowed to take more to--

Do they tell them where they were going?

To dress. No, no. I don't know how we were so stupid. But like I said, before we wouldn't-- we never learned how to fight, how to kill, how to-- and they went like shaved sheep.

Yeah.

Wherever-- I don't know what they did to them. I have an idea what they did. I don't want to talk about.

Do you know where they-- you were with your aunt. And they took the whole family then?

The whole family. And leave everything there.

And do you know where they were taken?

Who would tell them? They wouldn't tell them. They-- they put you in a transport--

Yeah.

--in a wagon, a train wagon. How do you call it?

Cattle car, usually a cattle car.

Cattle car. And they put in, my goodness-- there was-- and that train, whatever you call it, was placed maybe for a 100 people.

Yeah.

For-- for 100-- I meant 50--

Yeah.

--people place to sit down tight.

Yeah.

And they put in over 100 people in that train. They took them. Then they took them to Auschwitz.

You found out later?

I went through the same thing, but in a different way by my aunt.

I see. Excuse me just for a second.

So--

So they-- your father came back? They took the whole--

My father came back. And you know, everybody was happy. And finally, within one week, became law, everybody in the family is going. Where you going? What you're doing? You don't-- like I said, they took that wagon. And those people-- all those people were worried that the wagon-- they was dying.

We was half dead already when they arrived at Auschwitz. They have some pregnant woman, so this was born their babies in the wagon. And after done that, they died. But I don't like to talk about those--
[SNIFFLES]

These are things you heard about later and you yourself went through later?

Yeah, true.

Yeah. I think-- is everything here?

No. Not yet.

OK.

But you can break if you want.

No, no, no. You-- when did you find out your family was taken? Because you were far away. You with your aunt.

Well, I have a family follow happiness to what happened to me. After two weeks, when I went through with it, when I said I shipped-- I brought some merchandise back--

Right.

--to my other parents--

Yeah.

I already see what's going on.

Uh-huh.

In one week, I said to myself, I was not allowed to go anymore in the train, no Jews. No Jews, only if they have some papers.

OK.

But they wouldn't give papers for nobody. Just for the world.

Yeah.

For the country. To show that I was not supposed to travel in the train--

Right.

--as a Jew.

Right.

And if I did, I had to travel with a yellow band--

OK.

--and have a paper who gave me permission to--

To go.

--go to the city.

Right.

I decided I must see my parents before they go. I didn't have idea if they going or not, but I find out later. I have to go and see them. I don't know what's going to happen with them.

Mhm. So you went on the train?

I went in the train. I figured if they catch me they shoot me. Fine. Maybe it's going to-- I'm lucky enough, I go off to my parents.

OK.

God give me-- God helped me at that time.

OK.

But anyway, I change my suit, my cap. I went in a plain cap as a non-Jew. What's the difference? At least, I thought it's going to work. I tried everything. If it's not going to work, what could I do?

Mhm.

But good enough. I went to the city of Satmar.

Uh-huh.

I bought a ticket. When I bought the ticket, they didn't ask me. There was not their construction-- or instruction, whatever you call it. I buy the ticket. They finally-- finally they gave me the ticket, and I sit-- I'm sitting in the train. What's going to happen is going to happen.

I know already because they took other people already in other cities. What's the difference? And I figure I must see my parents before they go someplace. And this is what happen.

Did you go? Did you see them?

I go. I took a chance. I tell my aunt, I have to go to see my parents. She says, you think you could make it? I says, if I'm here I don't make it. Maybe I'll-- I'm lucky enough.

Mhm.

I-- that was very bad. I go back to my town already. I am already-- I didn't have anything in my body, afraidness. I'm going. What could happen? Finally, I arrived. If you would see that, my mother started crying. How could you go? How could you come here? She was very happy that I'm here, but she asks me how did you-- how did get to come such a couple miles. Nobody asked you?

I said this just happens. I bought a ticket. And I-- I had a--

A cap?

Cap. Make-believe I'm Jewish-- not Jewish.

Yeah. And I said, I'm here. My mother-- I want to say to hello. I didn't want to tell her. She know what-- what's going to happen with them. So I didn't want to tell her that I know it. So I said-- I decided that I find bad news. They take away people. I don't know what's going to happen with you.

I figured myself, what could they do? They going to shoot me or what?

Yeah, yeah.

I have to say goodbye. And I was crying and crying. My mother says, "Don't worry. It'll be all right." I says, "I come to the conclusion that it's not going to be all right. Get ready for anything you could do." Finally, I couldn't stay there, because meantime I had a--

Return ticket or something?

Not a return ticket. I had-- [INAUDIBLE] from the government into the army.

Oh, you had a letter from the government into the army?

Not a-- yeah.

OK.

A call-in.

All right. To draft you.

Draft me. And they told me that what's waiting for me. They not going to give me any more army suits. And

they gonna-- it was a group.

OK.

And they going to put us in a camp. From there I go to a particular city. And maybe if you're lucky enough, the Germans are going to take over or not. We can't tell you now.

So this is from the Hungarians or from the Romanians?

Hungarian-- Romanian, Romanian.

From the Romanian.

Romanian.

So there was a letter at your parents' home for you that you have to report-- you're going to be in the army, and they're going to put you in a camp? This is-- I understand that correctly?

Not-- they don't write they're going to put you in the camp.

Oh, but they just write you have--

But you have to go-- you have to go to the army, and they put you in civilian clothes.

Ah.

No more army clothes.

So did you return to your aunt? Or did you go where the letter told you to go?

Well, I had still seven, eight days to go there. But anyway, here I am still home.

Yeah.

And my mother tells me-- my mother tells me that your father is coming home. She still didn't let up hope. They had a call-in another 10 days. And they wrote a letter--

OK.

--in German and in Hungarian that you can't take nothing with you.

OK.

You only come with-- everybody with two shirts, wearing one shirt. And they take-- they didn't take-- they didn't tell you where they take you.

Right.

[INAUDIBLE]

So were you there when your parents left their home?

Wait a minute. So no.

OK.

Because I had to go-- I had to go to register in the army. And I-- and I wonder should I leave in peace. She

took me couple house-- maybe 10, 3 house-- 10 or 15 houses. She came with me to say goodbye. Because I had to go back. And she says to me-- well, she came along with me because she didn't know that I am-- why should I tell her more worries that I have not a legal paper. I told her something [INAUDIBLE]. I have to register in the army.

Uh-huh.

I didn't want to tell her I didn't come to her much legal.

Oh. OK.

And-- but that time you lived in a--

Excuse me just for a second. Got it? Yeah.

Yeah. I'm going to run out of battery pretty soon.

OK. So you tell me when that happens.

It says like another 20 minutes.

Oh, OK. We'll be fine. We'll be fine. So your mother accompanies you a few houses down.

Two, three houses.

--houses down.

More than-- why.

Why?

Because there was an army bases.

Ah.

I didn't tell her that they don't know that I'm not officially--

There. OK.

But because I still looked Jewish, and she was very afraid--

OK.

--that they're going to hit me.

Oh.

And this [INAUDIBLE]. [SNIFFLES] She said I want to go with you to that base. And she said-- she said, "I promise you you're going to come back. God is going to help you. Because what you did to us." She saw already the problem. She saw already that the hesitation was going to be. But she didn't tell me nothing, because she got some German paper. She informed me they're going to come.

But anyway, she says to me that "you'll come home because what you did, you took such a chance. God's going to help you. You'll come home for the family. This is of truth. I promise you," she said.

Wow. Wow. And did she leave you there at the base? Did she say goodbye to you there at the base?

I did say goodbye at home.

You said a goodbye at home? OK.

No. Not at the base.

Oh, OK.

There. Well, she'd already had to go to register the base.

OK.

What the-- I didn't know what's waiting for me when I go.

Yeah. Well, this is what I'd like to find out. What happened then?

Well, what happened then is-- yeah. She promised me, trust me. You'll come home. God is going to help you because what you did. And let us know when you go. Let us know. You couldn't-- forget about it.

Yeah.

Couldn't read a letter or nothing.

Well, what do you want to know?

OK. After that, after you said goodbye to your mother, what happened with you?

My aunt told me--

You went back?

I went back, and I told her. She told us-- me.

Yeah.

Told me that you know you've got to-- have to register. You got something in the mail.

So that was the letter calling you to join the army?

Yeah.

OK.

And they-- well, but you could take only two shirts--

OK.

And the clothing-- and it said nothing-- nothing is illegal. You've taken everything. She gave me-- she gave me a little food.

Uh-huh.

She gave me-- her heart was working. But they took it away from me anyway. And--

And you said--

That was--

You said goodbye to your aunt then?

What?

You said goodbye to your aunt? When you got that letter, you packed just the two shirts and the pants.

Sure.

And you said then goodbye to your aunt? Or did she come with you?

No. I still had couple days.

Ah, OK. OK.

And that was-- I said goodbye to my-- was terrible say also goodbye. You know when you work and couple-- I don't know, half a year, a year, I was working. I didn't know what's waiting for me.

Yeah.

But I know that something is not normal.

That's-- of course. Of course. I think we're going to--

We were dizzy. We were--

Yeah.

We were-- you know you're thinking stopped. You changed-- you became like an animal. You didn't think nothing because you had-- you got. When I was there, I was pretty-- according to my age, I was very normal, very active.

Yeah.

And what I learned in that two weeks with my parents, and then I come home. This is waiting for me. I said to them I got to explode.

Yeah.

Didn't show nothing my aunt. I didn't show my parents nothing. I said to my parents nothing. Don't worry about that. Survive. You become like an animal. You have no feeling. I don't know what I should tell you the feeling that I went through. This is undescrivable what I went through in that week.

Go to the train back. Maybe they catch me. If they catch me, then now they catch me. When I registered in the-- by my aunt, where are you? What are you--

Yeah.

You're late or not late. I figured myself that's all I could take.

So were you like numb? Was it like a numb feeling where you don't feel anything?

I just-- I became like an animal. What happens is going to happen. I don't care. They should do what they want with me. What do I care? I said goodbye to my mother, to my parents. They led the parents-- my parents don't ask. What are you doing here? My father was already home. They sent him home to pack the family.

What are you-- what are you doing here? I said, what are you doing here?

To your father.

Yeah. The feeling-- well, just didn't bother me anymore. That's it. This I could take. At my age, that's all I could take.

Tell me, how old were you at that time? When all this happened, how old were you?

19.

You were 19 years old.

Yeah.

So this must have been--

Otherwise, they would not call me.

Yeah. So this must have been 1943. If you're born in 1924, then at 1943, you would have been 19 years old.

Yeah, yeah.

Something like that. Yeah. I think at this point, let's take a break, OK? And we'll have--

OK. And we are speeding.

OK. Before the break, we were talking about how you had said goodbye to your family and how you returned to your aunt's house and you found the letter that said you had to report to a certain place.

Yeah.

And you said goodbye to your aunt, as well, who gave you--

Yeah, definitely.

Yeah, who gave you a packet. You could only take two shirts, and a little bit of food.

Yeah.

And what happened after that? Tell me what happened later.

Well, it's hard to say because you feel like upside down, everything-- you didn't care for nothing. The only thing wanted you cared for little food, you know? You were like an animal then. I know two sisters, sisters who were like sisters say a week before. And they would steal the food from their own sisters. When she went to work, she hide it someplace. And she'd find out where she put it, and--

And the sister would take it.

Would take it away. Like animals.

When you went to report for the military, where did they take you?

You don't call it the military.

So the army, the-- what was this place you had to go to?

Well, in the beginning was the army place. Hungarian army or Romanish. I don't know if I got it mixed up. Then they give them over-- they give us over to the Germans.

So how long were you in this--

Oh, a couple months.

OK. And then they give you over to the Germans?

To the Germans. And as a matter of fact, there was a Hungarian or Romanish-- man was unbelievable. Very good. Felt sorry for us. But he had orders. He was general. He had an order how to handle us, and when to give us up pretty soon for the Germans. I could tell you, the man was crying. A plain, ordinary man, Romanish man. He was crying, a general. He knew the secrets, what's waiting with us. And all right, so he says, I feel very sorry. He was not allowed to talk too much because is like German spies all the time even if was officers or what. And we arrived to-- so named Kosice.

Kosice.

Yeah. There was a German-- Czecho--

Czechoslovakia.

Czechoslovakia. There was a mess, and pretty soon, [INAUDIBLE] each other. And till then, was very good. He was so harmless. God bless him.

This Romanian general.

This Romanian general. He took so many chances what the normal man wouldn't do it. And God bless whoever he is.

Can you describe to me some of the chances that he took?

Well, [INAUDIBLE] like, well, in general, he would try all the time to give us light work when he was under control because he had an order how to handle us getting used to the German life.

Yeah.

And he was not able to do it. First of all, he was faking, and then they find out and they replaced him, another whole story.

That's interesting for us to find out about. What kind of work were you supposed to be doing at this labor camp?

Well, to tell you clear, you see such a thing in life, you fill up-- [NON-ENGLISH]

A grave?

A grave.

OK, you fill up a grave--

He dug a hole.

You dug a hole.

Hole, work in slavery.

Yeah. And tomorrow you open it again-- you--

Empty it.

You dug it up again.

The same thing, you took it out. Just for no sense. They did no sense work. It happen a lot of times with a Hungarian officer. And there's a guy who's so harmless, so nice to us. He was a general. And I was there, too, with a friend of mine. Not alive anymore. Like, they did without the dig with us--

A trench or a grave or a hole.

A nonsense thing.

Right.

And an hour or a day later, they would say, fill it back again, just for--

Just for nothing.

Just for nothing.

OK.

But let me tell you a little something. He belonged to the Hungarians. Of course, he had orders how to handle things like this. He wasn't anxious to keep up the others. He took a big chance. I don't know how he did it. He probably [INAUDIBLE]. We're digging with anything. For instance, a holiday. Came a Jewish holiday, and it was very interesting.

We had-- just for the world, we had to make believe somebody who took care of-- if he had a cut or this or this, he should die too fast. We had a doctor, we called. And that was a play doctor.

Not a real one.

Not a real one. It doesn't matter. But he had orders how to handle things like how to behave, how to handle us, all these goodies. Forget about this conversation, but the-- for instance, a little thing, him as a general for that holiday, he would help us a lot of ways, doing which was illegal. They could have fired him in the bad way, very bad way. But he had one doctor make-believe, but there was not a doctor to help us [INAUDIBLE].

He, this man, Kasidas, is a doctor. And I don't blame him because we had the yellow bands, and he had a white band.

OK.

And I wasn't mad at him because he want to survive his life. Those who wear the yellow band, it was terrible what we went through. I want to go in detail. I don't want to go. This doctor, he had a white band, make believe he's not Jewish anymore, he's a half Christian or [INAUDIBLE] whatever you call it.

And they try to get-- they gave him a little-- the Hungarians or the Germans or the Romanians, whatever it was, they gave him an easier life. And of course, everybody wants to have it good. It was a holiday, and he was actually Jewish. Give him a white band, but doesn't matter. In the end, don't ask. They had also plenty troubles.

Came a Saturday, and he did something with us, the general, which nobody would do it. He said that we supposed to fast like did yesterday. Still had plenty help to survive. I'm over 18, but all right. I'm here. And it was a Thursday.

OK.

It was a Thursday. He knew he would like to give us a day freedom, which was not official. It was for him 10 times.

OK.

And he would like to find out those people only who are fasting. Not all the Jewish people, only the fasting. And he announced that he wanted to know that we belonged already to Hungarian, mind you.

And he's Romanian.

It doesn't matter if he's Romanian or Hungarian. What he-- the general, the Hungarian general, he announced that people should raise their hand who wants to fast.

OK.

Doesn't belong to him.

Right.

It's a joke. But this is so much chance he took. And I wanted to know, he says, oh, but you should cook for those people who are working, not fasting, or whatever it is. And those people who are fast, raise their hand, and we should handle him not officially. So to the doctor, the doctor says, he says my name is this and this here general, whatever it is your name, I'm not fasting.

OK.

You're not fasting? It bothered him a little bit. The general look at the Jew man--

And he's not fasting?

He's not fasting. They're using and doing favor, but the people are taking a chance. It bothered me very much. He says for the doctor in front of everybody, because it was you're standing in lines, lining, lines, he said, you know with the doctor, if your people are going to fast, you're going to fast, too. You know what a big chance he took?

Yeah, yeah.

This is so much. It bothered him that the doctor wanted to prove that he is no more Jew.

So in other words, he showed respect.

Huh?

It sounds like he showed respect.

It showed respect, but he took a big chance. He did it.

I see.

And we had some people who, a lot of times, you will go in the line, they were throwing some food if nobody should see it, you know? They played the big risk.

OK.

And they did it. That's what happened, a lot of non-Jew people helped Jewish people with things where they could.

Did you see this, then? Did you get-- this is import-- if it happened, it's important to know about.

Well, it happened. I wish I had the name.

Yeah.

But it happened that you do things that you're not supposed to do. Before we decided-- there was a lot of thing to talk about. I don't have the name for it. Some non-Jew, an old man with a family, they decided they're going to take a non-Jew to help a little bit. They used to do it with us a lot of times. It's a matter of fact, two of them, we took the address. If we ever got help, we came back. We going to send you, you know, which we did, thank God. And some people had [? connection out ?] with them. And after all--

So did they give you food?

Huh?

Did they give you extra food?

They gave us a little food, yeah.

They gave you a little food.

Food. This is the way you survived a lot of times.

Did you also have people in this time, before you came under control from the Germans, did you have people who were also cruel to you? Was it a mix? Was it both people who were good and people who were cruel?

Well, they didn't have to do it to us. They didn't have to do it to anybody, Mr. Charlie. They just did it.

Got it.

They just did it. For instance, I was once-- you know, after all, I was a human. My shoes went kaput.

Yeah.

[INAUDIBLE] come wintertime. I figured, if I have a chance, we'll fix my shoes by shoe man that was in a town, the shoe man. And I went to him, I says, I would like to have fixed my shoes. And he says nothing. He says, all right, I'll fix it for you. Come back later. I come back later, there was some Germans were working on the field to go fight to the [? Romane ?], or however you call it. I don't know, I didn't keep track, because that was a dirty life that time. If a soldier, in the wintertime, if a soldier who died already from the shooting, they would cut off his feet and use his shoes. You people wouldn't believe that, you know?

That you cut off the feet?

They cut off the feet in order to take his shoes, because the Germans had very good shoes.

Yeah.

And if the Germans find some [INAUDIBLE] before they were under their control, they didn't mind, as long they-- or they did it for the Russian, too. A lot of times, the opposite way, use their shoes.

Yes.

They didn't care. They were dead already.

Yes, they're dead. They're dead already.

But they're-- all right.

Finish your story.

Huh?

Finish your story with your shoes.

What happened-- it's coming. It's coming. So this--

What did you ask me?

Finish.

Sorry.

Your daughter was just asking something. So you go to this shoemaker to have your shoes fixed because they're gone, they're not working. There are holes in them, and they're just-- you wanted to have them fixed. And you come back, and what happens?

Before I came back.

OK.

He said, yeah, I'll take it, I'll take it. And meantime, it was a very best life.

That man who fix the shoes was a German. Not a German, a real German. We called him-- had a particular name. The Hungarians, the Romanians who-- they were Hungarian citizens.

That's right. They were Germans who lived there.

Germans who lived there. They know the language and they--

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

--talk and everything. So I took a chance. I went to the shoe store and-- by the way, before I forget, that Hungarian officer, he tried to help us very lot. He was like a father to children. We were in a Hungarian [INAUDIBLE] in a Hungarian troop.

OK.

And that guy was asking, that officer was asking for our officer to give us 10 people. He wants to dig some--

Trenches?

--holes.

Yeah, OK.

Digs was important. Digging, not important. Nothing there all. But just some Hungarians make believe that talk nice with the Germans, maybe they're going to get something out of them in the end. They would sell us for this reason, you know?

OK.

They didn't care. They figured they're going to get something out of it. So he gave for the Hungarian [INAUDIBLE] to do some digging. Of course, he wanted to show up for the Germans with the digging. He made us go up and down on the road.

So you mean you had to do push-ups?

Punishment. He didn't like how much we did digging or how many digging we did, so he--

It wasn't good enough.

Wasn't good enough.

OK.

And tomorrow, the next day we cover it back. That was such a thing, it's unbelievable. And finally, maybe by 10, 15 people, they couldn't take it anymore.

Yeah.

They give up, and don't ask what kind of punishment they get for them. This officer find out. That's what he did to us. He ask himself for a official--

Record?

--request, record to-- they should to complain to this officer. He was also probably a general.

OK.

He says, you didn't have to have the right-- he ask his--

Workers.

--he ask his personal right, because he was also a general, what he wanted to do punishment with his people, why don't he ask him. That is, he want to do it or not, or he is guilty--

He allows it or not, yeah.

--they are guilty or not, because they make them up and down, they couldn't--

Yeah, the push-ups.

--to push up, and they fell down already, for they couldn't take it anymore. They fell down the floor.

Yeah.

And it bothered them a little consciously. So he said he didn't have any right, the general--

To do that.

--to do that. So he ask a bigger officer why he did it. That guy was afraid to take a chance. He says, all right. Never mind. Don't do that to them. And he didn't have the right to give orders for them.

So in other words, in this way, he was trying to protect you from having bad treatment when you were under the Hungarians.

Unbelievable

It is unbelievable.

Some people were conscious. Bothered him a little bit. But the dictatorship was so hard, they were afraid to take a chance, because they were afraid-- you can't blame them, their own life.

Yeah. It was nothing for Germans to shot even officers of a different country if they didn't like it. They did it a few times.

Of course.

So tell me again, what about the shoes? Your shoes are kaput.

The shoes is very interesting-- very interesting. That small town with the guy that fixed the shoes, we ran away, not legally to him, to fix the shoes. It was in the end of the little town.

OK.

That was the end of that town.

OK, so it was at the border of the town.

Fighting was going on terrible with the two different sides, the Germans and the Romanians.

OK.

Today, the knowledge is so big, I wish it wouldn't be with the killing that you could stay 100 or 200-- I'm not a military man. I don't how far you could shoot-- in order to shoot. So anyway--

You can do it from the moon to the earth, you can shoot today.

Anyway, they didn't have to stay today. And they didn't have to stay anymore for us and the enemy 10 miles or 20 in order to shoot them, even 100 miles, far away. [INAUDIBLE] not a big deal, the knowledge is so good.

That time, you wouldn't believe it. The enemies were fighting on their side, and there were enemies fighting for the other side. And they were maybe five miles far away.

Yeah, not far.

Not far because they wouldn't able to reach the enemy. Right.

So they needed it that time. So anyway, I went to the shoe man to fix the shoes good enough. He looked at my face, you see?

He figured that man must be a Jew. Maybe he talks too nicely-- too fine. In the old time, when you spoke with a plain man, he'd say, come over and do that. You can [INAUDIBLE] gently. And educated people would then be so kind and do it.

That's right. They're much nicer.

Hey, hey. Can I have it?

Yeah.

He saw that I speak too finely, the Germans. That I don't speak--

Rough.

Rough so I probably must be Jewish. Must be Jewish. He didn't ask any questions. In that last house was a group of Germans who was, like, bums.

Mm-hmm.

They were occupied. They had to fight in the middle of the night.

OK.

And they give them a chance there, sit down for a half hour by the shoe man. And take a rest and come back again, change. Would you know if this man is a German, he goes-- one of the Germans, and he says yes to him. I'm sure he's Jewish.

This man, I have to fix him a shoe. But he's not Jewish. I said, Jewish? I made a mistake. He is Jewish.

OK.

He is Jewish.

OK.

So take care of him.

What does that mean?

That means that he could kill me.

Yeah, that's what I thought it meant.

Because there was war there. It was nothing that you wanted to kill.

Yeah.

You don't like somebody, you killed him.

There you go.

You didn't ask any questions. You go to the officer and ask. If you would go to them, he says this man definitely, he's Jewish. Can I shoot him?

Go ahead. Kill them. That was the life then.

So this is what this shoe man tells this German soldier.

And I was sure the German, the shoe man, looked at my face very closely. He looked all fishy. When somebody's stealing, you're always thinking the other guy is watching him.

Yeah.

I felt guilty, and I talked all the time. Who knows who I'm talking to. If he's not [? insulting ?] German-- if he's not going to cooperate with that German who came for a half hour, good enough. After this easy-to-tell story, what happened but I felt a little different. In my nature, I was getting scared. I know that I'm in trouble now.

Yeah.

How do I survive. This man, he's pretty sure-- he's not going to ask me are you Jewish.

Of course not.

He decided I'm Jewish. Big deal. I lose a man. it was nothing at that time.

Yeah.

If you would see how people's clothing and everything was tearing off, and took away what they liked.

So what happened? What happened?

So anyway, I figured to myself what do I do now. I see that he's looking at my face very much.

OK.

And I felt guilty myself, that I'm pretty sure that this guy is thinking about me that I'm Jewish. And he's going to tell that soldier, the German soldier. The German soldier, he himself-- the shoe man, didn't ask me if I'm Jewish.

Of course not.

He decided I'm Jewish. There's nothing to-- he went to that soldier.

And he asked him, he says, take care of this man. He's Jewish. He's Jewish. You don't have to be afraid that he has to go a hearing, because--

So did the soldier do that?

The whole army was Nazis.

So did the shoe man actually do this? He went to the soldier and he said this?

Sure.

And so what did the soldier do?

He went to the German. I see that he spoke with him. If somebody stealing, it's an obvious thing. But they think it was him.

OK.

I saw already I'm in trouble.

OK.

The shoe store-- maybe not the shoe store-- the shoe man looked at me very fishy.

OK.

He didn't tell me that I'm fishy.

Of course not. He decided to go to the German, and he tells them that this man is a Jew. Take care of him.

OK.

Figured I'm going to take care of him. He didn't ask any questions. He's going to shoot me down. Big deal.

So I see already I am in trouble. I don't know what to do. This was the end in the little town. There was no people. No human was living there anymore.

OK.

Only the soldiers were shooting and fighting each other. It was terrible there, too. You could fall down losing your life with talking.

That's right.

Walking there.

Right.

So I figure to myself what-- I said God help me. I just talked to myself like a crazy guy. I says, I beg you, God, this time help me, maybe. What should I do? I decided since it's the last time, the last house in the town, what could I lose?

OK

Either I'm thinking about it, what do I do with my life. Maybe I survive. I didn't ask the German what I should do with my life, right?

Of course not.

I figured it's the last house. I walk to the end of the house. And the end of the house is already fields-- lands and [INAUDIBLE] and all these kinds of goodies. I figured to myself-- I look back. I walked to the end of the house. And I looked back, maybe there is still a German who wants to shoot me.

Yeah.

And really, it was, because it was the end of the house. And it was a stocky house, an old house. And that German was working there, like a poor man.

OK.

I looked back. Whatever had happened I have nothing to do. I wanted to know if the guy is following me-- the soldier is following me, because I figured he decided with him what to do with me. I figured, what can I lose? If I look back, I lose my life. At that time, it was nothing to lose a life.

Right.

You were like an animal. Good enough, I see the soldier is putting in my position.

OK.

A German soldier putting in my position, without asking me any permission, to shoot me down. I see that. I see it already.

I figured he waits till I go to the end in the town. There is already no people. Nobody walks there, and he's going to shoot me dead. I fall down. Big deal.

Finally, I look back. I see he's in my position. And so, help me God, I run. I started running. I didn't know if I did the right thing. I ran in the field.

I thought maybe I could defend, but I survived myself. And maybe I'm still running. He had the position for me to shoot me down.

And I survived. This is why I'm here now telling this story. That's why I'm alive.

So you ran away from him.

I ran away from the German soldier. He was ready to shoot me.

And your shoes never got fixed.

Huh?

Your shoes never got fixed?

Sure. I left the shoes. I left the shoes. I was running without shoes.

[CHUCKLES]

All right.

Did you ever-- you mentioned earlier that sometimes, boots were taken from dead soldiers, or shoes were taken away.

Oh yeah, they did it a lot of times.

Did you ever find such shoes yourself?

If they find a dying soldier-- it was either German or Romanian-- they would take off the shoes. It would go in not easy. They would carve the next piece, and take off the shoes. That was very natural, because both sides were like animals with the shooting.

So you were barefoot, then. At that point when you were running, you had no shoes on at all.

Huh?

You had no shoes on at all.

Did I worry with my shoes?

Of course not. But my question is, when did you get another pair?

Well, when I get them back.

Yeah.

I could get other shoes.

OK, and another question came to me. This is while you're in the labor camp underneath the Romanian general. So did that mean you were allowed to leave the camp?

No. So this was all--

Anything that you do, you didn't do anything officially. Not legally. You always took a chance for your life. But you didn't care for your life if you wanted to leave.

So you were in this transition from the time you had to report to the time you get to the Germans for a

number of months, you said

Yeah.

What happens when you're transferred over to the Germans?

Right away, it's sounding bad.

Yeah.

Sounding bad. They told the officer, wherever they are, everything is reduced down 50. Suppose you got a little bread so big.

So you have half of that.

Either way, we were treated like this. We were ready already for this. What we went through in Hungary or Romania, they gave us a very hard time.

The government Hungarian government, the Romanian government, they gave an order, don't give the Jews anymore so much of this. Give half of it. There were a lot of troubles where we were. About half a year, we were in the troubles that-- strictly strict things, strict our life.

And were you all just young men? Was this just a group of young men? Because if you had been called to this army base, I take it there were no women there. There were no children there. It was just young men.

I'm telling you before the war. Before we went to the-- we had a really bad time with the government.

I see.

It was terrible.

I see. I see. Before the war started, it was still bad.

Before the war started, we had a bad time. So we was treating with that life. But we get used to that-- life. I wouldn't say you get used to it, but--

But you already know about it.

You already know about it. It was nothing--

OK.

So when the Germans finally-- you're under their control. Where did they take you, and what did you have to do?

Well, right away, were before we settled with them, we went in a town in Czechoslovakia.

Kosice?

Kosice.

OK. And how do you know Kosice?

Well, I lived in Prague. So--

Huh? I lived in Prague.

Oh, you lived in Prague. So I know a little bit.

That was Kosice.

OK.

There was a Hungarian guy-- officer. High officer. As a matter of fact, I knew him from my town before--

The war.

Before the war. He was a high officer.

No kidding.

But it happened because of that book-- what I told you, the story. Once or twice, he brought me a book to bind it.

OK.

Of course, I said I don't need any money.

Right.

For that officer, you've got to ask for money. But he was unbelievable.

OK.

He was driving specially in that town where I came from, Kosice. He was going with a horse thing. He didn't walk. He didn't walk. He rode a horse.

And a big officer used to give orders, do this and do this, soldier. This and this, take care. Get wherever. Give him a hard time.

OK.

And so of course, he didn't know me.

He doesn't remember you from the book--

He didn't remember me.

OK.

So he came to Kosice. I don't know how he got the job that he's a supervisor.

OK.

We were registered. We had to register in Kaserne, they called it.

Yes, Kaserne. Mm-hmm.

And I know him, and there I saw him. And he knew me. I wouldn't have the guts to tell him, you know me. How would I call him Mister or Charlie or Jim.

Yeah, exactly.

I figured better if he don't see me. He used to work with the [INAUDIBLE], young people who registered

Jewish people, had to stay in the line and register. He told them you go this way, you go-- I mean, you go this general. You belong this army base. And from there, they took us into terrible places.

What were those? Well, first of all, so you're in this barracks area. The Kaserne is a barrack.

Correct.

And then you go to register.

You couldn't run away anymore.

You could run away. It's the end. And you were under the control of this Hungarian officer that you recognized from the town.

That time, they gave us over to the Germans.

They gave you over to the Germans?

Yeah. That was the end of it.

OK. And then the Germans, where did they take you?

In different directions. In different--

Places?

Places. There's 50 go here, 50 go.

Where did you go?

We were a number. Do I know the town? That's all I need. I have nothing to do.

But anyway, since then, started with other trouble. They gave orders. Then they give us food. Then we get nothing. It's unbelievable what they did there. That was the town. First of all, they put us in an empty lot that was-- they made bricks for the Czech--

Yeah, a brick factory.

Brick factory. There was no wall, nothing. Wind or not wind, or cold or not cold, they let us--

Stay there.

--stay there. Don't ask. It was terrible-- terrible life.

No blankets, nothing?

Blankets?

OK, fine.

I don't remember the color.

[LAUGHS]

You don't remember the color of the blankets? Maybe red, maybe orange?

I think for me, it was red.

You can pretend.

You can merge whatever you could take. You only think he is going to drop dead, but then they don't drop dead so fast.

So what kind of work did you have to do?

Over there, we have to wait for orders.

OK.

Where we have separated. So they separated in different-- some people had a good job to do. Some people would [INAUDIBLE] such a good job.

Yeah.

It was a test and a man who was testing what is good or bad to give us the bad one.

Well, what was your job?

Huh?

What was your job?

My job was to think about how could I have a piece of bread, or a piece of anything. Everybody was like animals. All they think, all day long, how could they gather a piece of bread. How could they survive the next day.

What happened with you is going to happen. They don't care. We needed food for the day.

Yeah.

And it happened a lot of times. I don't say Hungarians and other [INAUDIBLE], other nationalities. They would throw us little potatoes, a little soup. But they paid a price for it.

Yeah. Well, as you were thinking about food and a piece of bread, what were you doing? What were they ordering you to do?

You were just waiting for orders--

Oh, really?

--to go work further.

Oh, I see. So what kind of--

Because then was a time the Hungarians gave over for the Germans.

OK.

So don't ask what the Germans are worried about. They would lead us--

They didn't give you any-- so you were just waiting there?

No official food. Just to survive like a dog.

Yeah.

They would have wood-- a sawing. Take a piece of wood-- an edge of wood which we trade. Cut it off, and sawing-- the electric sawer, the power--

Shavings?

Shavings, whatever, is left off, falling down in the--

Sawdust.

The sawdust, the cutting, give it to us, and something like cook it up or not.

Oh gosh.

And you had to eat that, if you like it or not.

That's not food.

That's not food.

It's not even food. No animal will eat that.

It was put into a liquid, like-- and this they would eat. When we went over to the Germans, it was already terrible. A lot of people died. A lot of people.

What happened then? What happened after that? What was the next stage?

The next stage is to send to a crematorium. Some people survived-- that's another story, plus me. Don't ask.

So tell me, from there, that means you were put on cattle cars and taken to a concentration camp?

Yeah. Sure.

Tell me about that. Tell me about-- you were in this area where there had been a brick factory. No walls, no windows, no nothing.

There was no windows.

And you were just waiting?

Waiting.

And then after that?

They took us over there with no food.

OK.

I don't want to go into what happened with that.

But you were taken to Auschwitz, is that right?

Yeah. If there is any God, that time, they let us lose. All right. Whoever try had enough brains or enough guts. Some of them-- I myself ran away from there.

You ran away?

Yeah. After all my friends get killed there.

How did you run away?

Don't ask. Didn't run away. You had to do a lot of thinking in order to run away.

To survive.

Yes.

What did you do to survive?

We used to go-- you had to take a chance to go over your electric wire. Some people-- not some, most of them, did want to take a chance. They died right away by the wire.

Yeah.

Electric wire.

Did you take that chance?

Huh?

Did you take that chance?

Took a chance.

What happened?

What happened-- after I survived, I went house to house, a little food. There were a lot of good people. They didn't report it.

So you actually were able to get out of the camp?

I don't know how. Don't ask me. I went like a--

OK.

You become an animal, you could do it. But not all the time.

Yeah. Today, we can't imagine what that must have been like. We have absolutely no idea.

First thing they took away was the food. I was always praying God, I don't want to see my parents, how they're struggling. It took them very little time that they're struggling.

So what happened to you after that?

What?

What happened to you after that?

After that was such a crazy war that the Germans lost. The Germans lost, and a couple nationalities' soldiers occupied them-- the whole story. They were fighting like animals also.

Where were you? Where were you when the end of the war was coming?

Well, the name is Kosice, a German state. A German state where we were but the labor.

But I thought you told me that you were taken to a concentration camp.

Yeah.

And was that Auschwitz where you were taken?

That was Auschwitz, but not Auschwitz-- near Auschwitz.

Birkenau?

Yeah.

Were you taken to Birkenau?

And you escaped from Birkenau.

I escaped from there. I escaped in a time. I became German, the whole story.

OK.

He was living as a non-Jew for a while. So why don't you tell her where you were when you were liberated, and somebody was hiding you. Why don't you tell-- [INAUDIBLE].

I was always hiding.

He was hiding.

They were very good-hearted people.

Can we cut just for a second?

They took you.

They just took you?

The train was going, the train was going. And I landed on someplace, and we would walk from there till we find--

Do you find out where you're going?

--till we find out what is the next city. We were taken-- a few people who were taking chances.

OK.

A lot of times, you became a different nationality. You were a German. You were Hungarian till you survived and at the end.

So did you sometime pretend to be somebody else too?

Huh?

Did you try to survive by pretending to be somebody else?

Yeah, correct.

How did you do that?

How did I do it? It was very, very risky.

OK, very risky.

I didn't have more than luck.

OK. Why is this something that is so difficult to bring up and to talk about?

Because I don't want to talk anymore. It was enough. You can't tell all the details from all your life.

No, of course not. In one interview, one can never do all of that. Can you tell me where you were when the war ended?

Where when the war ended-- that was not far from-- it's called Kassel.

Kassel.

Kassel.

So that's in the Western part of Germany.

Germany.

Yeah. And how did you-- there were a lot of places we went. I was in that couple-- that half a year, a lot of places.

I didn't know where they took me. It happened a lot of things. I took a chance. I ran away. I was risking my life.

Yeah.

I didn't care if they kill me. If I could make it, I could make it. If not, not.

Who liberated you?

Huh?

Which army liberated you?

Russian, finally.

OK, and where were you when they liberated you?

Where were you?

Were you in Czechoslovakia?

Not far from there.

OK.

The Russian liberators and all sorts. And finally, was missing some numbers after so much I suffered. Then the Russian that-- was missing a man.

I'm a Russian. I'm a German, and I start to scream, I'm not a German. I mean, I'm not a German, whatever

it is.

Mm-hmm.

And I somehow survived.

The Russian army thought he was a German.

I'm getting a sense, yeah. The Russian army thought you were German?

He was dressed as a German.

And you were dressed as a German?

Yeah.

And you-- because my suit was torn off very much.

And he was afraid they were going to say, you're German.

And they would treated me as a refugee.

And what did they believe you that you're not a German?

Only God.

OK.

They grabbed me to take-- they didn't they didn't care. I was missing a number. And they just want to put you there.

What do you mean about a number? Like, a number you were stamped on your arm?

There were a of people, didn't have numbers.

Oh, I see. So when you got to Auschwitz, you weren't tattooed with a number. That took place late in the war.

Right.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And so they didn't believe you because you didn't have the number.

You're talking like a human who's talking with the United Nations.

Sorry. My apologies. Should we-- let's take a break. Let's cut.

So I understand that you would rather not go into details. Let's talk about after the war. Where did you meet your wife?

Well, my wife, I meet in Munchen.

In Munchen. OK. And you told me off camera--

By the way, she is a relative I know about.

Yeah? So you recognized her.

Yeah.

And did you get married in Munchen.

No.

OK.

I came to-- when I came to the United States.

All right. Where did you come here? What place did you--

I came through Germany from Munchen.

Were you there for several years? Were you in a DP camp?

For several years. I was there for two years.

OK. And where did you come to in the United States?

Where did I come?

Mm-hmm.

It was very funny, the way I came. I came from-- where do you call it? State there. North American state.

Through the Statue of Liberty? By the Statue of Liberty?

No. I don't--

Ellis Island? [INAUDIBLE]

There was here my wife's family.

Uh-huh. OK.

Who were here in the United States-- American citizens.

OK.

That time.

Williamsburg you're talking about?

Huh?

Williamsburg, Crown Heights? The America you told me about?

Yes, yes. In America.

Williamsburg?

Again?

Williamsburg?

Your wife's family, was it from Williams--

No, the first time we landed in America, in an American town-- it was a [INAUDIBLE]. So we came with a General Haan from Mauthausen, from American Germany.

OK, so you came from the American part of Germany that is where the Americans controlled.

Correct, in American control. And we came to a city here, I forgot already. Did

You come to New York City?

I didn't come to-- first, I came to English-- to Chamberlain, I don't know the name.

It's OK.

--by boat? You came by boat?

We came by boat, yeah.

Yeah.

General Haan.

General Haan. That was the boat you came on.

That was the name.

OK.

We arrived to here, America, before the Passover holiday.

OK.

And her parents, her relatives, were good up. And they could afford it. It's a shame-- I don't know. Who knows the names?

It is the name for the English [INAUDIBLE]. We came to a certain state. I could tell you later if I think about it.

OK.

We were far away from New York.

OK.

That was before Passover.

OK.

And her relative didn't want I should stay there for the Passover in the American city.

OK.

They took-- they sent us a ticket for an airplane.

OK.

And we landed in New York. After New York, they pick us up. And we went to their town.

OK.

In Brooklyn. In Brooklyn.

OK.

And so we stay here for the holidays. And we arrived through Brooklyn. After the holidays, we registered by the United-- it was a city where there is an organization, the Joint.

The Joint, yes.

We went there. We registered. To make a story short, they wanted to send us, me and my wife. Wasn't married yet.

Mm-hmm.

And of course, [INAUDIBLE] live together there. They were very strict. I said that's named the Joint.

Yes.

They came-- they have an instruction in the government, the United States government, how to handle us. To talking in-- to talk us in to go to a different city, because over there it's easier to get--

Jobs and things?

Jobs. They told us here, you get \$0.75 an hour. And over there, out of town, especially if I have a trade, I could get more money.

Mm-hmm.

So I told them I was still-- thank God, I didn't leave my religion. I said to a lady there in the office, I want to ask you a question. How we do it if you are religious, and you're here for Passover?

Yeah.

Never mind Passover, after Passover.

Yeah.

Because in Passover, you could stay. But then-- which we did.

But if you're a religious person, how could you be a religious person if you're not in the community?

That was our request.

Yeah.

Never mind, I said "our." My wife had a sister here, and she also came. She died already.

Mm-hmm.

And she was by her.

So she wanted to stay with her sister-- near her sister.

So-- no, but I did ask something else. I myself, I says non-religious, they brought me up like this and how to keep it.

I said, out of town, if I go, I would not be able to be religious. And slowly, I give up everything. I says, my generation is gone [INAUDIBLE], because they were all modern people.

Yeah.

And I'm not going to-- I can't be accomplished in my life.

Yeah.

So she took it very serious, that woman, that lady. She says, I'm very sorry that I made you inconvenienced. You know what? Stay here in Brooklyn, and we will get you a job. And finally, I get a job.

Mm-hmm.

It was not so easy.

No.

I got a job in a big place. The place was Knickerbocker in that East Side.

The people who make beer?

Pardon me?

The people who make beer, Knickerbocker?

No, book binding. I started my history I didn't give up my history trade in Europe.

Yeah.

And I said, would you like me that I should become non-religious? Because you out of time, you're not going to continue with religion. So that lady felt very sorry, and she apologized.

You don't have to apologize. I says, if you're not going agree with me, apologize to God. I'm only a piece of garbage. But anyway, she gave me a job. Funny thing about the place, there was a publisher, Knickerbocker.

OK.

They had maybe seven floors-- a giant place. I was only a number there because there was a lot of people working there. They made an assembly line.

Mm-hmm.

It was an assembly line. Everybody [INAUDIBLE] did. You put on that machine, and the machine rolled it down to the right place.

And it was books? Were you binding--

Covers.

Covers.

Book covers.

OK.

And finally, I had that job. And excuse me if I'm talking like an old-fashioned man.

That's OK.

I was very simple. I came Friday. And I said to myself it was winter. It was short days.

Mm-hmm.

And the short days comes Saturday-- very short.

Yes.

And I had a go early from the new place. I finally got the publisher piece. And I said to the foreman, blah, blah, blah.

I didn't speak English, very hardly, [? he didn't understand ?]. There was a [INAUDIBLE] there who was head. Finally gave him hell because there was a Jewish guy, a friend of mine, who was a foreman.

OK

And I said if it's Friday afternoon, I have to leave earlier.

Right.

I don't care what had happened. So he says, in this country, you have to work Saturday.

Saturday? I said-- I put on my coat, and I said I'm not going to do here anymore. And I left the place.

Yeah.

That was a-- funny thing is, it was an Italian lady. I was standing with her in one line-- assembly line. She did something else. I did my work.

She's Italian and she's asking me-- so I said to the foreman, all right. Then I leave. I start a little bit crying because it was before the wedding.

Yeah.

I didn't have any money. I was needing badly money-- hardly the money, badly the money.

Yeah.

But I said to myself I came for America. I want to keep up my religious.

Of course.

So I'll hope with God I'll get another job, because I only worked there a week.

Oh my goodness.

Thursday through Friday.

Oh my goodness.

Not Thursday, Monday.

From Monday to Friday.

Monday to Friday. I didn't say nothing.

OK.

And people asked me, and that lady asked me, hey Francis-- they called me a Romanish name Francis. I had so many names already-- Ferenc, Frank. When you go, understood already so much what she's saying.

Yeah.

Because I was here only a couple weeks. And I said the man fired me. What? Why? Why did he fire you?

He told me I shouldn't come anymore next week. She was very disappointed. She grabs me with the coat together. I had my coat on.

Yeah.

She grabbed me with the coat. Come in office. She takes me in the office.

She started screaming. That man understands so much. That man wants to keep it religious. And they fired him because he don't--

Doesn't want to work on Saturdays.

Won't work on Saturday. I could not speak English. Finally, they find somebody, a second bookkeeper whose folk is Jewish, spoke Yiddish. And they called him in.

OK.

It was a big place.

Yeah.

They called him in to meet for a [INAUDIBLE]. That they want to find out what's going on with me, why don't I work? Well, I told him--

Religious.

So he says, I can do nothing to decide myself. They're going to call the main boss from another floor. They called another boss.

And they told him the story. Look at that poor man. He's able to give out the job. But because this man fired him, the Jewish foreman.

Yeah.

So they came-- and the owner was Italian.

Mm-hmm.

The owner was Italian, yeah. Let me see. The owner probably was Italian. And they told him what a story. The poor man wants to [INAUDIBLE] an hour later, and they fired him.

He says-- he gives me like this. Go. Don't worry about it. Go, go. Just go home.

Nothing happened. You'll come back. You'll work. You know, the main boss talked like that after all the big deal. I was worried, but this guy is going to keep an eye on me.

That's right, the foreman.

The foreman.

Right, and he's going to say all the goodies.

Yeah.

I figured whatever is going to happen, I'll get fired. I don't care. It's a little thing I went through in my life. Big deal.

I'm going to aggravate myself? I'm here in America. I'm going to drop dead from this?

I'm not going to drop dead. I said whatever-- just happened, I was before the wedding a couple of weeks And I needed the money.

Of course, for the wedding.

And this is event happened. I just didn't know it. So Monday I came to work.

The foreman looked at me, at my face. He gave me faces. I figured, this guy is going to work on me.

And I stayed there. Stayed there Monday and Tuesday. I stayed there.

Tuesday, all of a sudden I got a call for Ferenc Weiss from the office. They want to talk to me. The owner want to talk to me.

Italian? I was getting scared that I'd get fired. Too bad, too bad. But I'm staying with my belief.

They called me up. He says, you could stay here. You don't get fired. And they let know some of the workers that they should give me \$0.75-- a raise.

I didn't ask for a raise. But I got scared I'm going to get fired. And they give me.

He says, don't worry about it. You could stay wherever, as long as you stay here. You want to stay. He gives me a raise. And that money was \$0.75.

That meant something.

It meant something. Later, they gave me more. But don't ask about it. God wants to help you. So anyway, but I didn't know that was going now for a couple of weeks.

Yeah.

The foreman was very disappointed that I became a success. I didn't give him no hard time all.

Yeah.

I was very, very-- he asked me to work, work here, work there. I worked, just not to give him a hard time. What I figured-- but he was looking all the time mad at me.

I figured I can't live that kind of life. The foreman's going to look at me like that. And I went back to the lady

from the Joint.

Right.

And I said, look, this and this happened. You gave me this job, which I appreciate very much. And actually, I need it. But this and this happened. I had a coincident with the foreman.

Mm-hmm.

Every morning, he looks at me like somebody-- I want to kill his mother-in-law.

Yeah.

So I say, maybe if you could get me a job-- another similar job, not so good, as long as I don't have to work Saturday.

OK.

She says she felt so touched her heart what I'm going through now. What's this? You know, Mr. Weiss, I think you're lucky. Just called me a fellow, a book binder at a big place Not big like I had before.

Yeah.

But the name is Glick Bookbinding-- Glick Bookbinding. And they're looking for a man for this job. You know this house? I say I'll know it. If I don't know it, I'll pick it up next week. They want to say that I know nothing.

Yeah.

Anyway, I told her, I said, don't worry about. If I'm come to it, if a Jew has a little heart, he's not going to fire me.

Yeah.

So I says-- he says, I'll send you there. You're just lucky that somebody called looking for-- so I went to them. I went to them, yeah.

It's very funny. I came to them. So he wanted to know what I know. In the meantime, he spoke Yiddish too.

No, he doesn't keep a Saturday or something. Well, it's not my business or my care. So he put me to work.

But I told him, look, I'm not working Saturday. Over there, they did work Saturday. And if you keep me, I don't want do what happened with me in the past.

Mm-hmm.

He says, I'm not giving you the Jewish law so good. But I respect you. You want to keep your holiday, we're going to divide you. We're going to make it. So finally it was enough. I left the place.

Mm-hmm.

I went to this place. I was very happy that I'm dealing with a human. And starting Monday, he gave me-- I told him what kind of work I do. I'm able to pick it up [INAUDIBLE]. I never lied.

Yeah.

I told him, I promise you, I am taking care of it.

OK.

If I don't pick it up today, I'll pick it up tomorrow. You want to give me less, I'm not going bargain with you. But finally, I got a nice raise there by them, because they saw that I am really professional. But I am not experienced, but the American life, machinery, because I picked it up very fast.

All right, so I come in next Monday, early Monday. And he gave me a job. Glick Bookbinding was the name. And I worked there a year, about a year. And I picked up a lot of things with my eyes, how the machine works, and this and this.

So the funny thing is, that fellow, he was wondering. I told them, I know this already what you teach me, what you told me. And I made it very good, not because I want to make a big out of me.

Mm-hmm.

But you know this job? I said-- so he says to me, since you're not waking Saturday, what's a giant place anyway?

Yeah, yeah.

Was working not too much-- 75 people. But it was a big place. Maybe more were. A lot of the ladies worked there, too. And he says to me, maybe you want to come in Sunday to make ready work for the people--

On Monday.

--on Monday.

OK.

Because since coming holiday, I'm not going to come in, maybe you-- I said, of course, good enough. I'm not supposed to do it, what it is, I tell you.

Good enough. I come in Sunday. There was a giant place. You had to punch your card, all these goodies.

Mm-hmm.

And I went to my work, but I know what I'm doing.

Mm-hmm.

In the meantime, I still knowledge.

Right, you're still learning.

Learning. Pick up. I came earlier. I picked up that machine I tried. I tried this. One worked, didn't one job, I didn't do it right. I spoiled the job.

You did it again?

I did it again because it was a big place. Nothing happened if I threw away--

A little bit.

A little better now. He wouldn't believe it. So help me God. He-- yeah. And he asked me if I could come in that Sunday.

Yeah.

And I said no. Of course, I was working very honest-- fast production. In general, I was working fair. Refugees are obviously afraid should lose a job, so I worked much harder than the other people.

They didn't like it. The people didn't like it, because I produced more. Maybe I'm going to take away somebody else's job. But anyway, I was working there, still a couple of years like this. And I picked up--

Everything.

--a little-- I wouldn't say everything. Gold stamping, cutting are a few things I picked up, and I know it perfect-- almost perfect. I didn't try it so much.

So came the next holiday. And he told me, could you come in? I said, you sure I could come in? And of course, I could get more knowledge there. And you know what happened? In the big places, everybody knows only one thing.

That's right. In big places, it's like a factory.

It's a factory.

And one person knows one thing, another person knows another thing. They don't know it all.

No. If somebody stays home, he doesn't come for a wrong reason, the boss gets nervous.

That's right.

Because the production slows down. Even the foreman knows it. But he was an old man, about 85 years old. He wouldn't like to take him for-- the boss knows the thing. But a boss is a boss.

He has to do other things.

The only thing is they watch him. They don't like when the boss works together with the numbers.

Yeah.

And so finally, I said to him one day, every couple of months, somebody-- two people skipped out in the line. They didn't come in. And the boss was very nervous.

Of course.

I said to him Mr. Glick-- they didn't like when I called him Mr, because the boys would complain.

Yeah.

I went with my lips. I ran in the office. I says the old man was a foreman for years.

Yeah.

Hey, hey, hey. They called him not respectable. What a name, and I couldn't do that. I went in the office and asked him-- I would like to know their real name, what his name is. And they--

They told you?

I says I can't call an older man that. Maybe you could give me the name. Oh, they gave me gladly the name. I have to start calling him-- I had a question maybe.

Right.

With something, a machine or something. The boys were laughing. So he notices that they're laughing when he called me.

And I called him Mr. He said, shame on you, you people. [INAUDIBLE] calls you for--

That's right. He shows what it is to show respect.

But making the story short, so help me God, I'm not lying. I worked there two more years.

OK.

Of course, with respect and everything. Money, they paid me more. And I used to come in the Sunday instead of Saturday.

Used to make up for if I skipped. He used me. Even when he doesn't need me, he gave me jobs to do things.

Right. Well, since you knew so many parts of the process.

Well, they thought I'm a miracle man. I didn't want to tell him a lie. Do the job. [INAUDIBLE] What jobs? I asked God he should forgive me. I didn't ruin anything special.

No.

He threw away, picked another. No big deal. Maybe \$2, \$3.

That's right.

I didn't mind if he takes it off, but I couldn't tell him.

OK.

So anyway, I worked there two years more. And I picked up a few traits. Whenever you needed me, so help me God, he asked me the nice way, could you stay here for a year? I could do other jobs.

Sure.

I was very important. But my crazy life, I decided myself, all along, I'm going to work for somebody else. So I figured I was waiting.

What can I do? He gave me a decent job. He gave me decent money. I'm going to tell them that I quit.

So I slowed down a little bit with the friendship. I didn't smile too much. But I didn't do it for pleasure.

No.

It was my stupid idea, because I was not supposed to quit.

Yeah.

In the end, I quit. I was waiting that he should fire me. What let me not mix up one with the other.

So finally, I got a good job. And I got plus raises. Don't ask. You wouldn't believe it, because I--

You worked well.

I worked well. I was young.

Yeah.

I could produce, and I had my real ambition. And finally, they called me in an office. What do you want?

He says, I want to talk to you. What happened? You were very friendly till now? What happened?

Are you needing a raise? I'm going to show you books if you want. I don't want that people should know that I give you less money who are here at 10 years.

That's right.

And you here are two or three years.

Yeah.

Why don't you tell me what's in your mind? [INAUDIBLE] you.

Did you tell him?

I finally tell them, look, Mr Glick-- I didn't call him Glick-- I said, Mr. Glick, I really appreciate you, what you did to me, and what you do to me. I'll never forget it.

But I'm doing something which I don't like to do it. What's the matter? I say, I want you should fire me.

[LAUGHS]

Yes, actually. I want you should fire me. Glick looked at me. Who's crazy, me or you?

Yeah.

I says since I can't leave the place here because they're going to ask at the unemployment office-- him, I was smart enough. Why did you fire this man? Well, here, what happened? He's not doing did it.

And the legal way they should tell me-- should tell the unemployment office. They have to tell the reason why did they fire him? Because in the meantime, he's going to ask for another man. He needs my replacement.

So he says to me, look, I feel very sorry for you, you think like that. I am not in this position. Even if I need you, I'm not in this position that I should ruin you.

Yeah.

What is it? He says, the unemployment private office is going to call up, why did you fire the man?

Yeah.

I can't say I fired him. I must say that you quit. And if you quit, you can't collect money.

That's right.

What did I say?

And how did you respond to that?

One second. In the meantime, [INAUDIBLE] report. He said to me, look, because I told them a lie that there is another print in place and so on. But I don't want to go there. I want to go to a different-- I want to go on my own.

Did you tell him that?

I don't why I have the guts to tell. I says, I really feel very sorry. The good that you gave me. I appreciate you.

Yeah.

I says, but since I am young, I can't live that kind of life every morning to wake up, and come. Had to go to synagogue every morning.

I says, I figured myself that I'm going to be in a business, one partner. I talked with the old partner. He has the same mind to go in business.

And so he says, look-- he didn't want to say that I'm lying or not. He didn't know it. He says to me, you want to go in business? I don't know if not going to struggle, because I know you said you don't have any money.

You quit by me. Don't forget. I didn't fire you.

I'm going to-- for the unemployment office, I had no way I could change. Number two, since you quit, I have to go to office. They just send me somebody else.

That's right.

So I can't lie to the offices.

Sure, sure.

I have to say the truth-- that the man quit. So you quit, you don't know what's waiting for you. If you're going to have a job, you're going to have customer, because I was young. And I thought it's so easy, just quitting, which I paid the price for it, was don't ask.

But did you quit?

And I told him I had decided already that I quit. He says, look, if you don't have a success, call us. We'll take you back any time.

That's amazing.

Any time, no problem, day and night. Don't be ashamed. If you have a job for a day, call me up. Mr. Glick, I would like to work for you half a day a week. Don't be ashamed. You don't know what's waiting for you.

So what happened? Consciously, I went summer when the printers are very slow. And I went. And finally, I quit. I said goodbye in a nice way. No fighting.

No nothing. Yeah.

They understood my situation. But they knew what's waiting for me. So again, don't be ashamed. If you don't have any work, come to us. You know by us that work all the time, day or night. And finally, I quit. And summer, I quit, and I went to jobs. And the printers say, why should I give you your--

A job.

--my printer after I quit him? And they were slow, anyway that summer. They didn't have enough work to--

the man has worked for me 10 years. Why should I give it for you, even if you work cheaper? But there was also another thing-- work cheaper.

Finally, don't ask what I went through. You have no idea that was going on. One printer to the other, that's the same thing. Now it's slow maybe. Some said maybe, I'll see you winter.

In the meantime, I didn't have money enough to survive. And thank God, my wife-- she should live in peace. She's not alive anymore. She saw that I agreed with her.

She says to me, listen. She did not talk me in. She knew the problems.

She had an idea. She didn't had problems. But she did see that I have an ambition to go in business myself. She wouldn't say don't do it.

Yeah, of course.

She didn't say, even if she knew it. She had an idea but somewhere know. So I bought some paper and things that make pads-- don't ask. It didn't work. It just didn't work.

Paper to buy, I didn't have enough money. Real paper, [INAUDIBLE] junk paper.

And I had so much aggravation. The customers didn't want to buy it. But don't ask. I don't want into that.

But did you succeed?

Huh?

At the end, did you succeed? In the end did you succeed? Did you set up your own business?

Yes.

You did.

I did set up already in the troubled time, when I didn't know what's ready for me.

Yeah.

But I said to my boss I did already decide that I want to quit, even if I'll get trouble. Easy to say get trouble when it comes to pay the bills.

Sure.

But I told him, I decide anyway that I'm going to quit.

So did you-- in the end, how long did it take for you to set up your business? How long did it take?

Well, finally, I quit.

Mm-hmm.

I quit, and it didn't work. A job didn't come in. I couldn't get a job, especially in summer. I was aggravated with myself.

And my wife, she should live in peace, she saw that I aggravated. She says, so help me God, don't worry. If you get meat on Saturday, you're going to eat two weeks or three weeks. Once in the time Saturday, you're going to eat less.

You don't have to worry about it. That's your wish. She was very good. If not for her, I would drop dead, because I was too young to have an idea how much aggravation it is when you go into business at the beginning.

Yeah.

So finally, I quit. So a few times when I see the bills coming in, I said to my wife, she should live in peace, I decided that I go back. I know he's going to take me. I have no problem. But she says, why don't you try a little bit more? Maybe--

Try some more. Try some more.

Try some more. And I don't care.

Oh, how important that must have been.

And what a struggle.

Yeah.

This is a book, like.

Yeah.

I stayed more. I struggled more. And it took a while, but I break in those people that they give me a little bit-- take [INAUDIBLE] the customers.

Yeah.

This is very funny. But why do I-- never like it was before. Here, I had a big check every week without headaches.

Right.

And I never would make it like I wanted to make it. So finally, I agreed and I saw opportunity, if you want. Then all of a sudden, the supplier who I used to buy from them supplies, I said to him-- I moved away in a cheaper place.

And this guy came up to me. He found out where I moved. I didn't call him up for reorders. He says, Mr. Weiss, you have anything ordered?

I told him the story, where I get an order. I will gladly give you. Maybe someday, you come. I'll give you orders.

He felt very sorry for me. And he says he didn't care if I don't buy by him. He went to a place.

Mm-hmm.

Also a Jewish place. He worked Saturday also. Also the same guy. And that was all the favors they did me, those people, who worked Saturdays.

Isn't that interesting?

But a good heart.

Yeah.

They don't have to be always religious. Then I learned. I appreciated it.

OK.

And he went to one place where they figured they have a lot of book binding. And he went to them, there's a poor a guy here in business and he's in trouble.

He's a young fellow. They need money. Is there anything?

He spoke with the printer-- big printer. Anything you could help him with? Cheap a little bit, give for the next [? guy ?] less. He says, here's my address. Here's my address.

And yeah, he called me up. He says I got to Mr. Nick Dancy. Which I forget his name.

Mm-hmm. Doesn't matter. But anyway, they helped you start out. They helped you by giving you some orders.

All of a sudden, he called me up. He said there's a guy who supplied. He told me your stories. I could go-- I'll give you a little order for this.

I says, I appreciate it very much, and I'll never forget. Somebody comes and offers you-- I didn't know what he's giving me. But finally, he sent the truck. I didn't know. He sent a truck, which is enough for me for a week.

Wow.

The whole week. They gave me instructions. It's a big place.

Yeah

Slips. And I said to my wife, I have a job for a whole week. A whole week. She was happy.

And all of a sudden, two, three days pass by, I got another order from them. Would you believe it? I didn't finish this yet.

And you have another one.

I have another order. I called them up. I called already with the [NON-ENGLISH] who worked by the office.

I called him up. He was very nice to me. And I told him, Glick, in case you have a mistake, I'm not a big [INAUDIBLE] place. And to be honest, I can't produce so much. You probably want to have the order.

He says, everything is going if God wants to help you. He says to me, you know, Frank-- he called me Frank. [INAUDIBLE] Frank. Who cares?

You know what? He was working for the big places-- a couple of hundred books to bind and to do all this. Took a lot of places.

He says, you know what? Give me in every one 20 books that we [INAUDIBLE] for a week at least. Then you survive, which I did. I'm making 20 books on each.

So the next stop came with a truck. He has his own truck. It's big place-- his own truck. And this guy during 2 and 1/2 years gave me to make a living 70%.

Wow.

You wouldn't believe it. He sent and paying-- the worker called me up. The guy was working on it, often

sections at a time. He says, the boss called me up. For everybody, he pays for 30 days.

Uh-huh.

He told me I should make a check every two weeks.

Every 15 days.

Yeah.

You know, if God helps you, then--

You know what else, though? It tells me that this impulse you had as a young boy to help your father, so that he wouldn't have to carry this burden by himself-- when you went first to your mother, and then your first aunt, and then your second aunt. This impulse gave you your future. Gave you your life.

Of course.

Gave you your living.

And appreciation and paying on time anything you wanted.

Yeah.

I appreciate [INAUDIBLE] God, and I appreciate for him.

Yeah. You wanted to do this for him, and you got your future from it.

You know what happened?

What?

Well, this, I don't want to go in details. The big man, the owner, he died. Of course, I felt sorry. And I thought that I'm going to have less work because--

He's gone.

He's gone. He took in his son-in-law-- American guy. He's supposed to take care on the bookkeeping and the workers and everything. Looks like he was not a talented man. He wasn't born for that.

He opened a business. And the business was open, gone. And I see somehow, they bring big jobs.

Mm-hmm.

I was a printer, and I had an idea a little bit in spelling [INAUDIBLE]. He ran the big jobs. And I look at the job. When you look at it, you could find it. When you don't look at it, you could see the mistake.

Yeah.

But you look at it, by nature, you're not going to see it, up, front, [INAUDIBLE].

Yeah.

I see jobs, it didn't print spelled it. I'm not an American, but I know ABC. A B is a B and a C is a C. And I see there is something wrong.

The jobs come to me. And it's not just making-- the printer tried. I call up. Then there was not a life

anymore.

Yeah.

It was done. He says-- I called him up. I says, I hate to tell you. But the job, if you look at it, it's not spelled right. And you ran such a big job, you're going to lose it.

And he says, you know? To hell with them. We're going to print it over. He had a lot of paper stuffed in everything from the old--

Place.

[INAUDIBLE].

Slowly, I says to them, I don't think I like the answer you told me. You should feel sorry, or you should think about what you did. As he said, all right. We'll try it.

The next appreciated Frank, what you did there, instead of telling me to hell with you, we printed over. After all, I says, someday the stock will be ended. But your father-in-law didn't want to touch his feeling.

I said, but your father-in-law gave you so much stock in the basement. For a half a year, I'll come to the end. And the business is going to ruin. But he kept by his philosophy.

And good enough, he made a couple mistakes. Afterward, I want to come to the end of the story. There was a few modern machines.

Mm-hmm.

He decided the business went so bad for him, that one piece of the expensive print machine, he's going to ask a friend of his to let him stock a corner for printing and let him do his job.

Mm-hmm.

This is all small, so small business. He had to give up all the printers [INAUDIBLE] go out of business. I said, remember? I told you. Remember I told you?

I wanted to ask you something about faith.

About?

About faith and belief.

Faith. You want to change me.

No, not at all. What I want to ask is this. Many people who went through what you went through.

I know what [INAUDIBLE]. But I decided--

They didn't believe in God.

Correct. This is what I want to come to. I decided not. I'm not going to let my-- and if you see my family, you would really thank God.

Thank the Almighty, I have such a nice family. They're all modern and believing. They do both. It's unbelievable that [INAUDIBLE].

So you stayed with God. You still believed.

I did not-- no. I'm not going to change. I still believe in God. What good is it if you don't believe, if you believe. That it's going to be better?

OK. But so many people said where was God.

I know a lot of things. I tell you, when I came home, I was the same way.

Really?

I came home. I will never forget. It was a Monday, I think. I came home.

And I figured-- I came home to Romania to Hungary. I wondered, maybe somebody remained from the family, because that was a crazy life that time. Nobody knew what's going on, what--

Right.

And I decided that I want to go for two, three days waiting. Maybe somebody else is going to come from the family. And I waited and I waited. I was very disappointed.

Nobody, huh?

Nobody came, from the 11 brothers and sisters. But I don't want to go into this. You've got to make me non-believe.

I don't want to do that.

You can't do it.

I don't want to.

You can't do it. The reason why that I disagreed with my parents that I should learn a trade. If I went along with my father with everything, sure, I was going to do now to roll up my beliefs. What good is it if you don't believe? What good is it?

You became a bum, and you became an unbeliever. And life is big deal. Thank God I believe.

I appreciate it. Yeah, what I want to bring out, I was so disappointed. First of all, I wanted to write the book, because I had a little talent.

Mm-hmm.

But my life, what happened. Then I decided-- this reason, if I'm going to write a book, and my children are going to read it, they're going to find out that I'm an unbeliever. And I decided I'm not going to do it.

And I am not going to change my religion. And I'm going to go with it. If you're going to see my parents, my children, they all updated modern-- I don't say they all too religion, because some of them go to college, some of them is educated, but very nice. They're very, very respectable.

How many children do you have?

I think 6.

You had 6. And how many grandchildren do you have?

I have to go to go to an accountant.

You have to go to an accountant?

Maybe my daughter.

The great grandchildren, you have one more. Kitty just had a girl.

Well, mazal tov. Oh. It's a boy or a girl?

A girl.

A girl.

See, I have to go already.

OK. So--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

So during the course of this interview, you just had another new great-grandchild born.

She knows what's going on.

Congratulations.

Mazel tov.

Thank you very much for listening to my nonsense.

No, no, we are grateful. We are very grateful.

I'm grateful that I have such fine children.

OK. I'm going to say then that that's a perfect note on which to end this interview, the birth of a new great-grandchild.

Thank you very much.

Congratulations to you.

I invite you to my Kaddish.

So this concludes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mr Ferenc Weiss on August 15, 2016, in Brooklyn, New York.

And [INAUDIBLE]. I really appreciate. I would like to make a statement for the ladies and gentlemen that they took time to listen to my nonsense.

It wasn't nonsense.

I'm sorry for keeping you up. And one thing I would remind for the gentlemen and ladies. Don't be surprised if you [? require ?].

It's a nice thing that you inquired. People will listen to the stories. And you think about from now on, I'll go be better.

But I am a bad news for you people, unless the world is going to change. Right now, it's terrible. And if you know what's going on in the world, how the youngsters are, how the old people change their mind, there is

nobody, anything, if somebody doesn't have two [INAUDIBLE] in the jar in this house, not so terrible.

And I would hope that life-- like to know it, like to hope, because I have also children. My life is gone. I don't care. But thank God I have good children. And please pray to God that the world should change.

Thank you.

Because this is not normal.

It isn't normal.

Every day, you hear killing, shooting. Shooting 10 or 20-- not one, not five, but in the 50s. Let's pray when you have time to pray to God.

Let's hope it's going to be different, because you're bringing up children, you're getting scared. It's [INAUDIBLE]. It's unbelievable-- unbelievable. I don't like to read newspapers because I'm very disappointed.

I think what you have to say is extremely important.

The family would say there's nothing wrong if you have two guns in the house. Sure, you think things like this-- think about what could come from those two guns. Could come eight killings and 12 killings.

That's right.

So let's hope to God it's going to change. Again, I thank you. Which I was not happy. Not happy what I said to you. But it hurts me. It mixed me up my life. [INAUDIBLE].

I know.

Because I don't believe till now that a normal man could take what I took. [INAUDIBLE] I lost my family. You would know [INAUDIBLE] working hard and keep the religious and everything. And this is what happened. My life is gone because I can't take it what's happened.

I know.

They're living, minding their own business. They didn't touch nobody in their whole life. They wouldn't raise a piece of nail to touch their own.

And they was living very honestly and normal. And my father, like I said, was working. I had to say that-- used that word, like a horse.

Yeah.

Just bringing up the family in a nice way, and how did they respect their children-- the parents and children. This is an unbelievable to describe. We didn't work. Our sisters and brothers worked.

Like I said, they worked that milk business. Why? Because the knowledge was very low, small. The factories was nothing. Here they go, the girls. Everybody learns the knowledge. And they go in their factories, in their offices, and they cheapened.

They see money in their eyes. And my brothers, my sisters, never saw an extra penny. Only what the parents would give it to him.

What I appreciate the most is that you described them to us today. You shared with us the story and who your parents were, who are your brothers and sisters were. You gave us an acquaintanceship with them.

I'm not mad at my children among parents that didn't learn a trade. This is what they wanted.

Yeah.

All right. But anyway, what I want to say, the less [INAUDIBLE]-- when I came home and I thought I'm going to write a book, and I see nobody came home, I decided-- I once said it to my older son to write the book to express my feelings for the life. Why did I lose my family?

So many people.

But I decided that I don't feel sorry for that too. I'm not going to write. I'm not going to express my feelings, because maybe my parents, my children, would think that I'm an unbeliever. I didn't want to take a chance.

But they didn't think that I'm a non-believer. Here, I teach them how to live, and I myself talk different things, different-- I appreciated again to God after my struggling. I have very fine children. If you would see them, you would say I'm right. I'm not a liar. I very thank God. I appreciate it to God.

Thank you. Thank you very, very much, Mr Weiss. And once more, congratulations on your new great-grandchild.

I invite you for a little supper.

OK. Thank you.