

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,050

2
00:00:03,050 --> 00:00:06,560
This is a United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3
00:00:06,560 --> 00:00:10,970
interview with Mrs.
Beatrice Muchman,

4
00:00:10,970 --> 00:00:16,670
now married to Larry
Abrams, on September 27th,

5
00:00:16,670 --> 00:00:20,630
2016 in Chicago, Illinois.

6
00:00:20,630 --> 00:00:24,410
Thank you very, very much
for agreeing to meet with us,

7
00:00:24,410 --> 00:00:28,370
to share your story, to
share your experiences

8
00:00:28,370 --> 00:00:29,330
and your thoughts.

9
00:00:29,330 --> 00:00:31,580
You're very welcome.

10
00:00:31,580 --> 00:00:33,260
We're going to
start the interview

11
00:00:33,260 --> 00:00:37,100
at the very beginning,
like we do with everybody.

12
00:00:37,100 --> 00:00:39,410

And I'm going to ask you
a few basic questions

13
00:00:39,410 --> 00:00:40,770
and then we go from there.

14
00:00:40,770 --> 00:00:41,450
OK.

15
00:00:41,450 --> 00:00:45,000
Can you tell me
your date of birth?

16
00:00:45,000 --> 00:00:46,550
June 5th.

17
00:00:46,550 --> 00:00:48,620
I'm sorry, I'm croaking.

18
00:00:48,620 --> 00:00:54,530
June 5th, 1933 in
Berlin, Germany.

19
00:00:54,530 --> 00:00:56,210
What was your name at birth?

20
00:00:56,210 --> 00:00:57,470
Westheimer.

21
00:00:57,470 --> 00:00:58,625
Your first name?

22
00:00:58,625 --> 00:01:01,701
Beatrix Westheimer.

23
00:01:01,701 --> 00:01:03,220
It wasn't the best year.

24
00:01:03,220 --> 00:01:06,790
It was the year
Hitler came to power.

25

00:01:06,790 --> 00:01:15,280

But my family was very
integrated, young, German,

26

00:01:15,280 --> 00:01:20,150

and reasonably unaware
of circumstances.

27

00:01:20,150 --> 00:01:23,850

Do you know what part of
Berlin your family lived in?

28

00:01:23,850 --> 00:01:24,350

Yes.

29

00:01:24,350 --> 00:01:28,490

It was the Bavarian
area, which is

30

00:01:28,490 --> 00:01:34,160

where young people would move.

31

00:01:34,160 --> 00:01:36,985

I just revisited
Berlin recently.

32

00:01:36,985 --> 00:01:38,150

Oh, really?

33

00:01:38,150 --> 00:01:40,250

Yes.

34

00:01:40,250 --> 00:01:42,950

Survivors were invited.

35

00:01:42,950 --> 00:01:47,900

And I saw the area, which
is now full of posters

36

00:01:47,900 --> 00:01:52,880

and indicating what Jewish
families were living through.

37
00:01:52,880 --> 00:01:54,560
Jews cannot visit parks.

38
00:01:54,560 --> 00:01:56,630
They cannot sit on benches.

39
00:01:56,630 --> 00:02:01,400
It's historical now, but
at the time, it was real.

40
00:02:01,400 --> 00:02:05,570
And it made me realize that as
a little child, being wheeled

41
00:02:05,570 --> 00:02:09,650
in a buggy, I knew
nothing, but my parents

42
00:02:09,650 --> 00:02:12,770
must have been aware.

43
00:02:12,770 --> 00:02:16,850
I want to ask, you say it was
the Bavarian part of Berlin.

44
00:02:16,850 --> 00:02:18,770
Would this have been
in the former Eastern

45
00:02:18,770 --> 00:02:20,500
section or the Western section?

46
00:02:20,500 --> 00:02:22,910
No, it was actually
the Western section.

47
00:02:22,910 --> 00:02:25,490
Do you know the
name of the region?

48
00:02:25,490 --> 00:02:30,470

Was it Lankwitz, Lichterfelde,
Zehlendorf, Dahlem,

49
00:02:30,470 --> 00:02:32,470
Charlottenburg?

50
00:02:32,470 --> 00:02:35,140
It was not Charlottenburg,
but I don't know the rest.

51
00:02:35,140 --> 00:02:35,640
OK.

52
00:02:35,640 --> 00:02:36,970
I don't know.

53
00:02:36,970 --> 00:02:37,975
OK.

54
00:02:37,975 --> 00:02:39,350
Because I couldn't
recognize what

55
00:02:39,350 --> 00:02:41,310
the Bavarian section
would have been.

56
00:02:41,310 --> 00:02:41,960
Yeah.

57
00:02:41,960 --> 00:02:42,460
Yeah.

58
00:02:42,460 --> 00:02:44,810
Do if it was the center
of town or whether it

59
00:02:44,810 --> 00:02:46,550
was a residential area?

60
00:02:46,550 --> 00:02:50,540
It was very much a

residential area.

61
00:02:50,540 --> 00:02:52,700
Had your family been
there for generations?

62
00:02:52,700 --> 00:02:54,440
For generations.

63
00:02:54,440 --> 00:02:56,780
OK, so they were old Berliners.

64
00:02:56,780 --> 00:02:58,070
They were old Berliners.

65
00:02:58,070 --> 00:03:01,370
And my great grandfather
fought in the First World War,

66
00:03:01,370 --> 00:03:08,270
like many Jewish
Germans, with medals.

67
00:03:08,270 --> 00:03:11,500
My grandmother had
a large family,

68
00:03:11,500 --> 00:03:13,050
and everyone would
meet on Sundays.

69
00:03:13,050 --> 00:03:16,350
These are hazy
memories that I have.

70
00:03:16,350 --> 00:03:19,740
But yes, they were Berliners.

71
00:03:19,740 --> 00:03:22,680
OK.

72
00:03:22,680 --> 00:03:24,900

Do you have any
memories of your home?

73
00:03:24,900 --> 00:03:27,420

74
00:03:27,420 --> 00:03:33,300
I have memories of visiting
an uncle on Sundays

75
00:03:33,300 --> 00:03:35,610
and getting very wet kisses.

76
00:03:35,610 --> 00:03:40,020
Now, that's about
as far as I go.

77
00:03:40,020 --> 00:03:44,070
I mean, when I went back,
I saw my nursery school,

78
00:03:44,070 --> 00:03:46,470
but only because
I've researched that.

79
00:03:46,470 --> 00:03:48,510
Could I really
tell you memories?

80
00:03:48,510 --> 00:03:50,670
Not until Kristallnacht.

81
00:03:50,670 --> 00:03:52,100
OK.

82
00:03:52,100 --> 00:03:56,990
What I'm trying to find out
now is what kind of a place

83
00:03:56,990 --> 00:03:57,650
you lived in.

84

00:03:57,650 --> 00:04:00,410
Was it an apartment or
a single family home?

85
00:04:00,410 --> 00:04:01,370
Would you know that?

86
00:04:01,370 --> 00:04:02,780
It was an apartment.

87
00:04:02,780 --> 00:04:03,470
OK.

88
00:04:03,470 --> 00:04:07,460
Actually, people didn't
live in single family homes.

89
00:04:07,460 --> 00:04:09,790
It was an apartment.

90
00:04:09,790 --> 00:04:12,710
And it had to be
somewhat spacious,

91
00:04:12,710 --> 00:04:15,740
from what I have now seen.

92
00:04:15,740 --> 00:04:19,760
But actually, I don't
have pictures of that.

93
00:04:19,760 --> 00:04:22,430
Do you know what your father--

94
00:04:22,430 --> 00:04:25,370
how he supported your family?

95
00:04:25,370 --> 00:04:29,970
My father did something
with the meat business,

96
00:04:29,970 --> 00:04:33,050

as many of the Westheimers did.

97

00:04:33,050 --> 00:04:36,620

And my mother worked
for her father.

98

00:04:36,620 --> 00:04:42,320

My grandfather had a printing
business for artists.

99

00:04:42,320 --> 00:04:43,190

Oh.

100

00:04:43,190 --> 00:04:46,640

So my mother was
one of four sisters,

101

00:04:46,640 --> 00:04:48,890

and all four sisters
were educated

102

00:04:48,890 --> 00:04:52,450

in some kind of a career.

103

00:04:52,450 --> 00:04:57,070

So they were somewhat
ahead of their day.

104

00:04:57,070 --> 00:04:59,740

Do you know the names
of all four sisters?

105

00:04:59,740 --> 00:05:00,830

OK.

106

00:05:00,830 --> 00:05:04,310

The oldest sister
was Frieda Hurwitz.

107

00:05:04,310 --> 00:05:06,790

Well, they were Boas, B-O-A-S.

108

00:05:06,790 --> 00:05:08,530
Their maiden names were Boas.

109
00:05:08,530 --> 00:05:09,160
Were Boas.

110
00:05:09,160 --> 00:05:12,320
So it was Frieda
Boas, the oldest.

111
00:05:12,320 --> 00:05:19,080
And then came Margot Louis,
but at the time Boas.

112
00:05:19,080 --> 00:05:23,430

113
00:05:23,430 --> 00:05:27,645
After Margot came
my mother, Meta.

114
00:05:27,645 --> 00:05:28,440
Meta.

115
00:05:28,440 --> 00:05:31,150
Boas, then Westheimer.

116
00:05:31,150 --> 00:05:36,950
And then the younger sister
was Hella Boas, later also

117
00:05:36,950 --> 00:05:38,030
a Hurwitz.

118
00:05:38,030 --> 00:05:39,010
OK.

119
00:05:39,010 --> 00:05:41,310
So that's your mother's
side of the family?

120
00:05:41,310 --> 00:05:42,920

Correct.

121
00:05:42,920 --> 00:05:45,220
What were you your
grandmother and grandfather's

122
00:05:45,220 --> 00:05:46,990
names on your mother's
side of the family?

123
00:05:46,990 --> 00:05:50,370
Baruch, B-A-R-U-C-H.

124
00:05:50,370 --> 00:05:51,940
Boas?

125
00:05:51,940 --> 00:05:53,530
Well, my grandfather was Boas.

126
00:05:53,530 --> 00:05:54,970
My grandmother was Baruch.

127
00:05:54,970 --> 00:05:55,790
Oh, I see.

128
00:05:55,790 --> 00:05:56,290
I see.

129
00:05:56,290 --> 00:05:57,490
Her first name?

130
00:05:57,490 --> 00:06:00,010
Her first name--

131
00:06:00,010 --> 00:06:03,200
Mimi is what I think
of-- was Johanna.

132
00:06:03,200 --> 00:06:05,320
OK, Johanna Baruch.

133

00:06:05,320 --> 00:06:07,450
And she married?

134
00:06:07,450 --> 00:06:08,300
His first name?

135
00:06:08,300 --> 00:06:09,400
Bernhardt.

136
00:06:09,400 --> 00:06:10,630
Bernhardt Boas.

137
00:06:10,630 --> 00:06:11,470
Correct.

138
00:06:11,470 --> 00:06:12,400
OK.

139
00:06:12,400 --> 00:06:13,485
And they had four girls?

140
00:06:13,485 --> 00:06:14,110
That's correct.

141
00:06:14,110 --> 00:06:16,690
Did you know your grandfather
and your grandmother?

142
00:06:16,690 --> 00:06:19,150
I knew my grandmother
very intimately.

143
00:06:19,150 --> 00:06:23,030
My grandfather died the
day my parents got--

144
00:06:23,030 --> 00:06:25,660
the day before my
parents got married.

145
00:06:25,660 --> 00:06:28,880
So he died long

before the Holocaust.

146
00:06:28,880 --> 00:06:34,986
It was 1932.

147
00:06:34,986 --> 00:06:38,620
Do you know how the story of
how your parents met and became

148
00:06:38,620 --> 00:06:41,440
engaged and how they
found each other?

149
00:06:41,440 --> 00:06:42,440
I don't.

150
00:06:42,440 --> 00:06:46,090
I don't know the
story, but I picture

151
00:06:46,090 --> 00:06:49,420
it had to be a
wonderful love story.

152
00:06:49,420 --> 00:06:52,210
And let's turn to your
father's side of the family.

153
00:06:52,210 --> 00:06:55,100
What was his name,
first and last?

154
00:06:55,100 --> 00:06:58,060
His name was Julius Westheimer.

155
00:06:58,060 --> 00:07:02,800
And my father, as far as
I knew, was an orphan.

156
00:07:02,800 --> 00:07:06,460
So there wasn't
very much history.

157

00:07:06,460 --> 00:07:11,260

I knew that my father was
a very sports-like person.

158

00:07:11,260 --> 00:07:13,120

He liked a crew.

159

00:07:13,120 --> 00:07:16,030

And of course, all of this came
to an end with the Holocaust.

160

00:07:16,030 --> 00:07:17,080

Sure.

161

00:07:17,080 --> 00:07:21,960

But he took to my
mother's family.

162

00:07:21,960 --> 00:07:24,200

And that's the only family
that I ever heard of,

163

00:07:24,200 --> 00:07:29,300

and therefore my entire life
has been the maternal part

164

00:07:29,300 --> 00:07:30,020

of the family.

165

00:07:30,020 --> 00:07:31,070

I see.

166

00:07:31,070 --> 00:07:33,230

I see.

167

00:07:33,230 --> 00:07:36,560

And you say he worked in
the meat business somehow,

168

00:07:36,560 --> 00:07:39,860

and your mother worked in her
father's printing business?

169
00:07:39,860 --> 00:07:41,630
And got married and
stopped working.

170
00:07:41,630 --> 00:07:43,840
And got married and
stopped working.

171
00:07:43,840 --> 00:07:50,090
And how would you describe your
family's financial footing?

172
00:07:50,090 --> 00:07:50,915
Was it well-to-do?

173
00:07:50,915 --> 00:07:53,970
Was it middle class?

174
00:07:53,970 --> 00:07:56,090
It was middle class.

175
00:07:56,090 --> 00:07:59,210
It was definitely middle.

176
00:07:59,210 --> 00:08:02,870
Did your mother have any help
at home, anyone coming in?

177
00:08:02,870 --> 00:08:05,180
I don't know.

178
00:08:05,180 --> 00:08:05,810
I don't know.

179
00:08:05,810 --> 00:08:09,650
I mean, at the age of five,
Kristallnacht had already

180
00:08:09,650 --> 00:08:13,430
happened, so a lot of
these things I don't know.

181
00:08:13,430 --> 00:08:16,692
My grandmother did, that I know.

182
00:08:16,692 --> 00:08:21,360

183
00:08:21,360 --> 00:08:22,980
I'm going to ask
a few questions.

184
00:08:22,980 --> 00:08:26,120

185
00:08:26,120 --> 00:08:29,240
The reason for them
is to get a sense

186
00:08:29,240 --> 00:08:32,280
of the level of development.

187
00:08:32,280 --> 00:08:34,970
I'm talking about economic,
mostly development,

188
00:08:34,970 --> 00:08:36,799
within a place.

189
00:08:36,799 --> 00:08:39,020
And I'm assuming in Berlin,
it would be quite high,

190
00:08:39,020 --> 00:08:40,220
but not always.

191
00:08:40,220 --> 00:08:42,679
Did you have indoor plumbing?

192
00:08:42,679 --> 00:08:43,559
Yes.

193

00:08:43,559 --> 00:08:44,059
OK.

194
00:08:44,059 --> 00:08:45,420
Did you have electricity?

195
00:08:45,420 --> 00:08:45,920
Yes.

196
00:08:45,920 --> 00:08:48,970

197
00:08:48,970 --> 00:08:50,660
Do you know how the
place was heated?

198
00:08:50,660 --> 00:08:54,030
Did you have coal
ovens or coal heating?

199
00:08:54,030 --> 00:08:55,420
No.

200
00:08:55,420 --> 00:08:55,920
No.

201
00:08:55,920 --> 00:08:56,420
OK.

202
00:08:56,420 --> 00:09:00,140
I would consider the
apartment about as modern

203
00:09:00,140 --> 00:09:03,110
as an apartment would
be today, except there

204
00:09:03,110 --> 00:09:07,760
was a depression in Germany,
and so things became very tough.

205
00:09:07,760 --> 00:09:11,420

And when my grandfather
died, of course, there

206
00:09:11,420 --> 00:09:18,580
were other hardships, but
the apartments were normal.

207
00:09:18,580 --> 00:09:19,200
[NON-ENGLISH]

208
00:09:19,200 --> 00:09:20,660
OK, [NON-ENGLISH].

209
00:09:20,660 --> 00:09:23,300
Did your family have a radio?

210
00:09:23,300 --> 00:09:24,470
Yes.

211
00:09:24,470 --> 00:09:25,640
Did they have a telephone?

212
00:09:25,640 --> 00:09:26,920
It was confiscated.

213
00:09:26,920 --> 00:09:28,110
OK.

214
00:09:28,110 --> 00:09:29,210
Did they have a telephone?

215
00:09:29,210 --> 00:09:30,170
I don't know that.

216
00:09:30,170 --> 00:09:33,330
I'm assuming they
might have, but I

217
00:09:33,330 --> 00:09:34,580
don't know the answer to that.

218

00:09:34,580 --> 00:09:35,080
OK.

219
00:09:35,080 --> 00:09:39,380
And there was a bathroom
and toilet facilities

220
00:09:39,380 --> 00:09:40,520
within the apartment?

221
00:09:40,520 --> 00:09:41,510
Yes.

222
00:09:41,510 --> 00:09:42,530
Yes.

223
00:09:42,530 --> 00:09:45,390
Did your father have a car?

224
00:09:45,390 --> 00:09:50,640
Yes, my father had a car,
because I distinctly remember,

225
00:09:50,640 --> 00:09:54,490
when I was about
probably four years old,

226
00:09:54,490 --> 00:09:56,700
we had a car accident
going on a trip.

227
00:09:56,700 --> 00:09:59,820

228
00:09:59,820 --> 00:10:02,220
It was very traumatic,
but that's how I know.

229
00:10:02,220 --> 00:10:04,970
Of course he had a car, yes.

230
00:10:04,970 --> 00:10:06,800

OK.

231

00:10:06,800 --> 00:10:11,210

And did you have your own room?

232

00:10:11,210 --> 00:10:12,720

Yes, I had my own room.

233

00:10:12,720 --> 00:10:13,220

OK.

234

00:10:13,220 --> 00:10:17,375

235

00:10:17,375 --> 00:10:22,290

Can you remember how many rooms
there were in the apartment?

236

00:10:22,290 --> 00:10:24,210

Not.

237

00:10:24,210 --> 00:10:25,220

I know.

238

00:10:25,220 --> 00:10:27,470

If someone asked me,
at five years old,

239

00:10:27,470 --> 00:10:29,840

whether I would remember--

240

00:10:29,840 --> 00:10:31,970

I don't remember that.

241

00:10:31,970 --> 00:10:34,580

OK.

242

00:10:34,580 --> 00:10:40,250

Do you have memories before
Kristallnacht about your life

243

00:10:40,250 --> 00:10:41,240
in Berlin?

244

00:10:41,240 --> 00:10:48,800
The memories I have are about
one uncle who was partially

245

00:10:48,800 --> 00:10:51,890
owner, or had some
relationship to Tietz,

246

00:10:51,890 --> 00:10:58,090
which was a German
Marshall Field's.

247

00:10:58,090 --> 00:10:59,290
A department store.

248

00:10:59,290 --> 00:11:01,480
Kind of a department store.

249

00:11:01,480 --> 00:11:03,130
One uncle was a pharmacist.

250

00:11:03,130 --> 00:11:08,060

251

00:11:08,060 --> 00:11:11,800
My grandmother had about
eight brothers and sisters.

252

00:11:11,800 --> 00:11:17,570
And I remember some days, we
would visit and just people

253

00:11:17,570 --> 00:11:18,510
floating around.

254

00:11:18,510 --> 00:11:21,480
But that's about the
extent of my memory.

255

00:11:21,480 --> 00:11:23,060
The Baruch family.

256
00:11:23,060 --> 00:11:26,910
In the Baruch family,
right, and lots of cookies.

257
00:11:26,910 --> 00:11:33,200

258
00:11:33,200 --> 00:11:35,420
Do you remember
walking in parks?

259
00:11:35,420 --> 00:11:36,620
Yes.

260
00:11:36,620 --> 00:11:39,680
I remember walking
in parks, and I also

261
00:11:39,680 --> 00:11:44,360
remember when you had to
stop walking in parks.

262
00:11:44,360 --> 00:11:49,460
But I must have been so
sheltered that none of this

263
00:11:49,460 --> 00:11:53,470
rang as a terrible thing.

264
00:11:53,470 --> 00:11:56,520
We walked in parks and then
we didn't walk in parks.

265
00:11:56,520 --> 00:11:58,140
And we walked on
the street and then

266
00:11:58,140 --> 00:12:00,190
we didn't walk on the street.

267
00:12:00,190 --> 00:12:02,220
This was Berlin.

268
00:12:02,220 --> 00:12:04,320
Things changed drastically.

269
00:12:04,320 --> 00:12:04,820
OK.

270
00:12:04,820 --> 00:12:07,490

271
00:12:07,490 --> 00:12:10,890
So let's come to Kristallnacht.

272
00:12:10,890 --> 00:12:15,330
What can you tell me from
your memory of Kristallnacht.

273
00:12:15,330 --> 00:12:20,400
From my memory, I
had woken up and I

274
00:12:20,400 --> 00:12:23,280
thought my drapes were on fire.

275
00:12:23,280 --> 00:12:25,120
Of course, it wasn't
drapes at all.

276
00:12:25,120 --> 00:12:28,200
It was a reflection,
but I had no idea.

277
00:12:28,200 --> 00:12:32,740
And my father came and
just scooped me out of bed

278
00:12:32,740 --> 00:12:34,250
and we ran out on the street.

279

00:12:34,250 --> 00:12:36,970
And our synagogue was burning.

280
00:12:36,970 --> 00:12:38,680
It was down the street.

281
00:12:38,680 --> 00:12:42,910
And having revisited, I know
it was really down the street.

282
00:12:42,910 --> 00:12:46,510
And I just knew
it was a disaster.

283
00:12:46,510 --> 00:12:49,840
Did I understand that it
was the end of something

284
00:12:49,840 --> 00:12:51,670
and the beginning
of something else?

285
00:12:51,670 --> 00:12:55,510
Really not, but it
was frightening.

286
00:12:55,510 --> 00:12:57,970
Do you remember
now the street name

287
00:12:57,970 --> 00:13:00,560
that your apartment was on?

288
00:13:00,560 --> 00:13:03,260
At this moment, I can't
tell you, but I do know it.

289
00:13:03,260 --> 00:13:04,070
That's OK.

290
00:13:04,070 --> 00:13:07,360
That's OK, Trixie.

291
00:13:07,360 --> 00:13:08,430
Kaiserallee.

292
00:13:08,430 --> 00:13:09,850
Kaiserallee.

293
00:13:09,850 --> 00:13:11,000
OK.

294
00:13:11,000 --> 00:13:12,700
It's fairly central,
if I remember.

295
00:13:12,700 --> 00:13:13,200
Yes.

296
00:13:13,200 --> 00:13:14,505
OK, it is.

297
00:13:14,505 --> 00:13:15,670
It is.

298
00:13:15,670 --> 00:13:16,403
Yeah.

299
00:13:16,403 --> 00:13:18,070
I have absolutely no
sense of direction.

300
00:13:18,070 --> 00:13:18,950
Sorry.

301
00:13:18,950 --> 00:13:19,460
That's OK.

302
00:13:19,460 --> 00:13:23,030

303
00:13:23,030 --> 00:13:25,490
And I just called you
Trixie without letting

304
00:13:25,490 --> 00:13:26,315
people know how.

305
00:13:26,315 --> 00:13:26,610
Oh.

306
00:13:26,610 --> 00:13:27,110
OK.

307
00:13:27,110 --> 00:13:30,010
So tell me about how
people called you.

308
00:13:30,010 --> 00:13:31,370
I had two nicknames.

309
00:13:31,370 --> 00:13:32,850
One was Puppe.

310
00:13:32,850 --> 00:13:33,620
Puppe.

311
00:13:33,620 --> 00:13:36,860
Which meant that my cousins
would look in the buggy

312
00:13:36,860 --> 00:13:38,090
and decide it was a doll.

313
00:13:38,090 --> 00:13:40,320
Because in German,
puppe means a doll.

314
00:13:40,320 --> 00:13:44,600
And the other one was
probably taken from Beatrix.

315
00:13:44,600 --> 00:13:45,920
And Trixie.

316

00:13:45,920 --> 00:13:48,350
So did your parents call
your Trixie or Beatrix?

317
00:13:48,350 --> 00:13:49,600
I think Puppe.

318
00:13:49,600 --> 00:13:50,760
Puppe.

319
00:13:50,760 --> 00:13:52,320
Puppe.

320
00:13:52,320 --> 00:13:58,500
Puppe, Trixie, Trixie
Line, a number of names.

321
00:13:58,500 --> 00:14:00,960
So you're out on the
street and you get a sense

322
00:14:00,960 --> 00:14:04,260
that something had ended and
something new was beginning,

323
00:14:04,260 --> 00:14:08,970
and there was all of this chaos.

324
00:14:08,970 --> 00:14:12,610
Did you see other people,
do you think, on the street?

325
00:14:12,610 --> 00:14:20,930
I just remember fire
and scary destruction,

326
00:14:20,930 --> 00:14:22,680
as it would scare a child.

327
00:14:22,680 --> 00:14:23,180
Sure.

328

00:14:23,180 --> 00:14:24,900
Sure.

329
00:14:24,900 --> 00:14:27,650
Then what happened?

330
00:14:27,650 --> 00:14:35,120
You know, I jump from that point
to the family falling apart.

331
00:14:35,120 --> 00:14:39,960
I'm from a very
sheltered background.

332
00:14:39,960 --> 00:14:44,610
I remember meetings and
whispering, and wanting

333
00:14:44,610 --> 00:14:46,560
to lie down on the
floor and listen

334
00:14:46,560 --> 00:14:50,670
to what people were saying
that I couldn't understand.

335
00:14:50,670 --> 00:14:53,280
And then of course,
the next thing

336
00:14:53,280 --> 00:14:57,000
I knew we were emigrating.

337
00:14:57,000 --> 00:14:58,800
By that, I mean
we were literally

338
00:14:58,800 --> 00:15:03,730
fleeing, because you could
really not emigrate anywhere.

339
00:15:03,730 --> 00:15:12,360
So how we got to the border

between Berlin and Brussels

340
00:15:12,360 --> 00:15:13,440
I don't know.

341
00:15:13,440 --> 00:15:14,880
So you were going westwards?

342
00:15:14,880 --> 00:15:19,130
We were going to meet my aunt
and uncle, Frieda, the oldest

343
00:15:19,130 --> 00:15:21,990
sister, her husband
who was a lawyer

344
00:15:21,990 --> 00:15:26,280
but had been blackballed,
and their youngest child,

345
00:15:26,280 --> 00:15:29,310
their only child, Henry.

346
00:15:29,310 --> 00:15:31,790
And it seemed like the
logical place to go.

347
00:15:31,790 --> 00:15:33,120
And they lived where?

348
00:15:33,120 --> 00:15:35,740
They lived in Brussels,
outside of Brussels.

349
00:15:35,740 --> 00:15:39,330
OK, well, the trek from Berlin
to the border is quite long.

350
00:15:39,330 --> 00:15:40,380
Is quite long.

351
00:15:40,380 --> 00:15:43,440

And I can't tell you if it
took a day, if there was

352
00:15:43,440 --> 00:15:45,180
a train, if there was a bus.

353
00:15:45,180 --> 00:15:46,350
Or the car.

354
00:15:46,350 --> 00:15:48,150
I don't know.

355
00:15:48,150 --> 00:15:48,990
I don't know.

356
00:15:48,990 --> 00:15:52,530
Do you remember anything else
from that trip to Brussels?

357
00:15:52,530 --> 00:15:54,880
Oh, from crossing the border?

358
00:15:54,880 --> 00:15:55,380
Tell me.

359
00:15:55,380 --> 00:15:56,420
Yes.

360
00:15:56,420 --> 00:16:00,150
What I remember about
crossing the border is being--

361
00:16:00,150 --> 00:16:07,300
we went with Margot, who was
the second sister down the line.

362
00:16:07,300 --> 00:16:09,400
The second oldest.

363
00:16:09,400 --> 00:16:13,530
Her husband was very
tall, and my cousin Bernt.

364
00:16:13,530 --> 00:16:16,590

365
00:16:16,590 --> 00:16:18,690
All we could do is
take whatever we

366
00:16:18,690 --> 00:16:21,610
could put on ourselves,
because really by this time,

367
00:16:21,610 --> 00:16:23,160
you could not leave.

368
00:16:23,160 --> 00:16:25,050
This was after Kristallnacht.

369
00:16:25,050 --> 00:16:27,300
I believe it was March.

370
00:16:27,300 --> 00:16:30,270
And I remember, for the
first time in my life,

371
00:16:30,270 --> 00:16:36,650
that I was told, one
sound and you're decked.

372
00:16:36,650 --> 00:16:40,940
So as a five-year-old
child and now a grandmother

373
00:16:40,940 --> 00:16:45,800
and great grandmother, I know
how scared I must have been.

374
00:16:45,800 --> 00:16:47,690
I never talked.

375
00:16:47,690 --> 00:16:53,430
I was on my father's shoulders,

and there were dogs all around.

376

00:16:53,430 --> 00:16:58,650

And this was a stretch
of forest with army.

377

00:16:58,650 --> 00:17:03,100

It's a very familiar story,
because so many thousands

378

00:17:03,100 --> 00:17:05,222

and thousands of people
did the same thing.

379

00:17:05,222 --> 00:17:09,180

380

00:17:09,180 --> 00:17:12,579

We had guides, and
of course, guides

381

00:17:12,579 --> 00:17:14,440

were not particularly
trustworthy,

382

00:17:14,440 --> 00:17:18,760

but these people obviously
got us to where we were going.

383

00:17:18,760 --> 00:17:21,520

Did I really
understand any of this?

384

00:17:21,520 --> 00:17:25,450

I only understood to
be afraid and to have

385

00:17:25,450 --> 00:17:27,099

to leave things behind.

386

00:17:27,099 --> 00:17:30,280

So how many people were
in your group of people?

387
00:17:30,280 --> 00:17:33,250
So altogether, there was my
grandmother, who had barely,

388
00:17:33,250 --> 00:17:35,830
I think, told anybody
that we were leaving.

389
00:17:35,830 --> 00:17:36,880
So your mother's mother?

390
00:17:36,880 --> 00:17:41,350
My mother's mother, my
mother, my father, myself,

391
00:17:41,350 --> 00:17:45,460
and my uncle and aunt,
and my cousin, their son.

392
00:17:45,460 --> 00:17:48,790
So this was another uncle
and aunt who had a son?

393
00:17:48,790 --> 00:17:51,010
So you had one that was
waiting for you in Brussels--

394
00:17:51,010 --> 00:17:51,340
Correct.

395
00:17:51,340 --> 00:17:52,750
--and one that was
coming with you.

396
00:17:52,750 --> 00:17:53,250
Correct.

397
00:17:53,250 --> 00:17:56,920
This was the oldest cousin,
and the one in Brussels

398

00:17:56,920 --> 00:17:58,770
was the youngest cousin, Henry.

399
00:17:58,770 --> 00:17:59,600
OK.

400
00:17:59,600 --> 00:18:00,280
OK.

401
00:18:00,280 --> 00:18:03,430
Who takes a life of his own
in the next part of this.

402
00:18:03,430 --> 00:18:06,880

403
00:18:06,880 --> 00:18:09,280
So you were rather a
large group, actually.

404
00:18:09,280 --> 00:18:12,060
We were a large group
to be kept quiet, yes.

405
00:18:12,060 --> 00:18:14,970

406
00:18:14,970 --> 00:18:17,710
I mean, did people just
leave everything behind?

407
00:18:17,710 --> 00:18:19,568
People left everything behind.

408
00:18:19,568 --> 00:18:20,860
And you left everything behind?

409
00:18:20,860 --> 00:18:22,780
And I had to leave
everything behind,

410
00:18:22,780 --> 00:18:25,810

except what you could
wear, and whatever

411
00:18:25,810 --> 00:18:28,750
you could take that wasn't
too cumbersome because it

412
00:18:28,750 --> 00:18:30,970
was a long journey in March.

413
00:18:30,970 --> 00:18:33,040
Now, at the time, you
wouldn't have known this,

414
00:18:33,040 --> 00:18:38,170
but later, did you know how
soon after Kristallnacht you all

415
00:18:38,170 --> 00:18:39,250
fled?

416
00:18:39,250 --> 00:18:41,140
It was March.

417
00:18:41,140 --> 00:18:42,590
So several months later.

418
00:18:42,590 --> 00:18:45,160
Several months later,
because obviously,

419
00:18:45,160 --> 00:18:47,540
this had to be arranged.

420
00:18:47,540 --> 00:18:50,440
So it was March 1939?

421
00:18:50,440 --> 00:18:52,210
Correct.

422
00:18:52,210 --> 00:18:56,135
And Kristallnacht had

happened November 9th, 1938.

423

00:18:56,135 --> 00:18:56,635

Correct.

424

00:18:56,635 --> 00:19:00,530

425

00:19:00,530 --> 00:19:04,910

So there you are, March,
which is still winter,

426

00:19:04,910 --> 00:19:06,860

and you're in the forest.

427

00:19:06,860 --> 00:19:08,990

Do you remember leaving it?

428

00:19:08,990 --> 00:19:11,600

Do you remember of being on
the Belgian side of the border

429

00:19:11,600 --> 00:19:12,570

at some point?

430

00:19:12,570 --> 00:19:19,940

I remember getting in and the
relief of the entire family

431

00:19:19,940 --> 00:19:23,000

that these guides
had taken the money

432

00:19:23,000 --> 00:19:27,327

and actually delivered us to
the other side of the border.

433

00:19:27,327 --> 00:19:28,640

OK.

434

00:19:28,640 --> 00:19:31,040

And then I remember

a reunion and I

435

00:19:31,040 --> 00:19:34,280
thought everything was
fine, because now we

436

00:19:34,280 --> 00:19:39,650
were again together with my
youngest cousin, who I adored.

437

00:19:39,650 --> 00:19:43,170
And I thought it was over.

438

00:19:43,170 --> 00:19:45,120
That was it.

439

00:19:45,120 --> 00:19:46,650
Let me step back
a little bit here.

440

00:19:46,650 --> 00:19:48,600
Go ahead.

441

00:19:48,600 --> 00:19:52,020
I want to ask a little
bit about the people who

442

00:19:52,020 --> 00:19:56,820
were in your world at that time
when you were a little girl

443

00:19:56,820 --> 00:20:00,810
and about who they were
and their personalities.

444

00:20:00,810 --> 00:20:03,180
So let's start with your mother.

445

00:20:03,180 --> 00:20:06,780
Tell me, what do
you remember of her?

446

00:20:06,780 --> 00:20:08,700
What was she like?

447
00:20:08,700 --> 00:20:11,490
What were some of the
things that she liked to do?

448
00:20:11,490 --> 00:20:13,710
What were her interests?

449
00:20:13,710 --> 00:20:16,560
My mother was very art--

450
00:20:16,560 --> 00:20:20,700
she was a very soft woman.

451
00:20:20,700 --> 00:20:23,110
She was beautiful.

452
00:20:23,110 --> 00:20:28,920
She was a wonderful seamstress,
an industrial artist,

453
00:20:28,920 --> 00:20:32,730
because that's actually
what she studied to be.

454
00:20:32,730 --> 00:20:38,850
And my father was
a very tough guy.

455
00:20:38,850 --> 00:20:42,380
He kind of ran the show, but
having been raised an orphan,

456
00:20:42,380 --> 00:20:44,960
that was quite understandable.

457
00:20:44,960 --> 00:20:47,705
So basically, my
father set the rules.

458

00:20:47,705 --> 00:20:51,490

459

00:20:51,490 --> 00:20:52,660

Was he scary?

460

00:20:52,660 --> 00:20:56,540

No, not to meet.

461

00:20:56,540 --> 00:20:58,790

And I doubt that he
was scary to my mother,

462

00:20:58,790 --> 00:21:01,100

but it's just sort
of the way I remember

463

00:21:01,100 --> 00:21:03,407

the flow in the family.

464

00:21:03,407 --> 00:21:04,750

OK.

465

00:21:04,750 --> 00:21:08,650

And did they play with you?

466

00:21:08,650 --> 00:21:09,920

Yes.

467

00:21:09,920 --> 00:21:10,420

Yes.

468

00:21:10,420 --> 00:21:12,770

They played with me to a point.

469

00:21:12,770 --> 00:21:17,470

But if I got in the way,
well then, you know, bye.

470

00:21:17,470 --> 00:21:21,700

But my Uncle Werner
was the star.

471
00:21:21,700 --> 00:21:25,570
He eventually became
my adoptive father,

472
00:21:25,570 --> 00:21:28,370
and he was definitely the star.

473
00:21:28,370 --> 00:21:31,420
Everybody loved my Uncle Werner.

474
00:21:31,420 --> 00:21:36,700
So he became my children's
grandfather later.

475
00:21:36,700 --> 00:21:42,190
Always beloved, so I have just
very long-term memories of him.

476
00:21:42,190 --> 00:21:45,610
So was he part of the group
that was coming with you?

477
00:21:45,610 --> 00:21:47,178
He was part of the group.

478
00:21:47,178 --> 00:21:48,220
He was part of the group.

479
00:21:48,220 --> 00:21:50,880
So it was your Aunt Margo.

480
00:21:50,880 --> 00:21:51,418
Right.

481
00:21:51,418 --> 00:21:53,460
And your Uncle Werner,
who were married together.

482
00:21:53,460 --> 00:21:54,520
Correct.

483

00:21:54,520 --> 00:21:56,650

And their last name was?

484

00:21:56,650 --> 00:22:00,070

Well, at that time it
was Loevy, L-O-E-V-Y.

485

00:22:00,070 --> 00:22:01,850

Oh, Loevy in German.

486

00:22:01,850 --> 00:22:02,350

Right.

487

00:22:02,350 --> 00:22:03,790

So it would have been lion.

488

00:22:03,790 --> 00:22:04,665

That's what it means.

489

00:22:04,665 --> 00:22:05,760

Right, exactly.

490

00:22:05,760 --> 00:22:08,500

OK.

491

00:22:08,500 --> 00:22:10,240

And they had a son named?

492

00:22:10,240 --> 00:22:11,083

Bernt.

493

00:22:11,083 --> 00:22:13,210

Bernt, OK.

494

00:22:13,210 --> 00:22:15,620

And your grandmother, Johanna.

495

00:22:15,620 --> 00:22:16,120

Yes.

496

00:22:16,120 --> 00:22:18,670
Boas.

497
00:22:18,670 --> 00:22:20,590
She was the matriarch.

498
00:22:20,590 --> 00:22:24,310
She also set the
tone, and I think

499
00:22:24,310 --> 00:22:28,330
my mother would never have left
Berlin if my grandmother would

500
00:22:28,330 --> 00:22:29,560
not have gone.

501
00:22:29,560 --> 00:22:34,270
And my grandmother hesitated
to leave because of her family.

502
00:22:34,270 --> 00:22:36,430
It was her life.

503
00:22:36,430 --> 00:22:37,570
OK.

504
00:22:37,570 --> 00:22:38,800
That's huge.

505
00:22:38,800 --> 00:22:39,440
It's huge.

506
00:22:39,440 --> 00:22:42,460
It just becomes more
understandable the older I get.

507
00:22:42,460 --> 00:22:43,680
Yeah.

508
00:22:43,680 --> 00:22:47,200
And I have questioned it.

509
00:22:47,200 --> 00:22:50,260
Well, that's part of
the process, isn't it?

510
00:22:50,260 --> 00:22:51,280
It is, indeed.

511
00:22:51,280 --> 00:22:55,130
When you have the
skeleton of a life story,

512
00:22:55,130 --> 00:22:56,990
the skeleton of what
happened, but you

513
00:22:56,990 --> 00:23:00,898
have many places where there
is no meat on the bones

514
00:23:00,898 --> 00:23:01,940
and you want to find out.

515
00:23:01,940 --> 00:23:02,710
Yes.

516
00:23:02,710 --> 00:23:03,860
Yes, absolutely.

517
00:23:03,860 --> 00:23:06,660

518
00:23:06,660 --> 00:23:09,480
So your grandmother was
a strong personality.

519
00:23:09,480 --> 00:23:12,510
Your father was a
strong personality.

520
00:23:12,510 --> 00:23:13,920
And your uncle Werner--

521
00:23:13,920 --> 00:23:16,710
My uncle Werner was very funny.

522
00:23:16,710 --> 00:23:19,820
I don't know that he was
necessarily as strong--

523
00:23:19,820 --> 00:23:22,680
not in the sense that
a child would remember.

524
00:23:22,680 --> 00:23:27,400
He was just the one who
would make everybody laugh

525
00:23:27,400 --> 00:23:32,320
and who had tons of patience,
and he was very tall

526
00:23:32,320 --> 00:23:35,890
so he would stand
out in any crowd.

527
00:23:35,890 --> 00:23:40,210
And so you as a group now
make it to the Belgian side.

528
00:23:40,210 --> 00:23:41,140
Correct.

529
00:23:41,140 --> 00:23:43,423
And do you remember
that moment when you've

530
00:23:43,423 --> 00:23:44,590
made it to the Belgian side?

531
00:23:44,590 --> 00:23:46,720
Not exactly.

532
00:23:46,720 --> 00:23:52,980

I remember being met by
family, and from that point on,

533
00:23:52,980 --> 00:23:55,710
I felt, oh, it's over.

534
00:23:55,710 --> 00:23:58,950
This is now wonderful.

535
00:23:58,950 --> 00:23:59,450
Mistake.

536
00:23:59,450 --> 00:24:00,560
And then what?

537
00:24:00,560 --> 00:24:02,300
And then what's the next place?

538
00:24:02,300 --> 00:24:07,160
OK, so then the
next several months,

539
00:24:07,160 --> 00:24:11,330
actually, were a joyful
reunion, as I remember it.

540
00:24:11,330 --> 00:24:14,030
So it's the mid of March 1939.

541
00:24:14,030 --> 00:24:15,240
The war hasn't started yet.

542
00:24:15,240 --> 00:24:15,800
March, April.

543
00:24:15,800 --> 00:24:17,510
No.

544
00:24:17,510 --> 00:24:20,540
But then my father was arrested.

545

00:24:20,540 --> 00:24:21,440
By whom?

546
00:24:21,440 --> 00:24:23,810
Actually, by the
Belgian authorities

547
00:24:23,810 --> 00:24:25,250
because he was German.

548
00:24:25,250 --> 00:24:28,190
So there goes this
double-edged sword,

549
00:24:28,190 --> 00:24:31,690
not realizing the Jews
are really escaping.

550
00:24:31,690 --> 00:24:34,370
It was just bureaucracy.

551
00:24:34,370 --> 00:24:37,430
And my father, as
well as my uncle,

552
00:24:37,430 --> 00:24:39,770
the uncle that we went to meet--

553
00:24:39,770 --> 00:24:40,820
Not uncle Werner.

554
00:24:40,820 --> 00:24:41,940
Not uncle Werner.

555
00:24:41,940 --> 00:24:44,990
This was Uncle Walter.

556
00:24:44,990 --> 00:24:50,120
These two men were
sent to France, Gurs,

557
00:24:50,120 --> 00:24:53,690

which was a common place to--

558
00:24:53,690 --> 00:24:55,300
at the time it was
a holding camp.

559
00:24:55,300 --> 00:24:57,900

560
00:24:57,900 --> 00:24:59,370
Run by the French?

561
00:24:59,370 --> 00:25:00,870
By the Belgians.

562
00:25:00,870 --> 00:25:01,900
In France?

563
00:25:01,900 --> 00:25:03,750
In France.

564
00:25:03,750 --> 00:25:08,220
This is where, frequently,
people would be sent.

565
00:25:08,220 --> 00:25:14,010
And their crime was that
they were in Belgium

566
00:25:14,010 --> 00:25:16,830
with German passports?

567
00:25:16,830 --> 00:25:17,460
Well--

568
00:25:17,460 --> 00:25:18,580
Because you all--

569
00:25:18,580 --> 00:25:21,060
What we now would
call green cards.

570

00:25:21,060 --> 00:25:23,070

I mean, they were not citizens.

571

00:25:23,070 --> 00:25:24,170

Of Belgium?

572

00:25:24,170 --> 00:25:25,020

No.

573

00:25:25,020 --> 00:25:27,315

They were allowed
into the country--

574

00:25:27,315 --> 00:25:29,820

575

00:25:29,820 --> 00:25:32,250

I didn't realize
all this exactly--

576

00:25:32,250 --> 00:25:36,800

but they were allowed into
the country as passersby.

577

00:25:36,800 --> 00:25:37,740

Transit.

578

00:25:37,740 --> 00:25:39,300

Exactly.

579

00:25:39,300 --> 00:25:41,100

Refugees.

580

00:25:41,100 --> 00:25:43,650

And the country
took them in, which

581

00:25:43,650 --> 00:25:46,780

is more than other
countries did, of course.

582

00:25:46,780 --> 00:25:50,810
But if they were German,
they were enemies.

583
00:25:50,810 --> 00:25:52,530
So there you go.

584
00:25:52,530 --> 00:25:55,160
No one understood
they were Jews.

585
00:25:55,160 --> 00:26:01,530
But here were these women,
my mother, without a husband.

586
00:26:01,530 --> 00:26:03,420
My mother was sewing.

587
00:26:03,420 --> 00:26:07,720
I'm assuming she was sewing
for other people, and for me,

588
00:26:07,720 --> 00:26:08,290
for sure.

589
00:26:08,290 --> 00:26:10,950

590
00:26:10,950 --> 00:26:14,250
And life went on.

591
00:26:14,250 --> 00:26:17,720
I don't exactly know how.

592
00:26:17,720 --> 00:26:23,830
I went to first grade,
whatever first grade was then.

593
00:26:23,830 --> 00:26:28,320
And my father did come home.

594
00:26:28,320 --> 00:26:30,420

He escaped.

595

00:26:30,420 --> 00:26:35,310

Do you now know how many
months incarceration there was?

596

00:26:35,310 --> 00:26:36,670

It was months.

597

00:26:36,670 --> 00:26:37,170

Months.

598

00:26:37,170 --> 00:26:38,730

It was a lot of months.

599

00:26:38,730 --> 00:26:39,990

OK.

600

00:26:39,990 --> 00:26:42,235

And the Jewish star
had already happened.

601

00:26:42,235 --> 00:26:43,610

So that was the
German occupation

602

00:26:43,610 --> 00:26:44,485

had already happened?

603

00:26:44,485 --> 00:26:47,910

So the German occupation
had already happened.

604

00:26:47,910 --> 00:26:52,370

But my father had
managed to escape.

605

00:26:52,370 --> 00:26:56,790

If you're asking me my memories
as a child, I don't know how.

606

00:26:56,790 --> 00:27:01,000

I just remember seeing my
father looking like a skeleton,

607
00:27:01,000 --> 00:27:04,030
and just being thrilled
that he was home.

608
00:27:04,030 --> 00:27:08,560
But I was scared, too, because
I already recognized him.

609
00:27:08,560 --> 00:27:12,130
So by this point,
the war has started.

610
00:27:12,130 --> 00:27:16,450
By the time he escapes,
the war has started.

611
00:27:16,450 --> 00:27:19,450
Germany has occupied Belgium.

612
00:27:19,450 --> 00:27:24,100
And not only occupied,
but now you, personally,

613
00:27:24,100 --> 00:27:28,030
have to wear the star
that distinguishes you

614
00:27:28,030 --> 00:27:28,920
from anybody else.

615
00:27:28,920 --> 00:27:34,690
And between that, between
the star and the occupation,

616
00:27:34,690 --> 00:27:39,790
there was the outpouring
of Brussels going

617
00:27:39,790 --> 00:27:42,100
toward the French borders.

618
00:27:42,100 --> 00:27:45,010
This was like reliving
the First World War.

619
00:27:45,010 --> 00:27:46,810
I didn't understand
that, either.

620
00:27:46,810 --> 00:27:47,910
You saw people leave?

621
00:27:47,910 --> 00:27:49,690
Oh, en masse.

622
00:27:49,690 --> 00:27:52,090
People were leaving en masse.

623
00:27:52,090 --> 00:27:54,590
And there were dead
horses on the road

624
00:27:54,590 --> 00:27:56,360
and bodies on the road.

625
00:27:56,360 --> 00:27:59,150
And my mother and my aunt--

626
00:27:59,150 --> 00:28:01,300
my cousin and I got the measles.

627
00:28:01,300 --> 00:28:03,880
I remember we were sick.

628
00:28:03,880 --> 00:28:06,190
But you know, everything
to us was half a game.

629
00:28:06,190 --> 00:28:08,650
So you were trying to
leave Belgium as well?

630

00:28:08,650 --> 00:28:11,680
We were trying to leave Brussels
because the Germans were

631

00:28:11,680 --> 00:28:15,850
going to invade, and
these women were scared.

632

00:28:15,850 --> 00:28:17,860
They were reliving
the First World War.

633

00:28:17,860 --> 00:28:20,650
Actually, we were
going into the fire,

634

00:28:20,650 --> 00:28:23,900
so it didn't do much good.

635

00:28:23,900 --> 00:28:26,030
But we turned around.

636

00:28:26,030 --> 00:28:27,530
You went into the fire, you say?

637

00:28:27,530 --> 00:28:30,530
Well, the fighting was
actually taking place

638

00:28:30,530 --> 00:28:34,580
on the border of France, where
all these people were escaping.

639

00:28:34,580 --> 00:28:38,110
So we were going
toward more war.

640

00:28:38,110 --> 00:28:41,710
And by the time we got back,
Brussels had been overtaken.

641

00:28:41,710 --> 00:28:43,300

And your father was
still in prison?

642
00:28:43,300 --> 00:28:44,616
Yes.

643
00:28:44,616 --> 00:28:46,970
OK, so you remember that flight?

644
00:28:46,970 --> 00:28:49,650
I remember the flight.

645
00:28:49,650 --> 00:28:52,950
And I remember eating
strawberries in farmhouses

646
00:28:52,950 --> 00:28:55,815
and drinking milk in farmhouses.

647
00:28:55,815 --> 00:28:56,940
Where was your grandmother?

648
00:28:56,940 --> 00:28:59,250
And my grandmother was with us.

649
00:28:59,250 --> 00:29:01,870
My grandmother was very strong.

650
00:29:01,870 --> 00:29:05,290
Anyway, she wasn't that old,
even though I thought she was.

651
00:29:05,290 --> 00:29:06,266
[CHUCKLES]

652
00:29:06,266 --> 00:29:09,730

653
00:29:09,730 --> 00:29:12,340
And so you go
partially, and you see

654

00:29:12,340 --> 00:29:15,435

that it's going into more
chaos and more fighting.

655

00:29:15,435 --> 00:29:17,040

And so you turned around.

656

00:29:17,040 --> 00:29:18,040

Everybody turned around.

657

00:29:18,040 --> 00:29:19,440

Everybody turned around.

658

00:29:19,440 --> 00:29:20,150

Right.

659

00:29:20,150 --> 00:29:21,160

OK.

660

00:29:21,160 --> 00:29:23,200

And you make your way
back to the same place?

661

00:29:23,200 --> 00:29:24,940

To the same place.

662

00:29:24,940 --> 00:29:29,980

And the landlady had taken
care of our apartment,

663

00:29:29,980 --> 00:29:32,920

as well as, I
imagine, my aunt's.

664

00:29:32,920 --> 00:29:35,320

In general, what
was the attitude

665

00:29:35,320 --> 00:29:40,240

of local Belgians to
you, to other refugees?

666

00:29:40,240 --> 00:29:42,580

What was the
atmosphere like there?

667

00:29:42,580 --> 00:29:47,320

We had a wonderful
Christian landlady.

668

00:29:47,320 --> 00:29:49,240

Belgium was a--

669

00:29:49,240 --> 00:29:52,390

I know this now as an adult--

670

00:29:52,390 --> 00:29:56,980

Belgium was basically
a Catholic country,

671

00:29:56,980 --> 00:30:00,870

and heroic in the way--

672

00:30:00,870 --> 00:30:04,270

this is Belgium, only Belgium.

673

00:30:04,270 --> 00:30:07,840

It's not Poland and
it's not Russia.

674

00:30:07,840 --> 00:30:13,450

There was an atmosphere of
helping Jewish, especially

675

00:30:13,450 --> 00:30:15,530

children.

676

00:30:15,530 --> 00:30:18,050

And I was never afraid.

677

00:30:18,050 --> 00:30:22,160

I was extremely
uncomfortable with the star,

678

00:30:22,160 --> 00:30:25,050

and my mother pulled
me out of school,

679

00:30:25,050 --> 00:30:28,870

because I didn't know why
I had to wear the star.

680

00:30:28,870 --> 00:30:31,560

And of course,
children must have

681

00:30:31,560 --> 00:30:36,780

made fun or stared or
wondered, and at that point

682

00:30:36,780 --> 00:30:38,130

my mother took me out of school.

683

00:30:38,130 --> 00:30:41,730

And that is about the time
that my father came back

684

00:30:41,730 --> 00:30:42,780

into our lives.

685

00:30:42,780 --> 00:30:44,880

Oh my gosh, all that chaos.

686

00:30:44,880 --> 00:30:46,790

It was nothing but chaos.

687

00:30:46,790 --> 00:30:47,820

Yeah.

688

00:30:47,820 --> 00:30:50,880

It was nothing but chaos.

689

00:30:50,880 --> 00:30:55,740

It was nothing but chaos, but
my mother continued not school,

690

00:30:55,740 --> 00:30:58,170

but dancing lessons.

691

00:30:58,170 --> 00:31:03,810

And the imagination kept going.

692

00:31:03,810 --> 00:31:06,660

She turned everything
into a game,

693

00:31:06,660 --> 00:31:09,990

and it stood me in such
good stead in my life.

694

00:31:09,990 --> 00:31:14,100

So was that your way of coping?

695

00:31:14,100 --> 00:31:16,490

Totally.

696

00:31:16,490 --> 00:31:18,040

Totally.

697

00:31:18,040 --> 00:31:20,600

So things became games.

698

00:31:20,600 --> 00:31:22,720

Everything was a game.

699

00:31:22,720 --> 00:31:25,520

I'm reminded of that
film Life is Beautiful.

700

00:31:25,520 --> 00:31:26,890

Yes.

701

00:31:26,890 --> 00:31:28,930

There was something
quite realistic

702

00:31:28,930 --> 00:31:32,210

about that film, that parents--

703

00:31:32,210 --> 00:31:36,210

I don't know about all parents,
but my mother especially.

704

00:31:36,210 --> 00:31:37,710

And my father was an optimist.

705

00:31:37,710 --> 00:31:39,510

My father never
believed any of this

706

00:31:39,510 --> 00:31:41,520

would really come to an end.

707

00:31:41,520 --> 00:31:46,560

So there was not only
being loved so much,

708

00:31:46,560 --> 00:31:49,590

but being given the
opportunity to remain

709

00:31:49,590 --> 00:31:55,640

as just possible a child and
looking at life as a child.

710

00:31:55,640 --> 00:31:57,145

That's amazing.

711

00:31:57,145 --> 00:31:57,770

That's amazing.

712

00:31:57,770 --> 00:31:58,400

Is it?

713

00:31:58,400 --> 00:31:59,240

Yeah.

714

00:31:59,240 --> 00:32:03,930

Or parents pretty much

shelter children, or try.

715
00:32:03,930 --> 00:32:04,580
Sometimes.

716
00:32:04,580 --> 00:32:06,190
We are talking
sometimes, of course.

717
00:32:06,190 --> 00:32:07,330
Sometimes.

718
00:32:07,330 --> 00:32:09,800
It's a huge generalization.

719
00:32:09,800 --> 00:32:12,480
Yeah.

720
00:32:12,480 --> 00:32:15,740
But that ability to
have had it succeed.

721
00:32:15,740 --> 00:32:18,380
It succeeded.

722
00:32:18,380 --> 00:32:21,590
I think that I probably
was born thinking I

723
00:32:21,590 --> 00:32:24,910
was going to be Shirley Temple.

724
00:32:24,910 --> 00:32:28,310
I remember wooden
curlers in my hair.

725
00:32:28,310 --> 00:32:31,010
And I remember
there's a war going

726
00:32:31,010 --> 00:32:36,260
on all around us, in horror,

and my mother managed this.

727

00:32:36,260 --> 00:32:38,745

And no work.

728

00:32:38,745 --> 00:32:40,120

There were
committees, of course,

729

00:32:40,120 --> 00:32:43,060

the Belgian Jewish
Committee helping.

730

00:32:43,060 --> 00:32:47,940

But she must have
been quite a wonder.

731

00:32:47,940 --> 00:32:50,475

So your father returns.

732

00:32:50,475 --> 00:32:53,820

733

00:32:53,820 --> 00:32:55,440

You've seen all of this chaos.

734

00:32:55,440 --> 00:32:56,700

You've seen the occupation.

735

00:32:56,700 --> 00:32:59,400

You see you have to
wear the yellow star.

736

00:32:59,400 --> 00:33:01,890

By this point, I assume you
must have already spoken

737

00:33:01,890 --> 00:33:02,820

some French?

738

00:33:02,820 --> 00:33:04,140

A lot of French.

739
00:33:04,140 --> 00:33:06,570
Did your parents also?

740
00:33:06,570 --> 00:33:07,560
Not.

741
00:33:07,560 --> 00:33:09,180
Barely.

742
00:33:09,180 --> 00:33:14,630
Barely, which was obviously
some part of the downfall.

743
00:33:14,630 --> 00:33:16,830
And my grandmother never.

744
00:33:16,830 --> 00:33:19,740
But children-- I became a
foreign language teacher

745
00:33:19,740 --> 00:33:20,850
for good reason--

746
00:33:20,850 --> 00:33:24,510
children just assimilate
language so quickly.

747
00:33:24,510 --> 00:33:25,680
Sponges.

748
00:33:25,680 --> 00:33:26,460
Oh, yeah.

749
00:33:26,460 --> 00:33:27,752
It was no problem.

750
00:33:27,752 --> 00:33:29,680
OK.

751
00:33:29,680 --> 00:33:32,650

Did you often have to be the interlocutor then between?

752
00:33:32,650 --> 00:33:34,350
Yes.

753
00:33:34,350 --> 00:33:36,300
Yes.

754
00:33:36,300 --> 00:33:37,680
How did that happen?

755
00:33:37,680 --> 00:33:41,140
You're six years old
maybe, seven years old?

756
00:33:41,140 --> 00:33:41,640
Six.

757
00:33:41,640 --> 00:33:44,340

758
00:33:44,340 --> 00:33:45,240
Did I love it?

759
00:33:45,240 --> 00:33:46,900
I think so.

760
00:33:46,900 --> 00:33:48,990
I think I was very impatient.

761
00:33:48,990 --> 00:33:51,780
I think I felt my mother
should definitely have learned

762
00:33:51,780 --> 00:33:55,265
French better than she did.

763
00:33:55,265 --> 00:33:56,940
Did you have to
translate for her?

764

00:33:56,940 --> 00:33:58,800

Oh, sure, at times.

765

00:33:58,800 --> 00:34:01,390

At times.

766

00:34:01,390 --> 00:34:04,080

And my grandmother was--

767

00:34:04,080 --> 00:34:06,230

well, my grandmother
was my mother.

768

00:34:06,230 --> 00:34:07,490

Tell me about her personality.

769

00:34:07,490 --> 00:34:13,030

Oh, my grandmother, she
was a very tiny person,

770

00:34:13,030 --> 00:34:15,580

but you didn't cross
my grandmother.

771

00:34:15,580 --> 00:34:17,310

She just knew what
she wanted to do.

772

00:34:17,310 --> 00:34:21,460

She would navigate
between her two daughters.

773

00:34:21,460 --> 00:34:25,210

She had my mother, who
was her favorite child,

774

00:34:25,210 --> 00:34:28,330

and my oldest aunt, Frieda.

775

00:34:28,330 --> 00:34:29,920

And my grandmother
would take turns,

776
00:34:29,920 --> 00:34:31,929
navigating between
the two sisters.

777
00:34:31,929 --> 00:34:34,960
So what happened to Margot?

778
00:34:34,960 --> 00:34:39,150
Margot had already left
for the United States.

779
00:34:39,150 --> 00:34:41,679
Oh, how did that happen?

780
00:34:41,679 --> 00:34:44,350
They were able to leave
and the others weren't.

781
00:34:44,350 --> 00:34:48,429
It was quite a sad
parting, because we all

782
00:34:48,429 --> 00:34:50,570
loved each other.

783
00:34:50,570 --> 00:34:53,230
And of course, as
I later found out,

784
00:34:53,230 --> 00:34:59,190
Werner and my father,
Julius, went for visas.

785
00:34:59,190 --> 00:35:00,630
I didn't know this as a child.

786
00:35:00,630 --> 00:35:03,120
But my father's
name was misspelled.

787
00:35:03,120 --> 00:35:05,880

A letter was missing
from Westheimer,

788
00:35:05,880 --> 00:35:11,010
so he didn't get a
visa and my uncle did.

789
00:35:11,010 --> 00:35:13,680
Did your uncle, who was
married into your mother's

790
00:35:13,680 --> 00:35:16,860
side of the family,
did he get an affidavit

791
00:35:16,860 --> 00:35:18,330
from his own relatives?

792
00:35:18,330 --> 00:35:22,500
He received an affidavit
from two brothers, who

793
00:35:22,500 --> 00:35:25,700
were lawyers in
Chicago, and that's

794
00:35:25,700 --> 00:35:27,080
how he received an affidavit.

795
00:35:27,080 --> 00:35:30,490
They would have done
the same for my father,

796
00:35:30,490 --> 00:35:32,810
had bureaucracy not intervened.

797
00:35:32,810 --> 00:35:35,600
So your father didn't
get it because his name

798
00:35:35,600 --> 00:35:36,590
was misspelled.

799

00:35:36,590 --> 00:35:38,080

By a letter.

800

00:35:38,080 --> 00:35:41,820

By one letter in the alphabet
on the letter, on the affidavit

801

00:35:41,820 --> 00:35:42,320

itself.

802

00:35:42,320 --> 00:35:44,880

On the affidavit.

803

00:35:44,880 --> 00:35:46,640

Oh, that must have been such a--

804

00:35:46,640 --> 00:35:49,190

805

00:35:49,190 --> 00:35:52,640

Well, it cost them their lives.

806

00:35:52,640 --> 00:35:55,310

807

00:35:55,310 --> 00:35:56,990

Did I understand all of it?

808

00:35:56,990 --> 00:36:00,890

No, I just understood
the parting was awful.

809

00:36:00,890 --> 00:36:06,360

And of course, everybody
wanted to come to America.

810

00:36:06,360 --> 00:36:09,690

And I don't think anybody
realized that America's borders

811

00:36:09,690 --> 00:36:11,530

were closed.

812
00:36:11,530 --> 00:36:15,248
I think we just thought
Roosevelt was God

813
00:36:15,248 --> 00:36:16,915
and was going to make
everything happen.

814
00:36:16,915 --> 00:36:20,890

815
00:36:20,890 --> 00:36:24,020
And none of this was quite
understood as a child.

816
00:36:24,020 --> 00:36:29,650
I do remember watching
as the war evolved

817
00:36:29,650 --> 00:36:33,810
and hearing so much
about Roosevelt.

818
00:36:33,810 --> 00:36:35,250
Everybody's hope.

819
00:36:35,250 --> 00:36:38,240
Everybody's hope.

820
00:36:38,240 --> 00:36:40,580
Roosevelt was everybody's hope.

821
00:36:40,580 --> 00:36:48,920
So of the four sisters, one
had already been in Brussels.

822
00:36:48,920 --> 00:36:52,150
Two-- one had already
been in Brussels.

823

00:36:52,150 --> 00:37:00,410
The youngest sister had left
in 1937 for the United States.

824
00:37:00,410 --> 00:37:01,400
Hella.

825
00:37:01,400 --> 00:37:08,790
Hella, and her husband Walter,
and a little girl, Florie.

826
00:37:08,790 --> 00:37:12,030
And then Werner and
Margot and Bernt.

827
00:37:12,030 --> 00:37:15,420
Just everybody left
on the last boat.

828
00:37:15,420 --> 00:37:18,150
They supposedly left
on the last boat.

829
00:37:18,150 --> 00:37:22,450
And so who was left was
Frieda and her husband,

830
00:37:22,450 --> 00:37:23,850
who was also in prison?

831
00:37:23,850 --> 00:37:24,820
Yes.

832
00:37:24,820 --> 00:37:27,425
And Henry, your youngest cousin.

833
00:37:27,425 --> 00:37:27,925
Yes.

834
00:37:27,925 --> 00:37:29,550
Your mother, your
father, and yourself.

835
00:37:29,550 --> 00:37:29,990
Exactly.

836
00:37:29,990 --> 00:37:30,330
And your grandmother.

837
00:37:30,330 --> 00:37:31,560
And my grandmother.

838
00:37:31,560 --> 00:37:34,080
And so that's when you said,
when she goes between the two

839
00:37:34,080 --> 00:37:34,740
daughters--

840
00:37:34,740 --> 00:37:38,370
It's the oldest
sister and my mother.

841
00:37:38,370 --> 00:37:39,010
The third?

842
00:37:39,010 --> 00:37:40,740
Right.

843
00:37:40,740 --> 00:37:44,520
And so she sometimes
lived with us

844
00:37:44,520 --> 00:37:46,710
and sometimes lived with Frieda.

845
00:37:46,710 --> 00:37:49,370
And she babysat for me.

846
00:37:49,370 --> 00:37:51,370
Well, it was not called
babysitting at the time,

847
00:37:51,370 --> 00:37:55,050

but she stayed with me a lot.

848
00:37:55,050 --> 00:37:57,630
And why was your mother
her favorite child?

849
00:37:57,630 --> 00:38:00,540

850
00:38:00,540 --> 00:38:05,640
I can't exactly answer
that, but it isn't

851
00:38:05,640 --> 00:38:09,600
because she lost my mother.

852
00:38:09,600 --> 00:38:13,320
My mother would never have
left her mother behind.

853
00:38:13,320 --> 00:38:14,940
I think the other
daughters were quite

854
00:38:14,940 --> 00:38:18,510
willing to make their own
way, maybe rightfully so.

855
00:38:18,510 --> 00:38:19,800
I don't know.

856
00:38:19,800 --> 00:38:22,890
But my mother would never
have left her mother.

857
00:38:22,890 --> 00:38:24,810
So she was very attached
to her own mother,

858
00:38:24,810 --> 00:38:27,540
and maybe it went both ways.

859

00:38:27,540 --> 00:38:28,830
OK.

860
00:38:28,830 --> 00:38:31,280
OK.

861
00:38:31,280 --> 00:38:33,380
That's not an easy
question to answer, I know.

862
00:38:33,380 --> 00:38:35,930
I don't exactly know, either.

863
00:38:35,930 --> 00:38:39,980
I do know from later stories
that she was definitely

864
00:38:39,980 --> 00:38:42,410
the favorite daughter.

865
00:38:42,410 --> 00:38:46,590
And your father reappears.

866
00:38:46,590 --> 00:38:48,860
Is he able to--

867
00:38:48,860 --> 00:38:52,290
I mean, if he looks so
different from when you had last

868
00:38:52,290 --> 00:38:56,500
seen him, and I think you said
he looked like a skeleton?

869
00:38:56,500 --> 00:38:58,020
Yeah.

870
00:38:58,020 --> 00:38:58,845
Was he unhealthy?

871
00:38:58,845 --> 00:38:59,790
Was he sick?

872
00:38:59,790 --> 00:39:02,110
He had typhoid.

873
00:39:02,110 --> 00:39:08,770
And he had actually hidden
beneath cadavers to escape,

874
00:39:08,770 --> 00:39:10,210
and escaped with typhoid.

875
00:39:10,210 --> 00:39:15,640
And was held up in between,
but eventually made his way,

876
00:39:15,640 --> 00:39:19,750
because my father, he
was just like that.

877
00:39:19,750 --> 00:39:23,000
You could have great confidence
in what he set out to do.

878
00:39:23,000 --> 00:39:25,320
OK.

879
00:39:25,320 --> 00:39:27,840
Was he able then to help
put food on the table

880
00:39:27,840 --> 00:39:29,160
once he came back?

881
00:39:29,160 --> 00:39:31,200
Once he came back, yes.

882
00:39:31,200 --> 00:39:35,580
And within, I can't
remember a span of time,

883
00:39:35,580 --> 00:39:40,200
but there were then

good times again.

884

00:39:40,200 --> 00:39:46,680

There was a lull, and we
moved to a bigger apartment.

885

00:39:46,680 --> 00:39:48,600

My grandmother came
to live with us,

886

00:39:48,600 --> 00:39:51,620

and we even had a little yard.

887

00:39:51,620 --> 00:39:58,190

And for immigrants in Brussels,
that seemed to be wonderful.

888

00:39:58,190 --> 00:40:04,330

Well, tell me, at the same
time this was happening

889

00:40:04,330 --> 00:40:09,810

and in your family, the minute
that German soldiers would

890

00:40:09,810 --> 00:40:13,320

march into a Polish
village, Polish Jews

891

00:40:13,320 --> 00:40:17,740

would be rounded up
and taken to a ghetto.

892

00:40:17,740 --> 00:40:21,700

Do you know why that
wasn't going on in Belgium?

893

00:40:21,700 --> 00:40:26,500

There was a committee,
and I found this out.

894

00:40:26,500 --> 00:40:28,150

We moved a lot.

895
00:40:28,150 --> 00:40:31,030
The minute you had to
register, my father moved.

896
00:40:31,030 --> 00:40:32,080
So he didn't register?

897
00:40:32,080 --> 00:40:36,230
He never registered, and
didn't do him any good anyway.

898
00:40:36,230 --> 00:40:39,020
But he never
registered, figuring

899
00:40:39,020 --> 00:40:43,890
that these committees that
were set up to register Jews

900
00:40:43,890 --> 00:40:46,360
were a trap.

901
00:40:46,360 --> 00:40:48,620
And in fact, that
was the case later.

902
00:40:48,620 --> 00:40:50,420
Who set up these committees?

903
00:40:50,420 --> 00:40:53,780
These were Jewish committees
set up by Jewish--

904
00:40:53,780 --> 00:40:54,370
Organizations.

905
00:40:54,370 --> 00:40:57,650
--organizations, that
were told by the Nazis,

906
00:40:57,650 --> 00:41:00,140

if you can round up Jews--

907
00:41:00,140 --> 00:41:00,780
not round up.

908
00:41:00,780 --> 00:41:01,760
No, no, no, no.

909
00:41:01,760 --> 00:41:03,110
Wrong term.

910
00:41:03,110 --> 00:41:06,290
If you can get us names
and phone numbers,

911
00:41:06,290 --> 00:41:08,810
these Jewish families
will be saved.

912
00:41:08,810 --> 00:41:10,900
Well, it was quite contrary.

913
00:41:10,900 --> 00:41:13,190
And history tells all
kinds of other stories

914
00:41:13,190 --> 00:41:14,800
about these committees.

915
00:41:14,800 --> 00:41:15,440
OK.

916
00:41:15,440 --> 00:41:19,910
But my father didn't
trust anybody,

917
00:41:19,910 --> 00:41:23,100
and he had decided that
he wasn't registering.

918
00:41:23,100 --> 00:41:28,370
So the minute we had to register

an apartment, we would move.

919

00:41:28,370 --> 00:41:31,940

So we moved a lot, and
sometimes in little places

920

00:41:31,940 --> 00:41:34,340

and sometimes in bigger places.

921

00:41:34,340 --> 00:41:39,290

And the place I remember
best was the last apartment,

922

00:41:39,290 --> 00:41:41,620

which, of course, was
probably the worst apartment

923

00:41:41,620 --> 00:41:44,770

because that was 1942.

924

00:41:44,770 --> 00:41:50,200

So you were able to live in
Belgium for almost three years

925

00:41:50,200 --> 00:41:51,860

after the war starts?

926

00:41:51,860 --> 00:41:52,510

Correct.

927

00:41:52,510 --> 00:41:53,440

Correct.

928

00:41:53,440 --> 00:41:58,160

Now, did you, as an adult
or later on in life,

929

00:41:58,160 --> 00:42:02,270

learn what the Nazi policies
in Belgium themselves

930

00:42:02,270 --> 00:42:07,330

were against native Belgian
Jews, not only the refugees?

931
00:42:07,330 --> 00:42:14,300
OK, against Belgian native Jews,
they were better than against--

932
00:42:14,300 --> 00:42:20,250
the first Jews that Nazis were
after were non-Belgian Jews.

933
00:42:20,250 --> 00:42:20,750
OK.

934
00:42:20,750 --> 00:42:23,180
Belgian Jews were
more protected,

935
00:42:23,180 --> 00:42:26,180
both by their own
government probably,

936
00:42:26,180 --> 00:42:29,270
as well as the
Nazis' disinterest.

937
00:42:29,270 --> 00:42:32,840
But we would have been first.

938
00:42:32,840 --> 00:42:36,680
And in 1942, of course,
as we all know now,

939
00:42:36,680 --> 00:42:39,350
my parents noticed people
disappearing all around,

940
00:42:39,350 --> 00:42:43,630
which was the "final solution."

941
00:42:43,630 --> 00:42:47,610
And that's when they
made the decision,

942
00:42:47,610 --> 00:42:51,060
along with an underground
committee that was set up,

943
00:42:51,060 --> 00:42:56,470
made up of Christians and Jews,
to find homes for children.

944
00:42:56,470 --> 00:43:01,490

945
00:43:01,490 --> 00:43:03,200
I mean, did I know
this at the time?

946
00:43:03,200 --> 00:43:04,100
No, I did not.

947
00:43:04,100 --> 00:43:06,630
I thought I was going to summer
camp, as a matter of fact.

948
00:43:06,630 --> 00:43:11,060
But Christians and
Jews and people--

949
00:43:11,060 --> 00:43:14,240
nuns, priests-- people
would gather and decide

950
00:43:14,240 --> 00:43:18,090
how many Jewish children
they could save.

951
00:43:18,090 --> 00:43:21,780
And my parents found a family.

952
00:43:21,780 --> 00:43:23,250
You were how old?

953
00:43:23,250 --> 00:43:25,710

At that time I was nine.

954
00:43:25,710 --> 00:43:28,110
Was I nine?

955
00:43:28,110 --> 00:43:30,660
Between eight and nine.

956
00:43:30,660 --> 00:43:34,050
And they found two
sisters to each other who

957
00:43:34,050 --> 00:43:36,570
were able to take two children.

958
00:43:36,570 --> 00:43:43,120
That was my young cousin Henry,
younger by a year, and myself.

959
00:43:43,120 --> 00:43:47,070
And my father said we
were going to summer camp.

960
00:43:47,070 --> 00:43:48,900
How did you get there?

961
00:43:48,900 --> 00:43:51,270
He took a train.

962
00:43:51,270 --> 00:43:52,980
With the star on him?

963
00:43:52,980 --> 00:43:54,280
No.

964
00:43:54,280 --> 00:43:57,780
He hid the star,
and we did, too.

965
00:43:57,780 --> 00:44:01,050
But we were on a
train with Germans.

966

00:44:01,050 --> 00:44:06,000
And I remember being told, now
you don't understand a word,

967

00:44:06,000 --> 00:44:07,500
so just hush.

968

00:44:07,500 --> 00:44:08,986
Pretend you don't know German?

969

00:44:08,986 --> 00:44:09,680
Exactly.

970

00:44:09,680 --> 00:44:10,960
But we were so excited.

971

00:44:10,960 --> 00:44:13,110
We thought we were going
to a regular summer camp.

972

00:44:13,110 --> 00:44:15,710

973

00:44:15,710 --> 00:44:19,010
So we were on this
train, all three of us.

974

00:44:19,010 --> 00:44:23,680
My father must
have been panicked,

975

00:44:23,680 --> 00:44:28,660
but never acted it,
not in my memory.

976

00:44:28,660 --> 00:44:30,310
So where did you end up?

977

00:44:30,310 --> 00:44:35,640
We ended up in a little
town called Ottignies, which

978
00:44:35,640 --> 00:44:39,000
is maybe 25 kilometers
outside of Brussels,

979
00:44:39,000 --> 00:44:41,700
but I thought it was the other
end of the world at the time,

980
00:44:41,700 --> 00:44:43,300
of course.

981
00:44:43,300 --> 00:44:50,540
And the train station was at
the very low end of the town,

982
00:44:50,540 --> 00:44:53,400
and the houses were way high up.

983
00:44:53,400 --> 00:44:55,590
Now, we were city children.

984
00:44:55,590 --> 00:44:58,320
We had been raised in
Berlin and Brussels,

985
00:44:58,320 --> 00:45:01,860
under surveillance
of the tightest kind,

986
00:45:01,860 --> 00:45:03,910
as you can imagine.

987
00:45:03,910 --> 00:45:07,150
And here we were
suddenly in a village.

988
00:45:07,150 --> 00:45:08,680
And we loved it.

989
00:45:08,680 --> 00:45:10,750
We just loved it.

990

00:45:10,750 --> 00:45:14,760

Now, arriving at this
little-- to us it was a fire.

991

00:45:14,760 --> 00:45:19,750

It was not really a farm, but it
was a house with a big backyard

992

00:45:19,750 --> 00:45:21,490

and they were
growing vegetables,

993

00:45:21,490 --> 00:45:23,500

and we saw all this.

994

00:45:23,500 --> 00:45:26,830

Tell me, why would there be
surveillance of the toughest

995

00:45:26,830 --> 00:45:27,880

kind?

996

00:45:27,880 --> 00:45:29,380

My parents.

997

00:45:29,380 --> 00:45:30,130

Oh my God.

998

00:45:30,130 --> 00:45:33,680

I mean, we couldn't go
anywhere alone is what I meant.

999

00:45:33,680 --> 00:45:34,180

I'm sorry.

1000

00:45:34,180 --> 00:45:35,480

Wrong-- well, wrong word.

1001

00:45:35,480 --> 00:45:35,980

No, no.

1002

00:45:35,980 --> 00:45:37,960

The right, but
needs explanation.

1003

00:45:37,960 --> 00:45:38,860

Yes, of course.

1004

00:45:38,860 --> 00:45:45,130

I mean parental surveillance,
because wherever we went,

1005

00:45:45,130 --> 00:45:47,950

our parents were with us,
or somebody had to be.

1006

00:45:47,950 --> 00:45:49,570

They were scared for us.

1007

00:45:49,570 --> 00:45:50,560

Got it.

1008

00:45:50,560 --> 00:45:53,852

So now we seem to be in
a place that, number one,

1009

00:45:53,852 --> 00:45:55,060

we thought was a summer camp.

1010

00:45:55,060 --> 00:45:59,500

Number two, was just
wide open countryside.

1011

00:45:59,500 --> 00:46:00,810

And nobody had to be with you.

1012

00:46:00,810 --> 00:46:03,520

And we thought,
after my father left,

1013

00:46:03,520 --> 00:46:06,650

that nobody would
have to be with us.

1014
00:46:06,650 --> 00:46:10,470
But when my father left, we
knew it wasn't a summer camp.

1015
00:46:10,470 --> 00:46:13,980
It was just only the two of us,
so what kind of a summer camp

1016
00:46:13,980 --> 00:46:16,000
could this be?

1017
00:46:16,000 --> 00:46:18,040
But it didn't really take long.

1018
00:46:18,040 --> 00:46:21,300

1019
00:46:21,300 --> 00:46:23,100
What was that goodbye like?

1020
00:46:23,100 --> 00:46:23,760
Pardon me?

1021
00:46:23,760 --> 00:46:25,500
What was the goodbye
like to your father?

1022
00:46:25,500 --> 00:46:28,110

1023
00:46:28,110 --> 00:46:32,700
He just said, "mon petit
bÃ©bÃ©," "my little baby."

1024
00:46:32,700 --> 00:46:38,010
And I knew something
was just terribly wrong.

1025
00:46:38,010 --> 00:46:40,860

1026

00:46:40,860 --> 00:46:48,030

But I think either we
were very well taught

1027

00:46:48,030 --> 00:46:51,300

or we knew just to
do what children do

1028

00:46:51,300 --> 00:46:52,830

best, which is really survive.

1029

00:46:52,830 --> 00:46:57,980

1030

00:46:57,980 --> 00:47:03,110

I know, watching him go,
it was not a summer camp

1031

00:47:03,110 --> 00:47:05,510

kind of parting, although
children going to summer camp

1032

00:47:05,510 --> 00:47:06,920

can be very sad, too.

1033

00:47:06,920 --> 00:47:07,470

Yeah, yeah.

1034

00:47:07,470 --> 00:47:11,330

1035

00:47:11,330 --> 00:47:12,360

It was just heavier?

1036

00:47:12,360 --> 00:47:14,100

You felt it was heavier?

1037

00:47:14,100 --> 00:47:17,820

It was heavier than some
kind of a summer separation.

1038

00:47:17,820 --> 00:47:20,550

1039

00:47:20,550 --> 00:47:22,960

I think I'm more than,
perhaps, my younger cousin.

1040

00:47:22,960 --> 00:47:25,690

1041

00:47:25,690 --> 00:47:29,990

What were these
two sisters like?

1042

00:47:29,990 --> 00:47:33,010

Well, one of them was
absolutely wonderful,

1043

00:47:33,010 --> 00:47:35,740

and she eventually
became my godmother.

1044

00:47:35,740 --> 00:47:41,860

She was tall, always a cigarette
dangling from her mouth,

1045

00:47:41,860 --> 00:47:46,500

wearing an apron,
and a little angular.

1046

00:47:46,500 --> 00:47:50,030

Wonderfully natural.

1047

00:47:50,030 --> 00:47:50,780

No fuss.

1048

00:47:50,780 --> 00:47:53,510

1049

00:47:53,510 --> 00:47:56,960

We just knew this was
going to work out.

1050

00:47:56,960 --> 00:47:59,872

And her sister was
more in the background.

1051

00:47:59,872 --> 00:48:02,160

What were their names?

1052

00:48:02,160 --> 00:48:05,460

The sister's name was
Adele [? Ponsiss ?]

1053

00:48:05,460 --> 00:48:07,890

and Jeanne Duchet.

1054

00:48:07,890 --> 00:48:09,180

Jeanne Duchet.

1055

00:48:09,180 --> 00:48:13,170

Who became Marraine,
my godmother.

1056

00:48:13,170 --> 00:48:14,500

Does Marraine mean godmother?

1057

00:48:14,500 --> 00:48:16,580

Marraine means
godmother, correct.

1058

00:48:16,580 --> 00:48:18,160

OK.

1059

00:48:18,160 --> 00:48:25,010

So basically, within a
few days, we were home.

1060

00:48:25,010 --> 00:48:26,840

What was that new home like?

1061

00:48:26,840 --> 00:48:30,590

It was a wonderful, little
house, another thing

1062

00:48:30,590 --> 00:48:35,180
we had never lived it, with a
basement where vegetables were

1063

00:48:35,180 --> 00:48:41,540
kept, one kitchen that
was like an everybody

1064

00:48:41,540 --> 00:48:45,950
room with a little oven,
and the oven was both there

1065

00:48:45,950 --> 00:48:48,770
to heat the room and cook.

1066

00:48:48,770 --> 00:48:55,460
There was a salon, which was
the front room, the living room.

1067

00:48:55,460 --> 00:49:00,080
Upstairs, there
were two bedrooms.

1068

00:49:00,080 --> 00:49:04,910
One belonged to the
sisters and one was for us,

1069

00:49:04,910 --> 00:49:07,280
but we all slept together.

1070

00:49:07,280 --> 00:49:11,480
It was just decided that
this felt better, and warmer.

1071

00:49:11,480 --> 00:49:12,560
[LAUGHS]

1072

00:49:12,560 --> 00:49:13,220
And warmer.

1073

00:49:13,220 --> 00:49:14,870
And warmer.

1074
00:49:14,870 --> 00:49:17,300
In the winter, it
was pretty cold.

1075
00:49:17,300 --> 00:49:20,940
Why was it that your mother
didn't go to see you off there?

1076
00:49:20,940 --> 00:49:21,890
I don't know.

1077
00:49:21,890 --> 00:49:28,740
I think, from what I heard, that
my father looked very Gentile.

1078
00:49:28,740 --> 00:49:32,130
He had blue eyes, blondish,
and he could pass.

1079
00:49:32,130 --> 00:49:36,180
I don't know that my
mother felt she could.

1080
00:49:36,180 --> 00:49:39,060
I don't even remember
saying goodbye to my mother.

1081
00:49:39,060 --> 00:49:41,970
I think my mother
couldn't handle this,

1082
00:49:41,970 --> 00:49:44,730
and I have since seen letters.

1083
00:49:44,730 --> 00:49:47,070
And I'm sure she
couldn't handle this.

1084
00:49:47,070 --> 00:49:52,570

1085

00:49:52,570 --> 00:49:55,720
When you left that time,
did you see her again?

1086
00:49:55,720 --> 00:49:57,020
I never saw my mother again.

1087
00:49:57,020 --> 00:50:01,000

1088
00:50:01,000 --> 00:50:03,030
I never saw my mother again.

1089
00:50:03,030 --> 00:50:06,990
And my greatest regret
was not even remembering

1090
00:50:06,990 --> 00:50:12,950
saying goodbye, or
perhaps even as a child,

1091
00:50:12,950 --> 00:50:14,990
not thinking that
it was important.

1092
00:50:14,990 --> 00:50:16,708
I don't know.

1093
00:50:16,708 --> 00:50:17,250
I don't know.

1094
00:50:17,250 --> 00:50:21,700

1095
00:50:21,700 --> 00:50:26,260
But you did enter a world
that was good for you.

1096
00:50:26,260 --> 00:50:27,380
That's what I'm sensing.

1097
00:50:27,380 --> 00:50:30,020

It was amazing.

1098
00:50:30,020 --> 00:50:32,700
What a gift.

1099
00:50:32,700 --> 00:50:33,200
What a gift.

1100
00:50:33,200 --> 00:50:36,100

1101
00:50:36,100 --> 00:50:44,190
It was a world so separate
from the reality in the world.

1102
00:50:44,190 --> 00:50:47,025
And we really didn't know.

1103
00:50:47,025 --> 00:50:50,030

1104
00:50:50,030 --> 00:50:51,570
Did we choose not to know?

1105
00:50:51,570 --> 00:50:53,090
I don't know.

1106
00:50:53,090 --> 00:50:55,070
It's perfectly understandable,
even if you had,

1107
00:50:55,070 --> 00:50:56,820
but you wouldn't
have known you had.

1108
00:50:56,820 --> 00:50:57,500
We didn't know.

1109
00:50:57,500 --> 00:51:00,180

1110

00:51:00,180 --> 00:51:05,480
We couldn't go to school, but
we learned how to pick berries.

1111
00:51:05,480 --> 00:51:06,410
We were roaming.

1112
00:51:06,410 --> 00:51:08,910
I've gone back many times.

1113
00:51:08,910 --> 00:51:11,840
And when my cousin, who
lives still in Brussels,

1114
00:51:11,840 --> 00:51:16,760
shows me where we walked,
we would walk in the woods

1115
00:51:16,760 --> 00:51:22,280
and the German Army was
stationed right above us.

1116
00:51:22,280 --> 00:51:24,900
I mean, if anybody had
asked us questions,

1117
00:51:24,900 --> 00:51:27,570
I don't know what
would have happened.

1118
00:51:27,570 --> 00:51:30,090
And we were totally unafraid.

1119
00:51:30,090 --> 00:51:31,660
You both spoke French, however.

1120
00:51:31,660 --> 00:51:32,670
Oh yes, fluently.

1121
00:51:32,670 --> 00:51:35,220

1122

00:51:35,220 --> 00:51:40,170
It had been decided we would be
the niece and nephew of Jeanne

1123
00:51:40,170 --> 00:51:43,290
Duchet, our eventual godmother.

1124
00:51:43,290 --> 00:51:45,945
So we had an identity.

1125
00:51:45,945 --> 00:51:47,320
And of course, we
found out later

1126
00:51:47,320 --> 00:51:48,925
that nobody really
believed this.

1127
00:51:48,925 --> 00:51:50,800
Everybody knew we were
Jewish children, which

1128
00:51:50,800 --> 00:51:52,570
was very interesting in itself.

1129
00:51:52,570 --> 00:51:54,510
Tell me a little bit
about the village itself.

1130
00:51:54,510 --> 00:51:55,870
How large was it?

1131
00:51:55,870 --> 00:51:57,297
About how many
people lived there?

1132
00:51:57,297 --> 00:51:59,380
You know, I can't tell you
how many people-- to me

1133
00:51:59,380 --> 00:52:00,430
it was very small.

1134
00:52:00,430 --> 00:52:01,680
People knew each other.

1135
00:52:01,680 --> 00:52:02,295
OK.

1136
00:52:02,295 --> 00:52:03,670
You knew the place
you would walk

1137
00:52:03,670 --> 00:52:10,380
to to get milk, unpasteurized,
and you knew the neighbors.

1138
00:52:10,380 --> 00:52:13,990
You felt perfectly free.

1139
00:52:13,990 --> 00:52:15,960
There was no one
you ever had to--

1140
00:52:15,960 --> 00:52:18,230
I mean, we would walk in
front of the city hall,

1141
00:52:18,230 --> 00:52:21,780
and the Germans
occupied city hall.

1142
00:52:21,780 --> 00:52:23,970
Hiding in plain sight.

1143
00:52:23,970 --> 00:52:27,190
We were totally visibly
hidden children.

1144
00:52:27,190 --> 00:52:28,120
Wow.

1145
00:52:28,120 --> 00:52:30,930
And there were other Jewish
children in the village.

1146
00:52:30,930 --> 00:52:32,630
Could you recognize them?

1147
00:52:32,630 --> 00:52:35,400
Well, recently, there
was a monument erected

1148
00:52:35,400 --> 00:52:40,320
in this town for the
rescuers, and our godmother

1149
00:52:40,320 --> 00:52:44,190
was, of course, memorialized
on this monument.

1150
00:52:44,190 --> 00:52:47,700
And I could not recognize,
but they recognized,

1151
00:52:47,700 --> 00:52:50,040
my cousin Henry and myself.

1152
00:52:50,040 --> 00:52:52,650
Oh, you were the little
Shirley that danced or sang.

1153
00:52:52,650 --> 00:52:57,300
Or whatever it is that
we did, they remembered.

1154
00:52:57,300 --> 00:52:59,640
Did I ever recognize anyone?

1155
00:52:59,640 --> 00:53:01,020
Yes.

1156
00:53:01,020 --> 00:53:06,780
Shortly after the war,
when we went back,

1157
00:53:06,780 --> 00:53:09,580

with my late husband
and our children,

1158
00:53:09,580 --> 00:53:12,195
we did recognize some
of the villagers.

1159
00:53:12,195 --> 00:53:12,945
We were now grown.

1160
00:53:12,945 --> 00:53:17,490

1161
00:53:17,490 --> 00:53:19,750
But did you recognize
other hidden children

1162
00:53:19,750 --> 00:53:21,190
as being hidden?

1163
00:53:21,190 --> 00:53:22,930
No.

1164
00:53:22,930 --> 00:53:25,120
You weren't allowed to do that.

1165
00:53:25,120 --> 00:53:28,100
Everybody had a story.

1166
00:53:28,100 --> 00:53:35,230
So the way you would unite would
be, more or less, as oh, we

1167
00:53:35,230 --> 00:53:38,170
belong to a scout team.

1168
00:53:38,170 --> 00:53:41,000
And all those
children were Jewish.

1169
00:53:41,000 --> 00:53:42,160
But you didn't know it.

1170
00:53:42,160 --> 00:53:45,480
No, we didn't know it.

1171
00:53:45,480 --> 00:53:46,230
We didn't know it.

1172
00:53:46,230 --> 00:53:47,700
And they arranged all ages.

1173
00:53:47,700 --> 00:53:49,435
I mean, some were 18.

1174
00:53:49,435 --> 00:53:50,610
Some were 16.

1175
00:53:50,610 --> 00:53:52,440
Somewhere were five.

1176
00:53:52,440 --> 00:53:58,290
And they were hidden in what was
considered to be an orphanage,

1177
00:53:58,290 --> 00:54:03,490
but was once, upon a time,
a school for disabled.

1178
00:54:03,490 --> 00:54:07,060
And these children were together
under the auspices of someone

1179
00:54:07,060 --> 00:54:09,530
else, who took care of them.

1180
00:54:09,530 --> 00:54:16,010
And since I did write a book
and the story is out there,

1181
00:54:16,010 --> 00:54:20,250
I have received phone calls from
people who were hidden right

1182
00:54:20,250 --> 00:54:21,840
in that institution--

1183
00:54:21,840 --> 00:54:22,810
Oh my.

1184
00:54:22,810 --> 00:54:26,410
--and didn't have such
a wonderful experience.

1185
00:54:26,410 --> 00:54:29,070
So we were quite fortunate.

1186
00:54:29,070 --> 00:54:30,660
We did.

1187
00:54:30,660 --> 00:54:31,160
OK.

1188
00:54:31,160 --> 00:54:32,870
And this doesn't
mean everybody, it's

1189
00:54:32,870 --> 00:54:35,960
just some, two people that
got in touch with me that

1190
00:54:35,960 --> 00:54:39,220
did not have a good experience.

1191
00:54:39,220 --> 00:54:41,035
So what made Marraine special?

1192
00:54:41,035 --> 00:54:43,770

1193
00:54:43,770 --> 00:54:50,340
I think the fact that she
was so not fussy, and caring

1194
00:54:50,340 --> 00:54:53,685

in the way that we weren't
accustomed to being cared for.

1195
00:54:53,685 --> 00:54:56,148

1196
00:54:56,148 --> 00:54:57,690
We didn't have to
be home for dinner.

1197
00:54:57,690 --> 00:54:59,730
We didn't have to
be home for lunch.

1198
00:54:59,730 --> 00:55:02,910
She trusted us completely.

1199
00:55:02,910 --> 00:55:06,900
She didn't have any
children of her own, ever.

1200
00:55:06,900 --> 00:55:13,870
And I think that this non-fussy
caring was just the best thing

1201
00:55:13,870 --> 00:55:16,000
that could have happened to us.

1202
00:55:16,000 --> 00:55:20,140
Because you had, for
understandable reasons, up

1203
00:55:20,140 --> 00:55:23,110
until then, parents who
are nervous for you.

1204
00:55:23,110 --> 00:55:24,790
Always.

1205
00:55:24,790 --> 00:55:26,640
Always.

1206

00:55:26,640 --> 00:55:30,240
And we were so loved.

1207
00:55:30,240 --> 00:55:32,370
We were so loved.

1208
00:55:32,370 --> 00:55:34,980
She genuinely loved us.

1209
00:55:34,980 --> 00:55:37,650
And my cousin remained with her.

1210
00:55:37,650 --> 00:55:40,920
His mother went back to Germany
because she married someone

1211
00:55:40,920 --> 00:55:42,780
who was on business there.

1212
00:55:42,780 --> 00:55:43,440
After the war?

1213
00:55:43,440 --> 00:55:47,280
After the war, he remained with
her and went to university.

1214
00:55:47,280 --> 00:55:48,990
He would commute every day.

1215
00:55:48,990 --> 00:55:53,220
She was a genuinely
loving human being.

1216
00:55:53,220 --> 00:55:55,430
Anyway, you couldn't
do what she did.

1217
00:55:55,430 --> 00:55:58,670
You just would have to be--

1218
00:55:58,670 --> 00:56:01,550
I don't think she thought of

herself as anybody heroic.

1219
00:56:01,550 --> 00:56:06,060
I think she just was a little
piece of the history that

1220
00:56:06,060 --> 00:56:07,340
made good things happen.

1221
00:56:07,340 --> 00:56:09,990

1222
00:56:09,990 --> 00:56:11,730
You couldn't go to
school, you said.

1223
00:56:11,730 --> 00:56:14,010
No, not formal.

1224
00:56:14,010 --> 00:56:14,600
Not formal.

1225
00:56:14,600 --> 00:56:16,740
So was there informal school?

1226
00:56:16,740 --> 00:56:19,800
Informal was the
words, and learning

1227
00:56:19,800 --> 00:56:22,860
what mushrooms
that you could eat,

1228
00:56:22,860 --> 00:56:25,118
the ones that weren't poisoned.

1229
00:56:25,118 --> 00:56:26,035
That's also important.

1230
00:56:26,035 --> 00:56:28,520
That was very important.

1231

00:56:28,520 --> 00:56:31,410

And learning, really, how to
navigate the countryside--

1232

00:56:31,410 --> 00:56:33,243

Did you have chores?

1233

00:56:33,243 --> 00:56:34,410

--and how to be on your own.

1234

00:56:34,410 --> 00:56:34,920

Pardon me?

1235

00:56:34,920 --> 00:56:36,310

Did you have chores.

1236

00:56:36,310 --> 00:56:39,240

Oh, we had enormous
amounts of chores, which

1237

00:56:39,240 --> 00:56:41,280

was another wonderful thing.

1238

00:56:41,280 --> 00:56:45,840

I think basically, we
were never given chores.

1239

00:56:45,840 --> 00:56:47,220

I took dancing lessons.

1240

00:56:47,220 --> 00:56:49,060

I'm not sure what my cousin--

1241

00:56:49,060 --> 00:56:50,640

he wasn't given chores, either.

1242

00:56:50,640 --> 00:56:51,810

You mean at home
with your parents?

1243

00:56:51,810 --> 00:56:53,070

At home with our parents.

1244
00:56:53,070 --> 00:56:54,480
But we loved the chores.

1245
00:56:54,480 --> 00:56:56,610
We were competing with each
other who was stronger,

1246
00:56:56,610 --> 00:57:03,090
who could peel more green beans,
who could be more potatoes.

1247
00:57:03,090 --> 00:57:04,800
We loved it.

1248
00:57:04,800 --> 00:57:07,740
We would gather what
was leftover from corn,

1249
00:57:07,740 --> 00:57:13,110
on our knees and kill ourselves,
but we never minded it.

1250
00:57:13,110 --> 00:57:14,760
That's a help.

1251
00:57:14,760 --> 00:57:15,570
That's a real help.

1252
00:57:15,570 --> 00:57:16,790
It's a real help.

1253
00:57:16,790 --> 00:57:19,470

1254
00:57:19,470 --> 00:57:22,900
My cousin now says it
really made a strong.

1255
00:57:22,900 --> 00:57:24,920
Well, maybe in a

way, it really did.

1256
00:57:24,920 --> 00:57:27,590

1257
00:57:27,590 --> 00:57:33,440
It was that part of education.

1258
00:57:33,440 --> 00:57:34,820
Then I became a teacher.

1259
00:57:34,820 --> 00:57:37,550
I always tell my
kids that there is

1260
00:57:37,550 --> 00:57:40,430
no way you can learn
as much behind a desk

1261
00:57:40,430 --> 00:57:44,810
as I learned in this
part of my life.

1262
00:57:44,810 --> 00:57:48,630
No, I didn't go back to
school until seventh grade.

1263
00:57:48,630 --> 00:57:49,450
Wow.

1264
00:57:49,450 --> 00:57:49,950
Wow.

1265
00:57:49,950 --> 00:57:52,070
Where I had a year
in Brussels, and then

1266
00:57:52,070 --> 00:57:54,050
I came to the United States.

1267
00:57:54,050 --> 00:57:58,040
So you have a gap of a good

three years or so, if not more.

1268
00:57:58,040 --> 00:57:59,090
Yes, four years.

1269
00:57:59,090 --> 00:57:59,590
Yeah.

1270
00:57:59,590 --> 00:58:02,220

1271
00:58:02,220 --> 00:58:05,340
Religion, did it come up?

1272
00:58:05,340 --> 00:58:07,560
Yes, that was the best part.

1273
00:58:07,560 --> 00:58:10,300
We had to go to catechism.

1274
00:58:10,300 --> 00:58:11,880
Was she religious, by the way?

1275
00:58:11,880 --> 00:58:12,770
Not at all.

1276
00:58:12,770 --> 00:58:13,674
[LAUGHS]

1277
00:58:13,674 --> 00:58:16,320
Not at all, but I
became so religious.

1278
00:58:16,320 --> 00:58:20,490
I wanted to be a Carmelite
nun of the non-speaking order.

1279
00:58:20,490 --> 00:58:23,890
Because we had visited
the Carmelite nuns,

1280

00:58:23,890 --> 00:58:26,730
who were just lovely
and floating around

1281
00:58:26,730 --> 00:58:28,440
in these incredible outfits.

1282
00:58:28,440 --> 00:58:32,310
And I thought, continuing
the Shirley Temple routine,

1283
00:58:32,310 --> 00:58:36,570
that this outfit, this habit,
would be wonderful on me.

1284
00:58:36,570 --> 00:58:39,670
And if I didn't have to talk--

1285
00:58:39,670 --> 00:58:41,420
oh, it would have
been a disaster.

1286
00:58:41,420 --> 00:58:42,690
Those poor sisters.

1287
00:58:42,690 --> 00:58:43,760
[LAUGHS]

1288
00:58:43,760 --> 00:58:50,480
But religion became, I
think, surrogate parents.

1289
00:58:50,480 --> 00:58:54,500
I think Catholicism became
enormously important to us.

1290
00:58:54,500 --> 00:58:55,893
So what would be the routine?

1291
00:58:55,893 --> 00:58:57,310
Would you go to
catechism classes?

1292
00:58:57,310 --> 00:58:59,540
At 6 o'clock in the morning.

1293
00:58:59,540 --> 00:59:01,850
So there goes schooling.

1294
00:59:01,850 --> 00:59:07,150
There goes reading in
Latin, and language,

1295
00:59:07,150 --> 00:59:09,320
and a wonderful parish priest.

1296
00:59:09,320 --> 00:59:10,550
What was his name?

1297
00:59:10,550 --> 00:59:11,890
Father Vaes.

1298
00:59:11,890 --> 00:59:12,410
Father Vaes?

1299
00:59:12,410 --> 00:59:14,240
V-A-E-S. Right.

1300
00:59:14,240 --> 00:59:14,930
Father Vaes.

1301
00:59:14,930 --> 00:59:18,350
What did he look like?

1302
00:59:18,350 --> 00:59:19,495
I have pictures.

1303
00:59:19,495 --> 00:59:24,350
He was probably a very
ordinary, middle-aged man.

1304
00:59:24,350 --> 00:59:26,410
I think to us,
everybody looked old.

1305
00:59:26,410 --> 00:59:27,110
But he wasn't.

1306
00:59:27,110 --> 00:59:29,030
He wasn't old.

1307
00:59:29,030 --> 00:59:32,240
And just a very
protective person,

1308
00:59:32,240 --> 00:59:36,110
who also was aware of
all the Jewish children.

1309
00:59:36,110 --> 00:59:41,900
And I don't think there were
any expectations laid upon us.

1310
00:59:41,900 --> 00:59:43,980
We just did.

1311
00:59:43,980 --> 00:59:48,410
So did Marraine arrange for you
to go to catechism every day?

1312
00:59:48,410 --> 00:59:50,270
Was this on her initiative?

1313
00:59:50,270 --> 00:59:51,920
Well, she had to.

1314
00:59:51,920 --> 00:59:55,550
I mean, the idea was that we
were in a Catholic village.

1315
00:59:55,550 --> 00:59:57,980
If we had been
anything but Catholic,

1316
00:59:57,980 --> 00:59:59,768
it wouldn't have appeared--

1317
00:59:59,768 --> 01:00:01,310
It wouldn't have
supported the story?

1318
01:00:01,310 --> 01:00:02,420
Not at all.

1319
01:00:02,420 --> 01:00:02,930
I see.

1320
01:00:02,930 --> 01:00:04,780
OK, so that's the tradition.

1321
01:00:04,780 --> 01:00:06,770
So all the children
of the village go.

1322
01:00:06,770 --> 01:00:10,220
All the children of the
village go to catechism.

1323
01:00:10,220 --> 01:00:12,290
And then, of course,
comes with this

1324
01:00:12,290 --> 01:00:14,410
a preparation for
a first communion.

1325
01:00:14,410 --> 01:00:15,200
Yes.

1326
01:00:15,200 --> 01:00:17,820
Which was the
highlight of my life.

1327
01:00:17,820 --> 01:00:19,850
And I borrowed a
dress and shoes,

1328
01:00:19,850 --> 01:00:24,480

and my cousin was a choir boy.

1329

01:00:24,480 --> 01:00:28,610

It was a huge part of that life.

1330

01:00:28,610 --> 01:00:30,850

We loved the church.

1331

01:00:30,850 --> 01:00:32,860

To me, the church looked huge.

1332

01:00:32,860 --> 01:00:37,120

As we went back to visit, later
as an adult with our children,

1333

01:00:37,120 --> 01:00:38,620

the church was very small.

1334

01:00:38,620 --> 01:00:41,847

It was not huge.

1335

01:00:41,847 --> 01:00:42,930

It shrunk in the meantime.

1336

01:00:42,930 --> 01:00:44,590

It shrunk.

1337

01:00:44,590 --> 01:00:50,190

But it gave us something.

1338

01:00:50,190 --> 01:00:52,780

It gave us hope.

1339

01:00:52,780 --> 01:00:54,790

There was the after life.

1340

01:00:54,790 --> 01:00:56,900

I never understood death anyway.

1341

01:00:56,900 --> 01:00:59,650

But if you're afraid

to lose someone

1342
01:00:59,650 --> 01:01:02,530
and you can believe that
there is a life hereafter,

1343
01:01:02,530 --> 01:01:04,420
how wonderful.

1344
01:01:04,420 --> 01:01:06,800
And we believed.

1345
01:01:06,800 --> 01:01:11,540
So there was nothing about the
Catholic religion lost on us.

1346
01:01:11,540 --> 01:01:16,900
Plus the kindness that
was extended to us.

1347
01:01:16,900 --> 01:01:19,090
That is the key.

1348
01:01:19,090 --> 01:01:21,240
That was the key.

1349
01:01:21,240 --> 01:01:27,240
It was all so much love, and
so much love on the other side

1350
01:01:27,240 --> 01:01:29,160
that we didn't understand.

1351
01:01:29,160 --> 01:01:30,190
The other side meaning?

1352
01:01:30,190 --> 01:01:32,280
Meaning my parents.

1353
01:01:32,280 --> 01:01:33,960
But you didn't know
it at the time?

1354
01:01:33,960 --> 01:01:34,680
Well, you did.

1355
01:01:34,680 --> 01:01:36,540
No, I didn't.

1356
01:01:36,540 --> 01:01:38,640
Why would you say
that you didn't?

1357
01:01:38,640 --> 01:01:41,350
When you say you were such
a loved child at home,

1358
01:01:41,350 --> 01:01:44,580
and had dancing lessons and
your mother sewed for you

1359
01:01:44,580 --> 01:01:47,180
and your parents played
with you, and so on.

1360
01:01:47,180 --> 01:01:50,250
I knew I was loved,
but I didn't understand

1361
01:01:50,250 --> 01:01:57,020
how much love it would take for
a parent to give up a child.

1362
01:01:57,020 --> 01:01:59,090
Did you feel like your
parents had given you up?

1363
01:01:59,090 --> 01:01:59,590
No.

1364
01:01:59,590 --> 01:02:04,200
I felt like they had sort
of just abandoned me.

1365

01:02:04,200 --> 01:02:05,030
Where were they?

1366
01:02:05,030 --> 01:02:07,890
They were really
not coming back.

1367
01:02:07,890 --> 01:02:09,780
And I found that
out the second time

1368
01:02:09,780 --> 01:02:13,340
my father came to
visit with clothes.

1369
01:02:13,340 --> 01:02:16,640
And the clothes were
indicative of the fact

1370
01:02:16,640 --> 01:02:19,170
that we were going to stay.

1371
01:02:19,170 --> 01:02:22,230
Otherwise, why would he bring
clothes after summer was over,

1372
01:02:22,230 --> 01:02:27,010
and supposedly,
camp was finished?

1373
01:02:27,010 --> 01:02:29,140
So then I knew.

1374
01:02:29,140 --> 01:02:33,280
So in other words, you
end up in a good place.

1375
01:02:33,280 --> 01:02:35,110
You're happy there.

1376
01:02:35,110 --> 01:02:38,230
But you're not being
told the full truth

1377
01:02:38,230 --> 01:02:40,690
as to what this is all about.

1378
01:02:40,690 --> 01:02:41,470
Right.

1379
01:02:41,470 --> 01:02:44,530
And you fill in the gaps
with your own interpretation.

1380
01:02:44,530 --> 01:02:45,330
Yes.

1381
01:02:45,330 --> 01:02:47,900
They're abandoning me.

1382
01:02:47,900 --> 01:02:55,570
I could have helped, or maybe
not help, but they left me.

1383
01:02:55,570 --> 01:02:58,270
In those days, or
in those times--

1384
01:02:58,270 --> 01:03:00,280
let me put it that way--

1385
01:03:00,280 --> 01:03:04,270
you just didn't tell children
why they were going away.

1386
01:03:04,270 --> 01:03:07,950
The truth was
beyond explanation.

1387
01:03:07,950 --> 01:03:11,680
Too scary, too frightening.

1388
01:03:11,680 --> 01:03:15,580
So I found out that my
father had been killed

1389
01:03:15,580 --> 01:03:18,880
through the parish priest.

1390
01:03:18,880 --> 01:03:22,930
This was in 1944,
and my grandmother

1391
01:03:22,930 --> 01:03:27,750
had gotten those news
through the underground

1392
01:03:27,750 --> 01:03:29,985
to my parish priest.

1393
01:03:29,985 --> 01:03:32,510

1394
01:03:32,510 --> 01:03:33,920
What happened?

1395
01:03:33,920 --> 01:03:36,105
How did he tell you?

1396
01:03:36,105 --> 01:03:40,600
I was on his lap and he told
me my father had been killed.

1397
01:03:40,600 --> 01:03:43,053
And I didn't even quite
understand what it meant.

1398
01:03:43,053 --> 01:03:44,470
I just knew I would
see him again,

1399
01:03:44,470 --> 01:03:47,790
so it couldn't be
that bad a thing.

1400
01:03:47,790 --> 01:03:49,065
I had not lost a dog.

1401
01:03:49,065 --> 01:03:52,020

1402
01:03:52,020 --> 01:03:53,220
I didn't understand death.

1403
01:03:53,220 --> 01:03:55,440
You hadn't seen a corpse.

1404
01:03:55,440 --> 01:04:00,790
I probably saw a corpse, but it didn't fall into place for me.

1405
01:04:00,790 --> 01:04:04,120
So it was a very sad thing.

1406
01:04:04,120 --> 01:04:05,580
But I had my mother.

1407
01:04:05,580 --> 01:04:09,030
So tell me, what did
you learn at the time

1408
01:04:09,030 --> 01:04:10,170
about the circumstance?

1409
01:04:10,170 --> 01:04:11,320
Not much.

1410
01:04:11,320 --> 01:04:12,610
OK.

1411
01:04:12,610 --> 01:04:14,830
Not much.

1412
01:04:14,830 --> 01:04:18,580
I just knew that he had
been wounded and hurt

1413
01:04:18,580 --> 01:04:21,100

and he was dead.

1414
01:04:21,100 --> 01:04:23,300
But I knew my mother
would come back.

1415
01:04:23,300 --> 01:04:33,030

1416
01:04:33,030 --> 01:04:34,780
Let me pause for just a second.

1417
01:04:34,780 --> 01:04:37,600
And I'm going to
take my jacket off.

1418
01:04:37,600 --> 01:04:38,710
OK.

1419
01:04:38,710 --> 01:04:45,920
And I will apologize in
advance because the question--

1420
01:04:45,920 --> 01:04:49,700
OK, so I wanted
to ask a question,

1421
01:04:49,700 --> 01:04:51,860
and I'm apologizing
in advance for it

1422
01:04:51,860 --> 01:04:57,260
because it is borne out of the
world we live in today, rather

1423
01:04:57,260 --> 01:04:59,690
than the times then.

1424
01:04:59,690 --> 01:05:02,200
But in the past
several years, there

1425

01:05:02,200 --> 01:05:06,980
have been many scandals within
the Catholic church of priests

1426
01:05:06,980 --> 01:05:12,020
being inappropriate priests,
exploiting the trust

1427
01:05:12,020 --> 01:05:14,810
that children have in them.

1428
01:05:14,810 --> 01:05:20,540
And when you mentioned
Father Vaes told you

1429
01:05:20,540 --> 01:05:25,250
about your father's death while
you were sitting on his lap,

1430
01:05:25,250 --> 01:05:27,680
in olden times, no one
would think twice about it.

1431
01:05:27,680 --> 01:05:30,050
Today people's
ears would perk up

1432
01:05:30,050 --> 01:05:32,762
and they'd say there's
a red flag there.

1433
01:05:32,762 --> 01:05:33,650
OK.

1434
01:05:33,650 --> 01:05:36,850
Is there any reason
to have that red flag?

1435
01:05:36,850 --> 01:05:37,840
There is no reason.

1436
01:05:37,840 --> 01:05:41,275

1437
01:05:41,275 --> 01:05:46,650
I have no explanation for
this, but in that village,

1438
01:05:46,650 --> 01:05:50,440
Father Vaes had a
housekeeper, and Father Vaes

1439
01:05:50,440 --> 01:05:52,900
and the housekeeper had a child.

1440
01:05:52,900 --> 01:05:57,040
So this little boy would
walk around the village.

1441
01:05:57,040 --> 01:06:02,170
Everybody knew he was Father
Vaes' son and the housekeeper.

1442
01:06:02,170 --> 01:06:06,670
So it was a different
time altogether.

1443
01:06:06,670 --> 01:06:10,090
But inappropriate
with me, never.

1444
01:06:10,090 --> 01:06:12,610
Or my cousin, never.

1445
01:06:12,610 --> 01:06:16,630
So I don't think anything
like that ever even entered

1446
01:06:16,630 --> 01:06:17,950
our minds.

1447
01:06:17,950 --> 01:06:20,740
So he was just an
affectionate person that,

1448

01:06:20,740 --> 01:06:22,970
when he wanted to
tell you this--

1449
01:06:22,970 --> 01:06:25,180
He didn't know how to tell it.

1450
01:06:25,180 --> 01:06:27,070
And you would automatically--

1451
01:06:27,070 --> 01:06:27,880
what would you do?

1452
01:06:27,880 --> 01:06:30,490
You wouldn't put a child
10 feet away from you.

1453
01:06:30,490 --> 01:06:32,910
You would, of course,
hold the child on your lap

1454
01:06:32,910 --> 01:06:34,545
and tell the child the story.

1455
01:06:34,545 --> 01:06:39,510

1456
01:06:39,510 --> 01:06:44,460
I just spoke to the Catholic
dioceses in northwest Indiana,

1457
01:06:44,460 --> 01:06:52,065
and it is so amazing to me where
we were and what we've come to.

1458
01:06:52,065 --> 01:06:56,980

1459
01:06:56,980 --> 01:06:58,620
Maybe it's just one story.

1460
01:06:58,620 --> 01:07:04,800

I doubt it, but this is
really just this story

1461
01:07:04,800 --> 01:07:09,510
and this little village, and the
life of this particular priest

1462
01:07:09,510 --> 01:07:13,050
and his housekeeper and
this son that they had.

1463
01:07:13,050 --> 01:07:14,700
And everybody knew it.

1464
01:07:14,700 --> 01:07:18,770
I mean, there was nothing
peculiar about it.

1465
01:07:18,770 --> 01:07:20,229
Can we cut for a second?

1466
01:07:20,229 --> 01:07:25,720

1467
01:07:25,720 --> 01:07:29,530
So you felt you like
you were in safe hands

1468
01:07:29,530 --> 01:07:32,140
when you were with him, when
you were with Marraine, when

1469
01:07:32,140 --> 01:07:34,990
you were in the village,
even though the Germans were

1470
01:07:34,990 --> 01:07:36,070
right there.

1471
01:07:36,070 --> 01:07:38,780
In total safe hands.

1472

01:07:38,780 --> 01:07:43,330
We were stopped once by a
German soldier, who told us

1473
01:07:43,330 --> 01:07:47,010
we reminded him of
his children, and it

1474
01:07:47,010 --> 01:07:49,950
was sort of a sad encounter.

1475
01:07:49,950 --> 01:07:51,900
Were we were a
little intimidated?

1476
01:07:51,900 --> 01:07:53,450
Yes.

1477
01:07:53,450 --> 01:07:56,270
But genuinely frightened?

1478
01:07:56,270 --> 01:07:57,540
No.

1479
01:07:57,540 --> 01:08:03,310
We became frightened when
the Allies began bombing.

1480
01:08:03,310 --> 01:08:07,560
Now that was horrific.

1481
01:08:07,560 --> 01:08:11,630
So it was something we
had never really expected,

1482
01:08:11,630 --> 01:08:14,420
but that particular
train station was

1483
01:08:14,420 --> 01:08:17,359
a very important train
station and the Allies were

1484

01:08:17,359 --> 01:08:19,500
trying to get to it.

1485

01:08:19,500 --> 01:08:23,970
So we had to dig a shelter
at the end of the yard.

1486

01:08:23,970 --> 01:08:26,520
And of course, even
building it was fun.

1487

01:08:26,520 --> 01:08:29,290
Going into it
wasn't so much fun.

1488

01:08:29,290 --> 01:08:40,850
But the lights, the glares
that the Germans would send up

1489

01:08:40,850 --> 01:08:45,380
to find the Allied
planes were frightening,

1490

01:08:45,380 --> 01:08:49,710
because we didn't
understand what they were.

1491

01:08:49,710 --> 01:08:50,870
And parachutes.

1492

01:08:50,870 --> 01:08:52,970
We would find parachutes.

1493

01:08:52,970 --> 01:08:56,479
And I always thought
somebody must be after us.

1494

01:08:56,479 --> 01:08:59,930
But that was frightening
because every night,

1495

01:08:59,930 --> 01:09:01,010

the sirens would go off.

1496

01:09:01,010 --> 01:09:03,010

And every night you would
have to get out of bed

1497

01:09:03,010 --> 01:09:04,460

and go into the shelter.

1498

01:09:04,460 --> 01:09:05,760

Well, that's war coming to you.

1499

01:09:05,760 --> 01:09:08,170

It was real war.

1500

01:09:08,170 --> 01:09:14,979

And at that point, it was as
frightening to the two sisters

1501

01:09:14,979 --> 01:09:18,770

as it was to us, as it
was to the whole village.

1502

01:09:18,770 --> 01:09:21,229

But then the next day, we
would go play in the craters,

1503

01:09:21,229 --> 01:09:24,109

so go figure children.

1504

01:09:24,109 --> 01:09:25,640

Yeah.

1505

01:09:25,640 --> 01:09:28,460

And I've seen
enough documentaries

1506

01:09:28,460 --> 01:09:31,040

to know children still do
these things now, even mines.

1507

01:09:31,040 --> 01:09:31,540

Sure.

1508

01:09:31,540 --> 01:09:33,590

They'll pick up a grenade
that doesn't explode.

1509

01:09:33,590 --> 01:09:35,702

That doesn't explode.

1510

01:09:35,702 --> 01:09:37,910

And mines all around them,
and they're still playing.

1511

01:09:37,910 --> 01:09:40,960

1512

01:09:40,960 --> 01:09:46,520

And so about how long did that
last, that period of time.

1513

01:09:46,520 --> 01:09:47,266

The bombs?

1514

01:09:47,266 --> 01:09:50,600

That period of time
seems like forever,

1515

01:09:50,600 --> 01:09:53,729

and probably not
as long as I think.

1516

01:09:53,729 --> 01:09:57,090

Probably a few months.

1517

01:09:57,090 --> 01:09:59,220

And then we were liberated by--

1518

01:09:59,220 --> 01:10:01,920

I didn't know this, but it
was General Patton's army.

1519

01:10:01,920 --> 01:10:06,870

I just knew they were
soldiers on tanks,

1520
01:10:06,870 --> 01:10:10,350
and I expected to see these
glamorous American soldiers.

1521
01:10:10,350 --> 01:10:11,970
Looking like Shirley Temple.

1522
01:10:11,970 --> 01:10:14,340
Oh, I don't know what
they were, just totally.

1523
01:10:14,340 --> 01:10:17,670
But it was a Black army.

1524
01:10:17,670 --> 01:10:20,400
I had never seen a Black
person, except chieftains

1525
01:10:20,400 --> 01:10:22,030
from the Congo.

1526
01:10:22,030 --> 01:10:26,830
So I thought, oh, then
America must look like this.

1527
01:10:26,830 --> 01:10:29,535
So the fact that I
never understood racism,

1528
01:10:29,535 --> 01:10:33,450
I come by it honestly,
because this was really

1529
01:10:33,450 --> 01:10:35,940
my first encounter.

1530
01:10:35,940 --> 01:10:39,900
What was interesting, that
I didn't even understand,

1531

01:10:39,900 --> 01:10:46,170
is the sergeant, or whoever led
the battalions, were all white.

1532

01:10:46,170 --> 01:10:48,030
And when I did
research for my book,

1533

01:10:48,030 --> 01:10:52,590
I found out that African
Americans were not

1534

01:10:52,590 --> 01:10:59,430
allowed to carry arms,
except when armed in wartime.

1535

01:10:59,430 --> 01:11:02,460
But as they were filing
through in tanks,

1536

01:11:02,460 --> 01:11:05,190
they weren't allowed
to carry guns.

1537

01:11:05,190 --> 01:11:08,070
So they only had
chewing gum and candy,

1538

01:11:08,070 --> 01:11:10,170
but we weren't even
allowed to take that.

1539

01:11:10,170 --> 01:11:11,280
Why not?

1540

01:11:11,280 --> 01:11:14,085
I think the villagers
were scared.

1541

01:11:14,085 --> 01:11:15,460
They didn't know
what was being--

1542

01:11:15,460 --> 01:11:16,860
they had never seen chewing gum.

1543

01:11:16,860 --> 01:11:20,400
Were they apprehensive
about the liberators?

1544

01:11:20,400 --> 01:11:21,465
Oh, sure.

1545

01:11:21,465 --> 01:11:22,110
Oh, sure.

1546

01:11:22,110 --> 01:11:23,280
Oh, really?

1547

01:11:23,280 --> 01:11:26,520
And there were still
various sniping going on.

1548

01:11:26,520 --> 01:11:28,630
Snipers were around.

1549

01:11:28,630 --> 01:11:31,130
So they didn't greet them with
flags and wave and everything

1550

01:11:31,130 --> 01:11:31,630
like that?

1551

01:11:31,630 --> 01:11:33,420
Not really.

1552

01:11:33,420 --> 01:11:35,710
We knew we were being liberated.

1553

01:11:35,710 --> 01:11:38,290
And why was this
apprehensiveness

1554

01:11:38,290 --> 01:11:40,590

there, do you think?

1555

01:11:40,590 --> 01:11:44,250

Well, I think this
was a village,

1556

01:11:44,250 --> 01:11:47,070

and the street is very narrow.

1557

01:11:47,070 --> 01:11:50,880

And when huge tanks
and dust comes through,

1558

01:11:50,880 --> 01:11:55,530

with helmets and soldiers,
so close to your front door,

1559

01:11:55,530 --> 01:11:57,357

I think it was
very intimidating.

1560

01:11:57,357 --> 01:11:59,940

I don't think it had a thing to
do with the color of anybody's

1561

01:11:59,940 --> 01:12:01,420

skin.

1562

01:12:01,420 --> 01:12:04,800

No one told me, this one way
or another, but I doubt it.

1563

01:12:04,800 --> 01:12:06,890

The children had to go inside.

1564

01:12:06,890 --> 01:12:07,530

OK.

1565

01:12:07,530 --> 01:12:09,420

And we had to give back
all the chewing gum.

1566

01:12:09,420 --> 01:12:12,210
[CHUCKLES] We didn't
know what it was.

1567
01:12:12,210 --> 01:12:15,400
We would have
swallowed in anyways.

1568
01:12:15,400 --> 01:12:16,160
OK.

1569
01:12:16,160 --> 01:12:19,140
Well, I could see
a logic for this,

1570
01:12:19,140 --> 01:12:22,980
in that if you were occupied
and if it's wartime,

1571
01:12:22,980 --> 01:12:28,630
you don't know what's real
until it's lasted for a while.

1572
01:12:28,630 --> 01:12:29,810
Exactly.

1573
01:12:29,810 --> 01:12:31,000
OK.

1574
01:12:31,000 --> 01:12:31,985
Exactly.

1575
01:12:31,985 --> 01:12:33,610
And then how did life
progress further?

1576
01:12:33,610 --> 01:12:36,780
Well, then it was
not good because,

1577
01:12:36,780 --> 01:12:41,130
and this is really strange,
we knew we had to go back,

1578
01:12:41,130 --> 01:12:44,170
Henry to his mother,
which survived.

1579
01:12:44,170 --> 01:12:46,380
His father had not.

1580
01:12:46,380 --> 01:12:52,830
And of course, my parents,
I knew, had been murdered.

1581
01:12:52,830 --> 01:12:54,430
And I didn't know
where my mother was,

1582
01:12:54,430 --> 01:12:56,013
so I had to go back
to my grandmother.

1583
01:12:56,013 --> 01:12:57,900
We did not want to go.

1584
01:12:57,900 --> 01:12:59,490
We did not want to go.

1585
01:12:59,490 --> 01:13:02,242
His father was the one who
was also imprisoned along

1586
01:13:02,242 --> 01:13:02,950
with your father.

1587
01:13:02,950 --> 01:13:04,110
In Gurs.

1588
01:13:04,110 --> 01:13:05,970
So what happened to him in Gurs?

1589
01:13:05,970 --> 01:13:06,970
Did he ever leave Gurs?

1590

01:13:06,970 --> 01:13:08,300

He never left.

1591

01:13:08,300 --> 01:13:11,970

He didn't understand that my
father would want to escape.

1592

01:13:11,970 --> 01:13:13,770

He was a lawyer.

1593

01:13:13,770 --> 01:13:16,140

And he'd felt that if
he obeyed the law--

1594

01:13:16,140 --> 01:13:19,340

even wanted his wife
to come with his child.

1595

01:13:19,340 --> 01:13:22,190

He figured if he obeyed the law,
he was doing the right thing

1596

01:13:22,190 --> 01:13:26,800

and everything would work
out, not understanding.

1597

01:13:26,800 --> 01:13:31,570

And eventually, he was
on transport to Auschwitz

1598

01:13:31,570 --> 01:13:34,580

and never heard from again.

1599

01:13:34,580 --> 01:13:38,940

And my father escaped
and it happened anyway.

1600

01:13:38,940 --> 01:13:43,480

As I found out later, they
were reported by a Jew

1601

01:13:43,480 --> 01:13:48,920

by the name of Jacques, who was
a notorious person in Brussels,

1602

01:13:48,920 --> 01:13:54,090
and who was told that if he
saved all these Jewish whatever

1603

01:13:54,090 --> 01:13:59,790
for the Nazis, his own
family would be saved.

1604

01:13:59,790 --> 01:14:03,360
There was a lady in Berlin
who had similar infamy.

1605

01:14:03,360 --> 01:14:04,280
I'm sure.

1606

01:14:04,280 --> 01:14:05,490
Yeah.

1607

01:14:05,490 --> 01:14:06,270
I'm sure.

1608

01:14:06,270 --> 01:14:07,110
The same person?

1609

01:14:07,110 --> 01:14:08,550
Because he was famous?

1610

01:14:08,550 --> 01:14:09,240
No, no, no.

1611

01:14:09,240 --> 01:14:10,470
She had a different one.

1612

01:14:10,470 --> 01:14:11,550
I don't know.

1613

01:14:11,550 --> 01:14:14,552
I think her name was Helga,
but I'm not exactly sure.

1614
01:14:14,552 --> 01:14:17,010
I don't want to go beyond that
because I would be guessing.

1615
01:14:17,010 --> 01:14:18,240
Right.

1616
01:14:18,240 --> 01:14:22,530
But she was a very famous what
they called [NON-ENGLISH]..

1617
01:14:22,530 --> 01:14:23,350
Oh, sure.

1618
01:14:23,350 --> 01:14:26,990
Yeah, known amongst the Jews.

1619
01:14:26,990 --> 01:14:28,920
Yes, yes.

1620
01:14:28,920 --> 01:14:30,870
And my parents had
broken the curfew

1621
01:14:30,870 --> 01:14:33,620
and were on their
way to a card game,

1622
01:14:33,620 --> 01:14:36,320
and this man knew all
the comings and goings.

1623
01:14:36,320 --> 01:14:38,130
So this is how they--

1624
01:14:38,130 --> 01:14:38,990
They were picked up.

1625
01:14:38,990 --> 01:14:41,120
They were picked up.

1626

01:14:41,120 --> 01:14:44,090

And this I found
out later when I did

1627

01:14:44,090 --> 01:14:47,180

go back to my
grandmother, unwillingly.

1628

01:14:47,180 --> 01:14:48,890

My poor grandmother.

1629

01:14:48,890 --> 01:14:51,840

And Marraine brought
us back to Brussels.

1630

01:14:51,840 --> 01:14:53,660

That was a terrible goodbye.

1631

01:14:53,660 --> 01:14:54,920

We didn't want to go.

1632

01:14:54,920 --> 01:14:57,020

Was the war still
on or had it ended?

1633

01:14:57,020 --> 01:14:59,390

The war ended.

1634

01:14:59,390 --> 01:15:02,570

And my cousin and I would
spend hours navigating

1635

01:15:02,570 --> 01:15:07,460

the lakes of Brussels,
making escape routes, how we

1636

01:15:07,460 --> 01:15:10,860

would go back to the village.

1637

01:15:10,860 --> 01:15:13,290

It was a wonderful
2 and 1/2 years.

1638
01:15:13,290 --> 01:15:16,200

1639
01:15:16,200 --> 01:15:18,870
But I stayed with my grandma.

1640
01:15:18,870 --> 01:15:22,640
My poor grandma, oh my God.

1641
01:15:22,640 --> 01:15:25,610
And then, of course,
came the search

1642
01:15:25,610 --> 01:15:28,420
for coming to the United States.

1643
01:15:28,420 --> 01:15:32,540
Oh, and prior to that, I had
told the parish priest, when

1644
01:15:32,540 --> 01:15:35,750
I didn't want to leave, that
I was going to be a Carmelite

1645
01:15:35,750 --> 01:15:38,990
nun, and I just wasn't leaving.

1646
01:15:38,990 --> 01:15:43,560
And this incredible,
incredible parish priest

1647
01:15:43,560 --> 01:15:47,890
said, oh, you know,
your roots are Jewish.

1648
01:15:47,890 --> 01:15:50,140
And when you grow up, you
can do whatever you want to,

1649
01:15:50,140 --> 01:15:52,460
but right now you belong

with your grandmother.

1650
01:15:52,460 --> 01:15:57,490
Now, if we transpose
this to today's times,

1651
01:15:57,490 --> 01:16:01,990
we know what it would
mean for a Catholic priest

1652
01:16:01,990 --> 01:16:05,470
to make this decision for
a child, who I would not

1653
01:16:05,470 --> 01:16:06,257
have left.

1654
01:16:06,257 --> 01:16:07,090
I would have stayed.

1655
01:16:07,090 --> 01:16:12,530

1656
01:16:12,530 --> 01:16:14,474
I would have missed
out on this interview.

1657
01:16:14,474 --> 01:16:15,956
[LAUGHS]

1658
01:16:15,956 --> 01:16:19,908

1659
01:16:19,908 --> 01:16:21,390
Yeah.

1660
01:16:21,390 --> 01:16:22,405
It's quite a story.

1661
01:16:22,405 --> 01:16:22,905
Yeah.

1662

01:16:22,905 --> 01:16:27,160

1663

01:16:27,160 --> 01:16:28,680

There were such people.

1664

01:16:28,680 --> 01:16:31,620

There were such little pieces.

1665

01:16:31,620 --> 01:16:37,290

Each person could
do something good.

1666

01:16:37,290 --> 01:16:39,480

They didn't know they were
part of a bigger history,

1667

01:16:39,480 --> 01:16:43,650

but they were just
good people and they

1668

01:16:43,650 --> 01:16:48,000

did what they considered
to be the right thing.

1669

01:16:48,000 --> 01:16:51,750

But you when you left,
your heart, in some ways,

1670

01:16:51,750 --> 01:16:52,650

was still there.

1671

01:16:52,650 --> 01:16:54,090

Oh, yes.

1672

01:16:54,090 --> 01:16:57,375

Did it ever return back to
Brussels, back to your family?

1673

01:16:57,375 --> 01:17:00,980

1674

01:17:00,980 --> 01:17:04,060

It took a long time.

1675

01:17:04,060 --> 01:17:05,310

It took a long time.

1676

01:17:05,310 --> 01:17:09,340

I did want to come to America.

1677

01:17:09,340 --> 01:17:13,350

What happened was
that every day,

1678

01:17:13,350 --> 01:17:15,690

we would look for my mother.

1679

01:17:15,690 --> 01:17:17,340

I mean, this is what people did.

1680

01:17:17,340 --> 01:17:18,810

They would go to
railroad stations.

1681

01:17:18,810 --> 01:17:20,490

They would look at lists.

1682

01:17:20,490 --> 01:17:22,260

My mother never showed up.

1683

01:17:22,260 --> 01:17:25,020

So after she is arrested
with your father

1684

01:17:25,020 --> 01:17:28,980

for not having made
it to the card game,

1685

01:17:28,980 --> 01:17:31,890

did you know what had
happened to her after that?

1686

01:17:31,890 --> 01:17:36,180
I knew that she had
been taken back.

1687
01:17:36,180 --> 01:17:37,200
She had been caught.

1688
01:17:37,200 --> 01:17:39,370
She didn't leave my father.

1689
01:17:39,370 --> 01:17:40,620
So they stayed together?

1690
01:17:40,620 --> 01:17:42,270
She did not leave my father.

1691
01:17:42,270 --> 01:17:43,170
They stayed together.

1692
01:17:43,170 --> 01:17:47,820
My father died in a
Christian doctor's home.

1693
01:17:47,820 --> 01:17:51,450
My mother was transported
to a hospital,

1694
01:17:51,450 --> 01:17:54,780
and could have been saved
if somehow the story hadn't

1695
01:17:54,780 --> 01:17:55,290
gotten out.

1696
01:17:55,290 --> 01:17:57,270
The Nazis were all over.

1697
01:17:57,270 --> 01:18:00,800
And so they recaptured the
people that had been saved.

1698
01:18:00,800 --> 01:18:01,720

In the hospital?

1699

01:18:01,720 --> 01:18:02,220

Right.

1700

01:18:02,220 --> 01:18:06,210

And so the 20th transport,
which is a very famous transport

1701

01:18:06,210 --> 01:18:08,290

at the US Holocaust
Memorial Museum

1702

01:18:08,290 --> 01:18:13,345

tour, that transport where
people tried to escape and were

1703

01:18:13,345 --> 01:18:13,845

helped.

1704

01:18:13,845 --> 01:18:17,160

1705

01:18:17,160 --> 01:18:18,150

No one really escaped.

1706

01:18:18,150 --> 01:18:22,000

1707

01:18:22,000 --> 01:18:24,190

And my father was
killed, and my mother

1708

01:18:24,190 --> 01:18:30,910

was then re-transferred out next
day in another transport, 21.

1709

01:18:30,910 --> 01:18:32,230

But no news.

1710

01:18:32,230 --> 01:18:34,720

No one ever knew

what happened to her.

1711

01:18:34,720 --> 01:18:37,930

But she was such a small
person, she probably

1712

01:18:37,930 --> 01:18:41,560

didn't stand a chance, and
I believe she was hurt.

1713

01:18:41,560 --> 01:18:45,190

But even the Museum
can't get the details.

1714

01:18:45,190 --> 01:18:46,840

Our Holocaust Museum
in Washington.

1715

01:18:46,840 --> 01:18:48,520

Right, even Washington.

1716

01:18:48,520 --> 01:18:51,690

1717

01:18:51,690 --> 01:18:52,950

So that's as much as you know.

1718

01:18:52,950 --> 01:18:54,480

That's all I know.

1719

01:18:54,480 --> 01:18:55,990

I have never known more.

1720

01:18:55,990 --> 01:18:56,820

Oh my.

1721

01:18:56,820 --> 01:18:58,792

And the waiting.

1722

01:18:58,792 --> 01:19:00,750

You know, the thinking
that, oh, on the street,

1723
01:19:00,750 --> 01:19:01,980
I would see that face.

1724
01:19:01,980 --> 01:19:06,880
And as other people have told
me, had the same experience.

1725
01:19:06,880 --> 01:19:09,270
And as a child,
you keep thinking,

1726
01:19:09,270 --> 01:19:13,577
my mother's going to
certainly show up now.

1727
01:19:13,577 --> 01:19:14,660
And of course, she didn't.

1728
01:19:14,660 --> 01:19:20,820

1729
01:19:20,820 --> 01:19:24,000
And leaving Mairaine
was very difficult,

1730
01:19:24,000 --> 01:19:25,848
and leaving the
Catholic religion,

1731
01:19:25,848 --> 01:19:27,390
because of course,
my grandmother was

1732
01:19:27,390 --> 01:19:29,530
totally unaccepting of this.

1733
01:19:29,530 --> 01:19:32,910
She neither understood it
nor wanted to understand it.

1734
01:19:32,910 --> 01:19:35,460

Well, my aunt was very smart.

1735

01:19:35,460 --> 01:19:37,950

My aunt would organize--
well, we went to church.

1736

01:19:37,950 --> 01:19:40,080

So Henry's mother.

1737

01:19:40,080 --> 01:19:42,070

Henry's mother.

1738

01:19:42,070 --> 01:19:42,720

Frieda.

1739

01:19:42,720 --> 01:19:46,750

Frieda was a very smart lady.

1740

01:19:46,750 --> 01:19:48,640

We would go to
church, the two of us.

1741

01:19:48,640 --> 01:19:50,140

In Brussels?

1742

01:19:50,140 --> 01:19:51,280

In Brussels.

1743

01:19:51,280 --> 01:19:52,750

And she never said much.

1744

01:19:52,750 --> 01:19:55,720

My grandmother was horrified.

1745

01:19:55,720 --> 01:20:00,940

But my aunt would organize,
with her food stamps, picnics.

1746

01:20:00,940 --> 01:20:03,430

And she would have
food, things that we

1747

01:20:03,430 --> 01:20:07,750

hadn't seen in years, whatever
she could get her hands on.

1748

01:20:07,750 --> 01:20:09,490

And my cousin was a traitor.

1749

01:20:09,490 --> 01:20:11,450

Within a week, he was
gone out of church.

1750

01:20:11,450 --> 01:20:12,320

[LAUGHS]

1751

01:20:12,320 --> 01:20:13,780

Not me.

1752

01:20:13,780 --> 01:20:14,920

I continued.

1753

01:20:14,920 --> 01:20:16,450

How long did you last?

1754

01:20:16,450 --> 01:20:19,870

Oh, maybe three weeks.

1755

01:20:19,870 --> 01:20:22,330

And she pulled it off.

1756

01:20:22,330 --> 01:20:26,560

I mean, she got these two
children not to go to church,

1757

01:20:26,560 --> 01:20:29,050

although I have her letters.

1758

01:20:29,050 --> 01:20:32,920

And she never cared
what Henry would be,

1759

01:20:32,920 --> 01:20:36,340

as long as he was the best
at whatever he could be.

1760
01:20:36,340 --> 01:20:38,180
And in effect, he
became a scientist,

1761
01:20:38,180 --> 01:20:41,620
and he's a total non-believer.

1762
01:20:41,620 --> 01:20:43,240
That was his choice.

1763
01:20:43,240 --> 01:20:46,570
It was his choice, and she
was a wonderful person.

1764
01:20:46,570 --> 01:20:48,280
My grandmother wasn't
a bit as tolerant.

1765
01:20:48,280 --> 01:20:50,800

1766
01:20:50,800 --> 01:20:52,060
She was a grandmother.

1767
01:20:52,060 --> 01:20:52,620
Yeah.

1768
01:20:52,620 --> 01:20:53,620
But she wasn't that old.

1769
01:20:53,620 --> 01:20:55,240
She was only 65.

1770
01:20:55,240 --> 01:20:59,110
I mean, I just thought
she was ancient.

1771
01:20:59,110 --> 01:21:01,270
But she lost her favorite child.

1772
01:21:01,270 --> 01:21:04,920

1773
01:21:04,920 --> 01:21:09,655
And son-in-law and every
member of her family.

1774
01:21:09,655 --> 01:21:10,280
Back in Berlin?

1775
01:21:10,280 --> 01:21:11,640
Brothers.

1776
01:21:11,640 --> 01:21:12,660
Yes.

1777
01:21:12,660 --> 01:21:14,840
Sisters.

1778
01:21:14,840 --> 01:21:15,390
Oh my.

1779
01:21:15,390 --> 01:21:16,670
[PHONE RINGING]

1780
01:21:16,670 --> 01:21:17,380
Let's cut here.

1781
01:21:17,380 --> 01:21:20,200

1782
01:21:20,200 --> 01:21:21,180
Is this your phone?

1783
01:21:21,180 --> 01:21:21,660
You're doing fine.

1784
01:21:21,660 --> 01:21:22,785
This is actually improving.

1785
01:21:22,785 --> 01:21:23,718
Yeah.

1786
01:21:23,718 --> 01:21:24,990
Speak whenever you're ready.

1787
01:21:24,990 --> 01:21:27,760
OK.

1788
01:21:27,760 --> 01:21:32,490
So your grandmother
had losses upon losses.

1789
01:21:32,490 --> 01:21:35,550
How old were you when you went
back to her, even though you

1790
01:21:35,550 --> 01:21:37,440
wanted to stay with Murraine?

1791
01:21:37,440 --> 01:21:39,860
How was your relationship
with one another?

1792
01:21:39,860 --> 01:21:42,390
Well, she took me
to a lot of movies,

1793
01:21:42,390 --> 01:21:44,280
and that worked out very well.

1794
01:21:44,280 --> 01:21:46,670
We would sit through
the same movie.

1795
01:21:46,670 --> 01:21:49,070
It was Nelson Eddy and
Jeanette MacDonald.

1796
01:21:49,070 --> 01:21:51,247
And now I wanted to be
like Jeanette McDowell.

1797
01:21:51,247 --> 01:21:52,830
It was always a
choice between a movie

1798
01:21:52,830 --> 01:21:54,520
star and the Carmelite nun.

1799
01:21:54,520 --> 01:21:57,870
So now the movie star
thing was winning out.

1800
01:21:57,870 --> 01:22:00,210
And she was smart.

1801
01:22:00,210 --> 01:22:02,070
She would take
something to eat and she

1802
01:22:02,070 --> 01:22:06,480
would sit with me through the
same movie for hours and hours.

1803
01:22:06,480 --> 01:22:10,560
And I would help to get a
visa, because at this time,

1804
01:22:10,560 --> 01:22:15,590
through the Red Cross,
through Quakers, through HIAS,

1805
01:22:15,590 --> 01:22:18,840
we had been found in
the United States,

1806
01:22:18,840 --> 01:22:21,150
because we had been looked
for through the whole war.

1807
01:22:21,150 --> 01:22:21,780
By your--

1808

01:22:21,780 --> 01:22:24,270
By Uncle Werner.

1809
01:22:24,270 --> 01:22:29,980
And all these letters that
I later found went to him.

1810
01:22:29,980 --> 01:22:35,890
And when they found us, because
I was going to be adopted,

1811
01:22:35,890 --> 01:22:39,310
I was going to go to the United
States without any camps.

1812
01:22:39,310 --> 01:22:43,400
As you know, people had
terrible experiences.

1813
01:22:43,400 --> 01:22:45,070
But we were allowed
to live with them.

1814
01:22:45,070 --> 01:22:48,090

1815
01:22:48,090 --> 01:22:52,260
Becoming adopted was
difficult because I thought--

1816
01:22:52,260 --> 01:22:54,480
it took a couple of years--

1817
01:22:54,480 --> 01:22:56,430
if I have another
mother and father,

1818
01:22:56,430 --> 01:22:59,790
what happens if I see my
mother and how would she

1819
01:22:59,790 --> 01:23:03,240
understand this?

1820
01:23:03,240 --> 01:23:06,660
You didn't know at the time
that your mother had wanted you

1821
01:23:06,660 --> 01:23:08,940
to be adopted by her sister?

1822
01:23:08,940 --> 01:23:10,170
Yes, I did.

1823
01:23:10,170 --> 01:23:11,490
Oh, you did.

1824
01:23:11,490 --> 01:23:13,470
I didn't know she
wanted me to be adopted.

1825
01:23:13,470 --> 01:23:16,240
Thank you for asking
that question.

1826
01:23:16,240 --> 01:23:22,750
I didn't know that at the
time, but later, in 1991,

1827
01:23:22,750 --> 01:23:26,830
when my adoptive father
died, one of the letters

1828
01:23:26,830 --> 01:23:33,310
that my mother wrote had
told her sister in the United

1829
01:23:33,310 --> 01:23:33,810
States--

1830
01:23:33,810 --> 01:23:36,970
Margot, Uncle Werner's wife--

1831
01:23:36,970 --> 01:23:39,520
that if anything

happened to them,

1832
01:23:39,520 --> 01:23:42,040
everything was for their child.

1833
01:23:42,040 --> 01:23:44,890
And please, you are the one
to take care of the child.

1834
01:23:44,890 --> 01:23:47,080
But I didn't know
that until then.

1835
01:23:47,080 --> 01:23:50,200
Did that change your feeling
of having been abandoned?

1836
01:23:50,200 --> 01:23:50,700
Oh, yeah.

1837
01:23:50,700 --> 01:23:54,810
And long before that,
when I lost my son.

1838
01:23:54,810 --> 01:24:00,200
I knew the hardest thing to
do is to give up a child.

1839
01:24:00,200 --> 01:24:07,940
Because in 1984, right after
graduating from law school

1840
01:24:07,940 --> 01:24:10,340
and getting married
in two months,

1841
01:24:10,340 --> 01:24:19,180
my kids were driving to see us
and were hit by a drunk driver.

1842
01:24:19,180 --> 01:24:25,000
And my son, Robbie,
was killed instantly.

1843
01:24:25,000 --> 01:24:30,670
And speak about
darkness and Holocausts,

1844
01:24:30,670 --> 01:24:32,080
I knew I hadn't been abandoned.

1845
01:24:32,080 --> 01:24:34,390
I knew my parents
had to love me more

1846
01:24:34,390 --> 01:24:37,520
than life itself to give me up.

1847
01:24:37,520 --> 01:24:43,210

1848
01:24:43,210 --> 01:24:48,020
So slowly, but surely, I worked
my way out of the abandonment.

1849
01:24:48,020 --> 01:24:49,870
It's natural that you
would have felt that.

1850
01:24:49,870 --> 01:24:50,690
You were a child.

1851
01:24:50,690 --> 01:24:51,720
As a child.

1852
01:24:51,720 --> 01:24:52,430
You were a child.

1853
01:24:52,430 --> 01:24:53,850
Yes.

1854
01:24:53,850 --> 01:24:58,010
And I think children somewhat
feel responsible, in a way.

1855

01:24:58,010 --> 01:25:00,050

If I had been there, I
could have saved them.

1856

01:25:00,050 --> 01:25:01,800

If I were good, it
wouldn't have happened.

1857

01:25:01,800 --> 01:25:05,350

It was, certainly in
my case, if I was good.

1858

01:25:05,350 --> 01:25:08,300

Certainly.

1859

01:25:08,300 --> 01:25:16,130

So your grandmother had
you to also look after.

1860

01:25:16,130 --> 01:25:19,320

1861

01:25:19,320 --> 01:25:21,780

Did she come with you
to the United States?

1862

01:25:21,780 --> 01:25:26,370

I think she lived to bring
me to the United States.

1863

01:25:26,370 --> 01:25:34,150

I was not that
easy, on retrospect,

1864

01:25:34,150 --> 01:25:35,290

having grandchildren.

1865

01:25:35,290 --> 01:25:39,390

I think that I made her
life very difficult.

1866

01:25:39,390 --> 01:25:44,040

And the letters later
showed that, oh, she

1867
01:25:44,040 --> 01:25:48,443
spoiled me and Trixie can be
difficult. I'm sure I was.

1868
01:25:48,443 --> 01:25:49,860
First of all, I
did not understand

1869
01:25:49,860 --> 01:25:52,020
not managing a language.

1870
01:25:52,020 --> 01:25:54,450
I felt that if you just
had managed the language,

1871
01:25:54,450 --> 01:25:56,220
you would be fine,
but you didn't

1872
01:25:56,220 --> 01:26:00,900
know how to speak French.

1873
01:26:00,900 --> 01:26:04,860
And yet, my grandmother
was never caught.

1874
01:26:04,860 --> 01:26:05,550
Yeah.

1875
01:26:05,550 --> 01:26:11,050
How was it so that she and
your Aunt Frieda survive?

1876
01:26:11,050 --> 01:26:12,435
Oh, my Aunt Frieda spoke French.

1877
01:26:12,435 --> 01:26:15,430

1878

01:26:15,430 --> 01:26:21,110
My grandmother used to call
that mazel, which means luck.

1879
01:26:21,110 --> 01:26:22,235
And I believe it is.

1880
01:26:22,235 --> 01:26:25,280

1881
01:26:25,280 --> 01:26:27,950
So she loses her daughter
when the daughter

1882
01:26:27,950 --> 01:26:32,000
goes to a card game for an
evening's entertainment,

1883
01:26:32,000 --> 01:26:34,370
something innocent.

1884
01:26:34,370 --> 01:26:39,140
And yet she herself, throughout
the war, is never caught.

1885
01:26:39,140 --> 01:26:42,650
And survives running everywhere
and doing everything,

1886
01:26:42,650 --> 01:26:46,070
although she was sheltered by a
Christian landlady to a point.

1887
01:26:46,070 --> 01:26:51,980
No one ever gave away her
apartment or her residence.

1888
01:26:51,980 --> 01:26:57,340
But yes, and my grandmother
had to live with that.

1889
01:26:57,340 --> 01:27:00,640
She had to live with that

knowledge, that not only was

1890
01:27:00,640 --> 01:27:05,055
she older and her daughter
had so much to live for,

1891
01:27:05,055 --> 01:27:06,430
but she had to
live with the fact

1892
01:27:06,430 --> 01:27:09,235
that she was so careless
about her comings and goings.

1893
01:27:09,235 --> 01:27:14,150

1894
01:27:14,150 --> 01:27:16,220
So she comes with you
to the United States.

1895
01:27:16,220 --> 01:27:20,450

1896
01:27:20,450 --> 01:27:23,300
Do you remember
the journey over?

1897
01:27:23,300 --> 01:27:24,170
Yes.

1898
01:27:24,170 --> 01:27:28,010
I still get sick to my
stomach on a rowboat.

1899
01:27:28,010 --> 01:27:28,550
Oh, really?

1900
01:27:28,550 --> 01:27:30,020
[CHUCKLES]

1901
01:27:30,020 --> 01:27:32,100

Yes, but it was fun.

1902

01:27:32,100 --> 01:27:35,180

I mean, I don't remember
it as anything drastic.

1903

01:27:35,180 --> 01:27:39,030

That was going to be a
real new beginning for me.

1904

01:27:39,030 --> 01:27:42,880

It wasn't as easy as I
thought it was going to be.

1905

01:27:42,880 --> 01:27:43,890

In what way?

1906

01:27:43,890 --> 01:27:48,740

Well, it was being adopted into
a family that now had never

1907

01:27:48,740 --> 01:27:52,320

had a daughter, number
one, that had been given

1908

01:27:52,320 --> 01:27:57,360

the responsibility of raising
this child that, supposedly,

1909

01:27:57,360 --> 01:28:00,180

came out of the
wilderness, practically.

1910

01:28:00,180 --> 01:28:05,990

Now there was breakfast and
lunch and dinner and homework

1911

01:28:05,990 --> 01:28:11,160

and hours, and never mind that
you come home or go anywhere

1912

01:28:11,160 --> 01:28:12,640

or without being--

1913
01:28:12,640 --> 01:28:14,530
Where was Bernt?

1914
01:28:14,530 --> 01:28:15,840
He was also there.

1915
01:28:15,840 --> 01:28:18,630
He was a year older.

1916
01:28:18,630 --> 01:28:21,820
It wasn't that they were out
of that and they were free

1917
01:28:21,820 --> 01:28:23,550
and then you come
into their lives.

1918
01:28:23,550 --> 01:28:25,020
They still were raising a child.

1919
01:28:25,020 --> 01:28:27,510
Oh, they were raising a
child, but not a daughter.

1920
01:28:27,510 --> 01:28:28,170
OK.

1921
01:28:28,170 --> 01:28:30,190
And I think that
that generation felt

1922
01:28:30,190 --> 01:28:33,480
you raise a daughter differently
than you raise a son.

1923
01:28:33,480 --> 01:28:35,370
So he had a lot of freedom.

1924
01:28:35,370 --> 01:28:38,310
First of all, he had
been their son forever,

1925
01:28:38,310 --> 01:28:43,940
and I came out of
nowhere, and I was a girl.

1926
01:28:43,940 --> 01:28:47,430
So he was allowed to
come home at midnight.

1927
01:28:47,430 --> 01:28:49,110
I had to be home at 9:30.

1928
01:28:49,110 --> 01:28:51,360
I mean, there were
different rules.

1929
01:28:51,360 --> 01:28:56,733
I wasn't used to rules,
and I wasn't used to them

1930
01:28:56,733 --> 01:28:57,900
and they weren't used to me.

1931
01:28:57,900 --> 01:29:03,960

1932
01:29:03,960 --> 01:29:08,730
And practically, the day
I came, I met a neighbor.

1933
01:29:08,730 --> 01:29:12,330
She happened to be my age,
going to the same school,

1934
01:29:12,330 --> 01:29:14,340
and she was also
German-Jewish, but they

1935
01:29:14,340 --> 01:29:17,220
had escaped prior to the war.

1936
01:29:17,220 --> 01:29:22,010

And I used to tell her,
if I had my mother,

1937
01:29:22,010 --> 01:29:23,780
my mother wouldn't do this.

1938
01:29:23,780 --> 01:29:26,150
This is just
because I'm adopted.

1939
01:29:26,150 --> 01:29:27,860
She would say to
me, I assure you

1940
01:29:27,860 --> 01:29:31,520
that my mother does the same
thing and I'm not adopted.

1941
01:29:31,520 --> 01:29:34,370
And for years, these
conversations would go on.

1942
01:29:34,370 --> 01:29:35,840
And I hate her.

1943
01:29:35,840 --> 01:29:37,640
She's doing this and
she's doing that,

1944
01:29:37,640 --> 01:29:39,890
and it's because I'm adopted.

1945
01:29:39,890 --> 01:29:46,250
But at base, it was difficult.

1946
01:29:46,250 --> 01:29:48,330
And it sounds like a
teenage voice, too.

1947
01:29:48,330 --> 01:29:51,030
Sort of, yes, on retrospect.

1948

01:29:51,030 --> 01:29:51,530
Yeah.

1949
01:29:51,530 --> 01:29:53,480
On retrospect.

1950
01:29:53,480 --> 01:29:59,540
But I missed the security
of the Catholic Church.

1951
01:29:59,540 --> 01:30:01,385
I missed confession.

1952
01:30:01,385 --> 01:30:03,260
I did all these awful
things and I had no one

1953
01:30:03,260 --> 01:30:05,410
to say to that I did this.

1954
01:30:05,410 --> 01:30:06,730
[CHUCKLES]

1955
01:30:06,730 --> 01:30:07,610

1956
01:30:07,610 --> 01:30:09,710
And I missed Murraine,
and I was not

1957
01:30:09,710 --> 01:30:11,370
allowed to correspond with her.

1958
01:30:11,370 --> 01:30:11,870
Oh, really?

1959
01:30:11,870 --> 01:30:13,830
No.

1960
01:30:13,830 --> 01:30:17,235
I think the greatest fear was
that I would be pulled back.

1961
01:30:17,235 --> 01:30:23,460

1962
01:30:23,460 --> 01:30:29,970
I did it anyway, and I would
put money into the letter.

1963
01:30:29,970 --> 01:30:39,620
But really, for Henry and
me, it was a huge separation

1964
01:30:39,620 --> 01:30:44,440
and the connection kind of
got lost for a long time.

1965
01:30:44,440 --> 01:30:48,250
That was difficult.

1966
01:30:48,250 --> 01:30:52,390
I loved high school and I
loved everything American,

1967
01:30:52,390 --> 01:30:54,550
and I wanted to
be more American.

1968
01:30:54,550 --> 01:30:59,470
I was going to learn English
in a minute, and I sort of did.

1969
01:30:59,470 --> 01:31:02,590
And I wanted to be more American
than any American child could

1970
01:31:02,590 --> 01:31:04,530
possibly be.

1971
01:31:04,530 --> 01:31:06,475
So I took to everything
that was American,

1972

01:31:06,475 --> 01:31:08,100
and my parents were
complete immigrants

1973
01:31:08,100 --> 01:31:11,040
and totally didn't
understand it.

1974
01:31:11,040 --> 01:31:14,800
Did Bernt understand it?

1975
01:31:14,800 --> 01:31:17,290
Was he called
something else by now?

1976
01:31:17,290 --> 01:31:17,930
Bernie.

1977
01:31:17,930 --> 01:31:18,430
Bernie.

1978
01:31:18,430 --> 01:31:21,310
Bernie, Bernie
[? Lanbernchen ?]..

1979
01:31:21,310 --> 01:31:22,530
Did he understand it?

1980
01:31:22,530 --> 01:31:25,120

1981
01:31:25,120 --> 01:31:28,330
We get along to a point.

1982
01:31:28,330 --> 01:31:30,060
Looking at it from
his point of view,

1983
01:31:30,060 --> 01:31:32,140
he must have been
terribly jealous.

1984

01:31:32,140 --> 01:31:36,380
He was always an only child,
and I was an only child.

1985
01:31:36,380 --> 01:31:39,650

1986
01:31:39,650 --> 01:31:40,380
I don't know.

1987
01:31:40,380 --> 01:31:43,020
I mean, his friends
sort of took to me,

1988
01:31:43,020 --> 01:31:45,190
and that upset my mother.

1989
01:31:45,190 --> 01:31:50,520
There were all kinds of issues
that are probably natural,

1990
01:31:50,520 --> 01:31:52,170
but didn't seem natural to me.

1991
01:31:52,170 --> 01:31:54,985

1992
01:31:54,985 --> 01:31:56,860
So you didn't have the
same connection to him

1993
01:31:56,860 --> 01:31:57,760
as you did to Henry?

1994
01:31:57,760 --> 01:31:59,740
Not at all.

1995
01:31:59,740 --> 01:32:00,350
Not at all.

1996
01:32:00,350 --> 01:32:03,240

1997

01:32:03,240 --> 01:32:06,170

So in some ways, you're putting
all of this out of your mind.

1998

01:32:06,170 --> 01:32:09,500

Everything that you left in
Europe, you leave in Europe.

1999

01:32:09,500 --> 01:32:11,090

Is that the case?

2000

01:32:11,090 --> 01:32:14,520

2001

01:32:14,520 --> 01:32:21,790

I did so much that when this
book was published in 1997,

2002

01:32:21,790 --> 01:32:25,780

and I remain friends with
the same people I knew then

2003

01:32:25,780 --> 01:32:29,890

and still now,
people had no clue.

2004

01:32:29,890 --> 01:32:32,650

People did not know that was me.

2005

01:32:32,650 --> 01:32:36,380

Or acquaintances
would say, what?

2006

01:32:36,380 --> 01:32:37,940

You were really an immigrant?

2007

01:32:37,940 --> 01:32:41,090

Wait, you're kidding.

2008

01:32:41,090 --> 01:32:45,590

So I knew that I really

did leave everything.

2009

01:32:45,590 --> 01:32:48,160

I just blocked it.

2010

01:32:48,160 --> 01:32:50,080

What unblocked it?

2011

01:32:50,080 --> 01:32:53,370

Robbie, losing Robbie.

2012

01:32:53,370 --> 01:32:56,660

And maybe a while before
that, because we went back

2013

01:32:56,660 --> 01:32:57,500

with our children.

2014

01:32:57,500 --> 01:33:03,050

We went back to visit my
cousins, as young children.

2015

01:33:03,050 --> 01:33:11,180

But as visitors, and Wendy, my
daughter, would tell you this,

2016

01:33:11,180 --> 01:33:12,860

it was fun memories.

2017

01:33:12,860 --> 01:33:15,080

I would tell all the
wonderful things that happened

2018

01:33:15,080 --> 01:33:18,700

and the village.

2019

01:33:18,700 --> 01:33:26,600

But really getting in back
in touch took losing my son.

2020

01:33:26,600 --> 01:33:35,570

And I think that's when

all this became therapy,

2021
01:33:35,570 --> 01:33:37,910
to touch base with
the things that I was

2022
01:33:37,910 --> 01:33:40,460
able to do when I was a child.

2023
01:33:40,460 --> 01:33:43,880
I knew I could do the rest then.

2024
01:33:43,880 --> 01:33:47,630
Because I felt, well, you
did this and you managed.

2025
01:33:47,630 --> 01:33:49,190
And you did this
and you managed.

2026
01:33:49,190 --> 01:33:51,260
And you did this
and you managed.

2027
01:33:51,260 --> 01:33:53,420
And always, there
were wonderful people

2028
01:33:53,420 --> 01:33:59,380
around to help,
always, continuing.

2029
01:33:59,380 --> 01:34:01,245
And so lucky in my life today.

2030
01:34:01,245 --> 01:34:05,060

2031
01:34:05,060 --> 01:34:11,815
Earlier today, we had a
separate interview with Renate.

2032

01:34:11,815 --> 01:34:15,530

2033

01:34:15,530 --> 01:34:21,670

Tell me about that,
in the sense of now

2034

01:34:21,670 --> 01:34:23,260

we know more about your father.

2035

01:34:23,260 --> 01:34:26,370

We know who your father was.

2036

01:34:26,370 --> 01:34:30,220

And in some ways, this is almost
like part of your father's

2037

01:34:30,220 --> 01:34:34,670

world being brought to you.

2038

01:34:34,670 --> 01:34:36,350

It is unbelievable, really.

2039

01:34:36,350 --> 01:34:39,100

2040

01:34:39,100 --> 01:34:43,990

I think that-- well,
let's put it this way.

2041

01:34:43,990 --> 01:34:51,580

In 1999, I lost my late
husband, Irwin Muchman,

2042

01:34:51,580 --> 01:34:56,100

and within a year
I met Larry Abrams.

2043

01:34:56,100 --> 01:34:59,690

And we became very good
friends and got married.

2044

01:34:59,690 --> 01:35:03,790
And Larry has a
huge clan of kids.

2045
01:35:03,790 --> 01:35:08,060
And I never felt
that I had a big--

2046
01:35:08,060 --> 01:35:09,760
I never felt I had family.

2047
01:35:09,760 --> 01:35:11,360
It was always either
my late husband,

2048
01:35:11,360 --> 01:35:15,740
who had a big family, too,
and other people's families.

2049
01:35:15,740 --> 01:35:17,810
But I had, for years--

2050
01:35:17,810 --> 01:35:22,970
I knew about my maternal
family, but I never

2051
01:35:22,970 --> 01:35:24,400
knew anything about my father.

2052
01:35:24,400 --> 01:35:25,700
The orphan.

2053
01:35:25,700 --> 01:35:29,360
The orphan, that's all.

2054
01:35:29,360 --> 01:35:33,940
And I had searched, because
in 1990, Wendy, my daughter,

2055
01:35:33,940 --> 01:35:36,560
found a cache of letters.

2056

01:35:36,560 --> 01:35:40,970
And these letters
contained over 100 letters

2057
01:35:40,970 --> 01:35:44,630
and documents and artifacts
that are now all in Washington.

2058
01:35:44,630 --> 01:35:46,490
Many, many are in Washington.

2059
01:35:46,490 --> 01:35:49,610
My rosary is still with me
and my Bible is with me,

2060
01:35:49,610 --> 01:35:54,140
but other things are mainly
donated, and given back

2061
01:35:54,140 --> 01:35:58,490
to me gloriously in
huge, beautiful books.

2062
01:35:58,490 --> 01:36:01,820

2063
01:36:01,820 --> 01:36:05,030
Somehow, the mystery
remained, because there

2064
01:36:05,030 --> 01:36:06,910
was a letter written.

2065
01:36:06,910 --> 01:36:11,150
I had the letter, which was in
this box, Marshall Field box,

2066
01:36:11,150 --> 01:36:15,870
and it was addressed to a
Max Westheimer in Houston.

2067
01:36:15,870 --> 01:36:19,740
And his answer was

somewhat abrupt.

2068

01:36:19,740 --> 01:36:22,838

I don't know that he would
have ever sent for my father.

2069

01:36:22,838 --> 01:36:25,380

He was going to tell his nephew
about he wasn't feeling good.

2070

01:36:25,380 --> 01:36:28,440

So your father had gotten
in touch, or your--

2071

01:36:28,440 --> 01:36:30,360

No.

2072

01:36:30,360 --> 01:36:33,750

Werner's wife, my
adoptive mother,

2073

01:36:33,750 --> 01:36:37,230

or together, they had
written a letter to Houston.

2074

01:36:37,230 --> 01:36:39,690

Because I'm sure they
scrolled all the Westheimers.

2075

01:36:39,690 --> 01:36:42,490

We're the Westheimers
in phone books.

2076

01:36:42,490 --> 01:36:44,520

And since they were
in Chicago, they

2077

01:36:44,520 --> 01:36:47,940

found a Westheimer in Houston.

2078

01:36:47,940 --> 01:36:50,310

And there were so many
Westheimers in Houston.

2079

01:36:50,310 --> 01:36:52,680

Westheimer Avenue is in Houston.

2080

01:36:52,680 --> 01:36:55,560

So they wrote to Max Westheimer,
who would have been an uncle

2081

01:36:55,560 --> 01:36:58,550

of my father's.

2082

01:36:58,550 --> 01:37:00,920

And they received this letter
in return, which I have.

2083

01:37:00,920 --> 01:37:03,410

There were two.

2084

01:37:03,410 --> 01:37:08,300

And I thought, what a
terribly unkind answer.

2085

01:37:08,300 --> 01:37:10,550

Such a wealthy
person, and he was.

2086

01:37:10,550 --> 01:37:12,850

He owned a big
insurance company,

2087

01:37:12,850 --> 01:37:15,440

and went to Houston
to look for it.

2088

01:37:15,440 --> 01:37:18,930

No Westheimer was willing
to admit anything.

2089

01:37:18,930 --> 01:37:23,166

Now I know why, because
no one really was related.

2090

01:37:23,166 --> 01:37:30,060
But after that I kind of dropped
it because it was useless.

2091
01:37:30,060 --> 01:37:36,090
And then Muchman cousins
of my late husband's.

2092
01:37:36,090 --> 01:37:43,770
This young woman would have been
my late husband's first cousin.

2093
01:37:43,770 --> 01:37:47,880
She decided to do ancestry.com,
she found the whole Muchman

2094
01:37:47,880 --> 01:37:50,670
clan, going all the
way back to Russia

2095
01:37:50,670 --> 01:37:52,020
and then when they came over.

2096
01:37:52,020 --> 01:37:56,860
And it's a wonderful story
of a very big family,

2097
01:37:56,860 --> 01:37:58,470
all Trotskyites.

2098
01:37:58,470 --> 01:37:59,730
[LAUGHS]

2099
01:37:59,730 --> 01:38:02,490
Wonderful, wonderful gang.

2100
01:38:02,490 --> 01:38:04,450
It's really when I
learned to be Jewish.

2101
01:38:04,450 --> 01:38:04,950
OK.

2102

01:38:04,950 --> 01:38:09,290

And then we got to know
them, and they read my book

2103

01:38:09,290 --> 01:38:10,340

and we got friendly.

2104

01:38:10,340 --> 01:38:12,440

And she decided they
were going to look

2105

01:38:12,440 --> 01:38:17,380

for Westheimers, because the
letter was sort of weird.

2106

01:38:17,380 --> 01:38:22,750

And within, I'd say, almost
not more than six months,

2107

01:38:22,750 --> 01:38:28,540

she discovered Westheimers in
New York on the East Coast.

2108

01:38:28,540 --> 01:38:34,980

And up came Renata and a
tree, an unbelievable tree,

2109

01:38:34,980 --> 01:38:38,250

going back to Germany,
all the Westheimers

2110

01:38:38,250 --> 01:38:40,488

in my line of Westheimers.

2111

01:38:40,488 --> 01:38:41,280

Your father's line.

2112

01:38:41,280 --> 01:38:47,420

My father's line, going
back to before 1800.

2113

01:38:47,420 --> 01:38:51,920

And it's all proven
because Ancestry,

2114
01:38:51,920 --> 01:38:53,420
in order to belong
to Ancestry, you

2115
01:38:53,420 --> 01:38:55,130
have to really go in search.

2116
01:38:55,130 --> 01:38:57,110
The Museum is
connected to Ancestry,

2117
01:38:57,110 --> 01:39:01,240
so I know they can
have all this material.

2118
01:39:01,240 --> 01:39:05,590
And when she found
all this, I realized

2119
01:39:05,590 --> 01:39:09,820
but nobody recognized my
father, another tragedy

2120
01:39:09,820 --> 01:39:13,600
of the Holocaust,
because he perished

2121
01:39:13,600 --> 01:39:16,940
and they were all
able to come here.

2122
01:39:16,940 --> 01:39:19,720
So fine.

2123
01:39:19,720 --> 01:39:22,810
Now I found all the Westheimers.

2124
01:39:22,810 --> 01:39:23,905
And then Renata decided--

2125

01:39:23,905 --> 01:39:26,410

2126

01:39:26,410 --> 01:39:29,440

she was a six degrees
of separation.

2127

01:39:29,440 --> 01:39:32,127

We lived together within a
half a block of each other.

2128

01:39:32,127 --> 01:39:33,460

We went to the same high school.

2129

01:39:33,460 --> 01:39:35,350

We went to the same university.

2130

01:39:35,350 --> 01:39:37,150

We didn't know each
other and our families

2131

01:39:37,150 --> 01:39:39,350

didn't know each other,
which is amazing.

2132

01:39:39,350 --> 01:39:42,280

2133

01:39:42,280 --> 01:39:45,630

She decided to come
visit with her children.

2134

01:39:45,630 --> 01:39:48,450

And so I had planned a
dinner and CBS was coming in,

2135

01:39:48,450 --> 01:39:52,680

and it was very chaotic, because
Sherri Goodman is an organizer

2136

01:39:52,680 --> 01:39:55,878

and she organized you and

she organized everybody.

2137
01:39:55,878 --> 01:39:56,420
Her daughter.

2138
01:39:56,420 --> 01:39:58,200
So her daughter, Sherri Goodman.

2139
01:39:58,200 --> 01:40:04,180
There's Lauren McCloud,
and there is David,

2140
01:40:04,180 --> 01:40:06,710
who's her son from New York.

2141
01:40:06,710 --> 01:40:09,770
And they all came.

2142
01:40:09,770 --> 01:40:12,850
So we just figured,
OK, nobody knows.

2143
01:40:12,850 --> 01:40:14,590
I had talked to
other Westheimers.

2144
01:40:14,590 --> 01:40:19,070
Nobody quite placed
Julius Westheimer,

2145
01:40:19,070 --> 01:40:25,850
until today, moments
before you were all set up,

2146
01:40:25,850 --> 01:40:27,050
she looked at the letter.

2147
01:40:27,050 --> 01:40:28,760
Coincidentally, I
had shown her what

2148
01:40:28,760 --> 01:40:31,490

the Museum does, because
she felt maybe she

2149
01:40:31,490 --> 01:40:32,770
wanted to give her pictures.

2150
01:40:32,770 --> 01:40:34,520
The Museum would be
thrilled to hear this.

2151
01:40:34,520 --> 01:40:39,020
But she saw the letter
that the museum had copied,

2152
01:40:39,020 --> 01:40:41,690
and of course,
everything is cataloged.

2153
01:40:41,690 --> 01:40:44,360
She looked at the letter.

2154
01:40:44,360 --> 01:40:48,740
And she said, this is
when my grandfather died.

2155
01:40:48,740 --> 01:40:53,360
This man in Houston also
died, coincidentally,

2156
01:40:53,360 --> 01:40:55,750
around the same time.

2157
01:40:55,750 --> 01:41:01,420
And she said, I suspect,
and I'm pretty sure,

2158
01:41:01,420 --> 01:41:05,090
the letter was written to
the wrong Max Westheimer.

2159
01:41:05,090 --> 01:41:08,470
Had it been written to
her grandfather, who would

2160
01:41:08,470 --> 01:41:10,000
have been my father's uncle--

2161
01:41:10,000 --> 01:41:10,870
In New York.

2162
01:41:10,870 --> 01:41:12,080
In New York.

2163
01:41:12,080 --> 01:41:13,000
Not in Texas.

2164
01:41:13,000 --> 01:41:13,780
No, no, no.

2165
01:41:13,780 --> 01:41:15,070
There's nobody in Texas.

2166
01:41:15,070 --> 01:41:17,320
They were all in New York.

2167
01:41:17,320 --> 01:41:19,690
Then the rest of
the Westheimers,

2168
01:41:19,690 --> 01:41:21,660
we would have been here.

2169
01:41:21,660 --> 01:41:25,410
Because the man
Herman, I think--

2170
01:41:25,410 --> 01:41:26,220
Humberger.

2171
01:41:26,220 --> 01:41:30,010
Humberger was in the
diamond business.

2172
01:41:30,010 --> 01:41:33,570

He sent all these people visas.

2173
01:41:33,570 --> 01:41:37,620
But my adoptive
mother and father

2174
01:41:37,620 --> 01:41:42,570
made the error of looking for
a Max Westheimer, logical,

2175
01:41:42,570 --> 01:41:43,650
and found one in Houston.

2176
01:41:43,650 --> 01:41:47,180

2177
01:41:47,180 --> 01:41:49,130
And there you are.

2178
01:41:49,130 --> 01:41:55,590
And Renata and I were together
alone, just moments ago really.

2179
01:41:55,590 --> 01:41:58,870
And I can't even believe this.

2180
01:41:58,870 --> 01:42:02,950
So not only did they
come here and you're here

2181
01:42:02,950 --> 01:42:06,280
and we're finding each
other, but here she is,

2182
01:42:06,280 --> 01:42:08,290
solved the mystery for me.

2183
01:42:08,290 --> 01:42:12,090
Why was this Max
Westheimer so standoffish.

2184
01:42:12,090 --> 01:42:12,930

Now it's logical.

2185
01:42:12,930 --> 01:42:16,980

2186
01:42:16,980 --> 01:42:20,070
I talk a lot to a lot
of groups and I'm always

2187
01:42:20,070 --> 01:42:24,960
talking about this complete
indifference, which

2188
01:42:24,960 --> 01:42:30,070
made me think of the Holocaust
and Jewish life in America.

2189
01:42:30,070 --> 01:42:32,530
Because I figured, Oh
my God the indifference.

2190
01:42:32,530 --> 01:42:35,030
These people could have helped
and they were so indifferent,

2191
01:42:35,030 --> 01:42:37,870
but they weren't even related.

2192
01:42:37,870 --> 01:42:42,738
And there was a hint of I'd
like to do something, but--

2193
01:42:42,738 --> 01:42:44,810
But some reserve as well.

2194
01:42:44,810 --> 01:42:45,650
Well, sure.

2195
01:42:45,650 --> 01:42:47,932
He probably, who
are these people?

2196

01:42:47,932 --> 01:42:48,890
Who are writing to him.

2197
01:42:48,890 --> 01:42:50,000
And do they have a ticket?

2198
01:42:50,000 --> 01:42:53,660
Do they have-- those
questions, those things

2199
01:42:53,660 --> 01:42:55,775
were important, if you
didn't have any money.

2200
01:42:55,775 --> 01:42:59,170

2201
01:42:59,170 --> 01:43:06,280
So we're sitting here
in 2016 and you've still

2202
01:43:06,280 --> 01:43:11,120
learned something new
that you never expected.

2203
01:43:11,120 --> 01:43:14,300
But you know where
this takes me?

2204
01:43:14,300 --> 01:43:18,930
Because it's 2016,
this takes me to what

2205
01:43:18,930 --> 01:43:22,460
I hear every day on the news.

2206
01:43:22,460 --> 01:43:27,230
It takes me to the
repeated tragedies,

2207
01:43:27,230 --> 01:43:32,120
the orphans, the refugees
who are going to repeat--

2208
01:43:32,120 --> 01:43:33,520
and never mind now.

2209
01:43:33,520 --> 01:43:34,520
This has been going on.

2210
01:43:34,520 --> 01:43:36,110
There was Bosnia, Rwanda there.

2211
01:43:36,110 --> 01:43:38,450
I mean, we can just go way back.

2212
01:43:38,450 --> 01:43:40,930
It has never stopped.

2213
01:43:40,930 --> 01:43:46,360
And where are the little
pieces of good people,

2214
01:43:46,360 --> 01:43:49,520
who are doing something?

2215
01:43:49,520 --> 01:43:52,220
It is really not just
about this Holocaust.

2216
01:43:52,220 --> 01:43:54,860
It isn't just about
my life anymore.

2217
01:43:54,860 --> 01:43:58,370
I mean, I'm sure
it was for years.

2218
01:43:58,370 --> 01:43:59,090
And that's OK.

2219
01:43:59,090 --> 01:44:01,820
But at this point
in my life, if I

2220

01:44:01,820 --> 01:44:04,910

can't do something or
try to do something,

2221

01:44:04,910 --> 01:44:06,110

I've wasted all this.

2222

01:44:06,110 --> 01:44:09,180

2223

01:44:09,180 --> 01:44:12,170

And of course, that's the
wonderful thing about the US

2224

01:44:12,170 --> 01:44:14,720

Holocaust Memorial
Museum, is all the things

2225

01:44:14,720 --> 01:44:19,110

that they do with
little pieces of people

2226

01:44:19,110 --> 01:44:20,210

who are willing to help.

2227

01:44:20,210 --> 01:44:22,878

2228

01:44:22,878 --> 01:44:23,670

Thank you for that.

2229

01:44:23,670 --> 01:44:27,590

2230

01:44:27,590 --> 01:44:31,860

I think we've kind of come to
the end of our conversation.

2231

01:44:31,860 --> 01:44:34,310

I believe so, and
you've been so kind,

2232

01:44:34,310 --> 01:44:37,600
and it's been a pleasure
knowing you anyway.

2233

01:44:37,600 --> 01:44:38,590
Likewise.

2234

01:44:38,590 --> 01:44:39,510
Thank you.

2235

01:44:39,510 --> 01:44:43,700
Is there anything else you'd
like to add before we wrap up?

2236

01:44:43,700 --> 01:44:45,410
No.

2237

01:44:45,410 --> 01:44:49,610
I used to think that there
has to be a time when

2238

01:44:49,610 --> 01:44:53,870
we can say no, it's enough.

2239

01:44:53,870 --> 01:44:55,890
I hope we find the time.

2240

01:44:55,890 --> 01:44:57,740
I hope that time comes.

2241

01:44:57,740 --> 01:44:59,490
I hope it's here.

2242

01:44:59,490 --> 01:45:02,680
It doesn't look it.

2243

01:45:02,680 --> 01:45:06,580
I'd like to leave it
on a positive note.

2244

01:45:06,580 --> 01:45:08,340

There's a lot that's
positive in what

2245
01:45:08,340 --> 01:45:10,030
you've shared with us today.

2246
01:45:10,030 --> 01:45:11,310
Thank you.

2247
01:45:11,310 --> 01:45:16,200
So I'll say, with that, this
concludes the United States

2248
01:45:16,200 --> 01:45:21,840
Holocaust Memorial Museum
interview with Beatrice Trixie

2249
01:45:21,840 --> 01:45:29,990
Muchman on September 27th,
2016 in Chicago, Illinois.

2250
01:45:29,990 --> 01:45:30,680
Thank you.

2251
01:45:30,680 --> 01:45:31,774
Thank you again.

2252
01:45:31,774 --> 01:45:32,602
[APPLAUSE]

2253
01:45:32,602 --> 01:45:33,430

2254
01:45:33,430 --> 01:45:34,240
Oh, you guys.

2255
01:45:34,240 --> 01:45:36,820

2256
01:45:36,820 --> 01:45:37,425
I'm rolling.

2257

01:45:37,425 --> 01:45:41,140

2258

01:45:41,140 --> 01:45:42,840

This is the rosary.

2259

01:45:42,840 --> 01:45:44,410

And what is that rosary from?

2260

01:45:44,410 --> 01:45:46,210

Who gave it to you?

2261

01:45:46,210 --> 01:45:49,240

Well, it was a gift
of my first communion,

2262

01:45:49,240 --> 01:45:54,070

and given to me by my
godmother, as well as the Bible.

2263

01:45:54,070 --> 01:45:55,200

Let's take a look at this.

2264

01:45:55,200 --> 01:45:58,160

And the little Bible.

2265

01:45:58,160 --> 01:46:00,567

Looks like a prayer book.

2266

01:46:00,567 --> 01:46:01,400

It's a little Bible.

2267

01:46:01,400 --> 01:46:04,280

It's a prayer book, and
it was given to everybody.

2268

01:46:04,280 --> 01:46:08,380

Let's hold it up like
this in the picture.

2269

01:46:08,380 --> 01:46:10,610

So here.

2270

01:46:10,610 --> 01:46:12,950

So it says, [FRENCH].

2271

01:46:12,950 --> 01:46:15,500

2272

01:46:15,500 --> 01:46:20,930

So it's a souvenir
of a solemn occasion,

2273

01:46:20,930 --> 01:46:25,670

given to Beatrix Duchet, because
my name was changed, of course.

2274

01:46:25,670 --> 01:46:29,480

And the church is the
Church of Saint Joseph,

2275

01:46:29,480 --> 01:46:35,900

St. Joseph of Ottignies,
30th of May, 1943.

2276

01:46:35,900 --> 01:46:38,810

Why don't we show
both sides of this?

2277

01:46:38,810 --> 01:46:43,160

Let's hold it like that so that
you can get all of these words.

2278

01:46:43,160 --> 01:46:47,170

2279

01:46:47,170 --> 01:46:52,570

That's what's on the flip side,
and now we'll turn it this way.

2280

01:46:52,570 --> 01:46:55,005

2281

01:46:55,005 --> 01:46:57,130
And that's on the occasion
of your first communion.

2282
01:46:57,130 --> 01:47:00,280
Of my first communion.

2283
01:47:00,280 --> 01:47:05,760
And this was given to me by
Father Vaes, the parish priest.

2284
01:47:05,760 --> 01:47:11,520
And that's the little card
or the Bible and prayer

2285
01:47:11,520 --> 01:47:12,810
book itself?

2286
01:47:12,810 --> 01:47:13,620
No.

2287
01:47:13,620 --> 01:47:16,590
This is the card
that was within the--

2288
01:47:16,590 --> 01:47:17,527
it's a little Bible.

2289
01:47:17,527 --> 01:47:18,360
It's a little Bible.

2290
01:47:18,360 --> 01:47:18,860
Yes.

2291
01:47:18,860 --> 01:47:20,470
OK.

2292
01:47:20,470 --> 01:47:22,630
And let's open the
Bible so we can

2293
01:47:22,630 --> 01:47:25,265

see at least a few pages of it.

2294

01:47:25,265 --> 01:47:26,890

And you have kept
that all these years?

2295

01:47:26,890 --> 01:47:28,270

Yes.

2296

01:47:28,270 --> 01:47:29,650

And I think this came recently.

2297

01:47:29,650 --> 01:47:32,700

That's why you donate
things to the museum.

2298

01:47:32,700 --> 01:47:35,480

Let's just see this.

2299

01:47:35,480 --> 01:47:39,120

It's very well kept
for so many decades.

2300

01:47:39,120 --> 01:47:40,320

It's amazing, isn't it?

2301

01:47:40,320 --> 01:47:44,272

2302

01:47:44,272 --> 01:47:46,940

And this is just a random page?

2303

01:47:46,940 --> 01:47:48,530

It's just a random page.

2304

01:47:48,530 --> 01:47:50,990

I'm not sure where we opened it.

2305

01:47:50,990 --> 01:47:54,200

And so you told me earlier,
or did you say no on camera,

2306

01:47:54,200 --> 01:47:57,290
you know all the prayers?

2307

01:47:57,290 --> 01:48:00,020
In French, I think I could
still go through them.

2308

01:48:00,020 --> 01:48:02,600
I was punished a
lot after confession

2309

01:48:02,600 --> 01:48:04,730
because I would
steal candy purposely

2310

01:48:04,730 --> 01:48:06,110
so I could go to confession.

2311

01:48:06,110 --> 01:48:07,140
[LAUGHS]

2312

01:48:07,140 --> 01:48:09,860
And then what you
have to do is you

2313

01:48:09,860 --> 01:48:14,100
have to just recite your
beads several times,

2314

01:48:14,100 --> 01:48:16,190
and it was my pleasure
to remain in the church

2315

01:48:16,190 --> 01:48:17,145
and recite the beads.

2316

01:48:17,145 --> 01:48:19,760

2317

01:48:19,760 --> 01:48:21,920
More candy, more beads.

2318

01:48:21,920 --> 01:48:23,000

Right.

2319

01:48:23,000 --> 01:48:23,690

More prayers.

2320

01:48:23,690 --> 01:48:26,600

More prayers.

2321

01:48:26,600 --> 01:48:30,110

So in a way, that's
an education.

2322

01:48:30,110 --> 01:48:31,620

Thank you so much
for sharing that.

2323

01:48:31,620 --> 01:48:33,910

Oh, you're so welcome.

2324

01:48:33,910 --> 01:48:34,640

We got it.

2325

01:48:34,640 --> 01:48:36,780

Thank you.