

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:00,500  
OK.

2  
00:00:00,500 --> 00:00:01,496  
Speed.

3  
00:00:01,496 --> 00:00:03,990  
[INAUDIBLE]

4  
00:00:03,990 --> 00:00:07,290  
This is a United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum

5  
00:00:07,290 --> 00:00:14,100  
interview with Mrs. Gertrude  
Shafer on January 16, 2019

6  
00:00:14,100 --> 00:00:17,310  
in Miami Beach, Florida.

7  
00:00:17,310 --> 00:00:18,480  
Thank you, Gertrude.

8  
00:00:18,480 --> 00:00:21,120  
Thank you so much for  
coming to talk to us today.

9  
00:00:21,120 --> 00:00:22,190  
Thank you.

10  
00:00:22,190 --> 00:00:26,490  
Our interview is a little bit  
unusual in that we had hoped

11  
00:00:26,490 --> 00:00:30,960  
and you had hoped that your  
mom, Mrs. Leah Burstyn,

12  
00:00:30,960 --> 00:00:34,650  
would be able to come and  
share her story with us.

13  
00:00:34,650 --> 00:00:37,460  
But it was too hard  
for her to do so.

14  
00:00:37,460 --> 00:00:38,010  
Yes.

15  
00:00:38,010 --> 00:00:41,460  
It was just-- it was too  
painful and too hard.

16  
00:00:41,460 --> 00:00:44,190  
And you have agreed  
to talk a little bit

17  
00:00:44,190 --> 00:00:48,160  
about what her story was  
and a little bit of your own

18  
00:00:48,160 --> 00:00:49,470  
in her stead.

19  
00:00:49,470 --> 00:00:50,970  
So what I'm going  
to do is I'm going

20  
00:00:50,970 --> 00:00:53,740  
to ask a few questions  
about your life.

21  
00:00:53,740 --> 00:00:58,080  
And then we'll go and  
see what we can hear

22  
00:00:58,080 --> 00:01:00,090  
about your mom's experiences.

23  
00:01:00,090 --> 00:01:00,780  
Great.

24  
00:01:00,780 --> 00:01:01,470

All right.

25  
00:01:01,470 --> 00:01:06,150  
So tell me, what was  
the date of your birth?

26  
00:01:06,150 --> 00:01:09,240  
May 29, 1957.

27  
00:01:09,240 --> 00:01:10,620  
And where were you born?

28  
00:01:10,620 --> 00:01:12,220  
Boston, Massachusetts.

29  
00:01:12,220 --> 00:01:12,720  
Really?

30  
00:01:12,720 --> 00:01:13,710  
Yes.

31  
00:01:13,710 --> 00:01:16,520  
And do you have many siblings?

32  
00:01:16,520 --> 00:01:21,940  
Well, we were five children--

33  
00:01:21,940 --> 00:01:25,610  
an older sister, who was  
born after the war in Munich,

34  
00:01:25,610 --> 00:01:26,650  
Germany.

35  
00:01:26,650 --> 00:01:27,680  
When was she born?

36  
00:01:27,680 --> 00:01:32,410  
She was born 1947--

37  
00:01:32,410 --> 00:01:35,760

February 13, 1947  
in Munich, Germany.

38  
00:01:35,760 --> 00:01:36,930  
And what was her name?

39  
00:01:36,930 --> 00:01:37,570  
Sarah.

40  
00:01:37,570 --> 00:01:38,070  
Sarah.

41  
00:01:38,070 --> 00:01:38,570  
Yes.

42  
00:01:38,570 --> 00:01:39,260  
Is Sarah still--

43  
00:01:39,260 --> 00:01:39,760  
No.

44  
00:01:39,760 --> 00:01:40,710  
She passed away?

45  
00:01:40,710 --> 00:01:43,150  
Yes.

46  
00:01:43,150 --> 00:01:44,980  
And then what other  
siblings do you have?

47  
00:01:44,980 --> 00:01:51,280  
Then next is my  
brother, Samuel Burstyn,

48  
00:01:51,280 --> 00:01:53,350  
who's named after  
my mom's father, who

49  
00:01:53,350 --> 00:01:54,850  
was killed in the war.

50

00:01:54,850 --> 00:01:58,360

And then I had a brother,  
Jerry, who passed away at 43.

51

00:01:58,360 --> 00:01:58,980

Oh, dear.

52

00:01:58,980 --> 00:01:59,830

Very young.

53

00:01:59,830 --> 00:02:01,960

Very special boy-- very young.

54

00:02:01,960 --> 00:02:04,780

Then myself, and  
a younger sister,

55

00:02:04,780 --> 00:02:09,550

Shari, who's named  
after my mom's brother.

56

00:02:09,550 --> 00:02:12,060

What was the mom's  
brother's name?

57

00:02:12,060 --> 00:02:13,628

The Hebrew name is [? Zurich. ?]

58

00:02:13,628 --> 00:02:14,170

[? Zurich? ?]

59

00:02:14,170 --> 00:02:17,080

Yes.

60

00:02:17,080 --> 00:02:19,330

You gave me the date of  
birth of your sister.

61

00:02:19,330 --> 00:02:21,760

What about your brothers  
and your other sister?

62

00:02:21,760 --> 00:02:25,010

So my brother Sammy, whose name is Shmuel Yitzhak who

63

00:02:25,010 --> 00:02:28,690

was named after my mom's father, his birthday

64

00:02:28,690 --> 00:02:34,907

is November 2, 1952.

65

00:02:34,907 --> 00:02:35,740

And then your other?

66

00:02:35,740 --> 00:02:43,990

My brother Jerry is August 31, 1954.

67

00:02:43,990 --> 00:02:44,720

And your sister?

68

00:02:44,720 --> 00:02:50,450

My sister Shari is October 8, 1964.

69

00:02:50,450 --> 00:02:50,950

Wow.

70

00:02:50,950 --> 00:02:51,550

Yes.

71

00:02:51,550 --> 00:02:58,150

So between 1947 and 1964 is when the five children

72

00:02:58,150 --> 00:02:59,260

were born in your family.

73

00:02:59,260 --> 00:03:00,130

That's correct.

74

00:03:00,130 --> 00:03:04,450  
And aside from your sister, who  
was born in Landsberg, Germany,

75  
00:03:04,450 --> 00:03:06,160  
was everybody else  
born in the States?

76  
00:03:06,160 --> 00:03:06,970  
Yes.

77  
00:03:06,970 --> 00:03:07,690  
All in Boston?

78  
00:03:07,690 --> 00:03:08,440  
Yes.

79  
00:03:08,440 --> 00:03:09,460  
What part of Boston?

80  
00:03:09,460 --> 00:03:12,848  
Boston-- I guess Brookline.

81  
00:03:12,848 --> 00:03:13,390  
In Brookline.

82  
00:03:13,390 --> 00:03:15,460  
Brookline, Massachusetts, yeah.

83  
00:03:15,460 --> 00:03:17,530  
And did you all grow up there?

84  
00:03:17,530 --> 00:03:20,230  
Yes.

85  
00:03:20,230 --> 00:03:23,230  
What did your father  
do for a living?

86  
00:03:23,230 --> 00:03:23,930  
Interesting.

87

00:03:23,930 --> 00:03:29,170

My father in pre-war  
learned cement and concrete.

88

00:03:29,170 --> 00:03:31,480

And when he came  
to America already,

89

00:03:31,480 --> 00:03:34,480

he, after living in the  
woods for 2 and 1/2 years,

90

00:03:34,480 --> 00:03:36,760

came back with very  
bad arthritis--

91

00:03:36,760 --> 00:03:39,850

crippling from the  
dampness and everything.

92

00:03:39,850 --> 00:03:41,590

So they were forced  
to do whatever

93

00:03:41,590 --> 00:03:45,160

work he could get--  
painting, wallpaper hanging,

94

00:03:45,160 --> 00:03:46,490

things like that.

95

00:03:46,490 --> 00:03:47,530

So is that what he did?

96

00:03:47,530 --> 00:03:49,000

Yes.

97

00:03:49,000 --> 00:03:52,090

So he was part of the building  
and construction industry?

98

00:03:52,090 --> 00:03:55,210



Yes, to a certain extent.

99

00:03:55,210 --> 00:03:57,430

Did your mom work  
outside the house?

100

00:03:57,430 --> 00:03:59,740

Actually, she  
worked with my dad.

101

00:03:59,740 --> 00:04:02,410

Many times, she would  
be wheeling the babies

102

00:04:02,410 --> 00:04:05,010

and painting with a roller.

103

00:04:05,010 --> 00:04:05,822

Yeah.

104

00:04:05,822 --> 00:04:06,655

That's what she did.

105

00:04:06,655 --> 00:04:08,740

Did they have their  
own small company,

106

00:04:08,740 --> 00:04:10,600

or did they work for others?

107

00:04:10,600 --> 00:04:15,430

Yeah, just odds and  
ends-- little jobs.

108

00:04:15,430 --> 00:04:18,320

What language did your parents  
speak at home with each other?

109

00:04:18,320 --> 00:04:19,120

Yiddish.

110

00:04:19,120 --> 00:04:20,440

They spoke Yiddish.

111  
00:04:20,440 --> 00:04:21,940  
What about with you kids?

112  
00:04:21,940 --> 00:04:22,960  
Yiddish.

113  
00:04:22,960 --> 00:04:25,390  
So even though you're  
born in Boston,

114  
00:04:25,390 --> 00:04:28,300  
you're growing up in an  
American environment,

115  
00:04:28,300 --> 00:04:30,130  
home life was in Yiddish?

116  
00:04:30,130 --> 00:04:32,350  
Yes.

117  
00:04:32,350 --> 00:04:34,870  
And did you speak  
English first or Yiddish?

118  
00:04:34,870 --> 00:04:35,784  
Yiddish.

119  
00:04:35,784 --> 00:04:36,700  
Yiddish?

120  
00:04:36,700 --> 00:04:38,270  
OK.

121  
00:04:38,270 --> 00:04:41,540  
In the neighborhood  
that you lived,

122  
00:04:41,540 --> 00:04:43,400  
were there many other  
Jewish families?

123  
00:04:43,400 --> 00:04:44,420  
Yes.

124  
00:04:44,420 --> 00:04:45,530  
Were they also--

125  
00:04:45,530 --> 00:04:46,880  
I take it you were Orthodox?

126  
00:04:46,880 --> 00:04:48,120  
Yes.

127  
00:04:48,120 --> 00:04:49,250  
Were they also Orthodox?

128  
00:04:49,250 --> 00:04:51,080  
Pretty much, yes.

129  
00:04:51,080 --> 00:04:52,610  
So it wasn't unusual?

130  
00:04:52,610 --> 00:04:53,120  
No.

131  
00:04:53,120 --> 00:04:54,530  
Not for your neighborhood.

132  
00:04:54,530 --> 00:04:55,370  
Right.

133  
00:04:55,370 --> 00:04:58,910  
And your parents were  
immigrants to the United States?

134  
00:04:58,910 --> 00:05:00,410  
--correct.

135  
00:05:00,410 --> 00:05:03,540  
Where did they come from?

136  
00:05:03,540 --> 00:05:04,730  
Poland.

137  
00:05:04,730 --> 00:05:05,630  
What part of Poland?

138  
00:05:05,630 --> 00:05:06,720  
Chelm.

139  
00:05:06,720 --> 00:05:07,280  
Chelm.

140  
00:05:07,280 --> 00:05:09,740  
So would that be C-H-E-L-M?

141  
00:05:09,740 --> 00:05:10,430  
That's correct.

142  
00:05:10,430 --> 00:05:12,680  
All right.

143  
00:05:12,680 --> 00:05:14,300  
Both your mother  
and your father?

144  
00:05:14,300 --> 00:05:17,270  
My father was a  
few kilometers out

145  
00:05:17,270 --> 00:05:20,270  
of Chelm in a little village.

146  
00:05:20,270 --> 00:05:22,720  
My mother was in the  
city proper of Chelm.

147  
00:05:22,720 --> 00:05:23,870  
It was a big town--

148  
00:05:23,870 --> 00:05:25,730  
not huge, but it was a city.

149  
00:05:25,730 --> 00:05:27,440  
She was in the city of Chelm.

150  
00:05:27,440 --> 00:05:31,760  
My father was a  
few kilometers out.

151  
00:05:31,760 --> 00:05:34,700  
Did your parents talk much  
about their childhoods

152  
00:05:34,700 --> 00:05:36,650  
and their early  
life with you kids?

153  
00:05:36,650 --> 00:05:37,730  
Interesting.

154  
00:05:37,730 --> 00:05:39,680  
Not so much with me.

155  
00:05:39,680 --> 00:05:42,960  
With my older siblings--  
my older sister

156  
00:05:42,960 --> 00:05:47,560  
who passed on pretty much  
knew all the story verbatim,

157  
00:05:47,560 --> 00:05:48,530  
every-- yes.

158  
00:05:48,530 --> 00:05:52,160  
My mother-- after the  
war, and had my sister,

159  
00:05:52,160 --> 00:05:55,220  
she said in a sigh  
of relief, thank

160  
00:05:55,220 --> 00:05:57,380

God I finally have  
someone who I can

161  
00:05:57,380 --> 00:05:59,960  
tell what happened to me,  
because no one's going

162  
00:05:59,960 --> 00:06:01,370  
to believe it.

163  
00:06:01,370 --> 00:06:06,050  
So she in a way regrets  
it, having shared

164  
00:06:06,050 --> 00:06:09,950  
very-- some gruesome details.

165  
00:06:09,950 --> 00:06:11,690  
But my sister knew everything.

166  
00:06:11,690 --> 00:06:14,960  
Did your sister ever  
mind that she was

167  
00:06:14,960 --> 00:06:16,630  
the repository of all of this?

168  
00:06:16,630 --> 00:06:17,270  
No.

169  
00:06:17,270 --> 00:06:20,030  
She was a very good,  
kind-hearted person.

170  
00:06:20,030 --> 00:06:26,690  
And she was very sensitive to it  
and very supportive of my mom.

171  
00:06:26,690 --> 00:06:30,930  
What kind of a personality  
did your older sister have?

172

00:06:30,930 --> 00:06:34,460  
Very bright, smart, and  
very fun-loving, caring--

173  
00:06:34,460 --> 00:06:37,760  
very warm, exceptionally  
warm, giving.

174  
00:06:37,760 --> 00:06:41,540  
So she passed away  
quite young, then?

175  
00:06:41,540 --> 00:06:44,740  
64 years old.

176  
00:06:44,740 --> 00:06:47,300  
Yeah.

177  
00:06:47,300 --> 00:06:48,870  
And the other kids--

178  
00:06:48,870 --> 00:06:50,910  
did you guys know much about?

179  
00:06:50,910 --> 00:06:55,350  
So my next brother,  
Sammy, he probably

180  
00:06:55,350 --> 00:06:57,390  
also heard a lot of it.

181  
00:06:57,390 --> 00:06:58,560  
I was speaking to him.

182  
00:06:58,560 --> 00:07:03,900  
He remembers the effects  
on my mother and father.

183  
00:07:03,900 --> 00:07:08,040  
He probably saw more of  
the pain and the trauma

184

00:07:08,040 --> 00:07:09,180  
on them because--

185  
00:07:09,180 --> 00:07:11,590  
you know, my mother  
took it very hard.

186  
00:07:11,590 --> 00:07:15,420  
She was very young at the time.

187  
00:07:15,420 --> 00:07:16,980  
And she suffered from it.

188  
00:07:16,980 --> 00:07:22,110  
My father wasn't so verbal about  
the abuse and the killings.

189  
00:07:22,110 --> 00:07:24,480  
But my mother made it  
very clear that she saw

190  
00:07:24,480 --> 00:07:27,390  
killings and abuse and murders.

191  
00:07:27,390 --> 00:07:28,290  
It bothered her.

192  
00:07:28,290 --> 00:07:31,140  
It always bothered her.

193  
00:07:31,140 --> 00:07:35,400  
As children, we felt  
her pain because she

194  
00:07:35,400 --> 00:07:36,825  
couldn't understand why.

195  
00:07:36,825 --> 00:07:38,460  
Why would they kill my mother?

196  
00:07:38,460 --> 00:07:41,740  
Why would they kill my father?



197  
00:07:41,740 --> 00:07:45,720  
Would she sometimes voice those  
questions as if-- you know,

198  
00:07:45,720 --> 00:07:47,370  
you don't have an  
answer for that.

199  
00:07:47,370 --> 00:07:49,260  
Right.

200  
00:07:49,260 --> 00:07:51,510  
Do you remember her  
just saying sometimes,

201  
00:07:51,510 --> 00:07:52,950  
why did they kill them?

202  
00:07:52,950 --> 00:07:56,017  
Interestingly enough, in the  
younger years, not so much.

203  
00:07:56,017 --> 00:07:58,350  
But now in the older years--  
because when we were young,

204  
00:07:58,350 --> 00:07:59,475  
it was a bunch of children.

205  
00:07:59,475 --> 00:08:00,360  
And she was busy.

206  
00:08:00,360 --> 00:08:01,140  
We were in school.

207  
00:08:01,140 --> 00:08:02,850  
We were running and going.

208  
00:08:02,850 --> 00:08:06,450  
My sister and brother  
probably heard that a lot.

209  
00:08:06,450 --> 00:08:08,950  
I heard it only  
recently in the past,

210  
00:08:08,950 --> 00:08:11,430  
let's say, 20, 25 years,  
when I was already,

211  
00:08:11,430 --> 00:08:14,220  
let's say, in the 30s, 40s.

212  
00:08:14,220 --> 00:08:18,120  
Before that-- yeah, as  
an adult. To this day--

213  
00:08:18,120 --> 00:08:19,480  
to this day, yeah.

214  
00:08:19,480 --> 00:08:22,075

215  
00:08:22,075 --> 00:08:23,700  
Was there ever a time  
in your life when

216  
00:08:23,700 --> 00:08:26,220  
you didn't know about  
something called the Holocaust?

217  
00:08:26,220 --> 00:08:26,920  
Yes.

218  
00:08:26,920 --> 00:08:27,420  
There was?

219  
00:08:27,420 --> 00:08:28,890  
Yes.

220  
00:08:28,890 --> 00:08:29,850  
Actually there was.

221

00:08:29,850 --> 00:08:31,410

In high school, I  
think it may have

222

00:08:31,410 --> 00:08:36,250

been in seventh grade,  
where I came home

223

00:08:36,250 --> 00:08:40,320

and just mentioned  
haphazardly, not realizing.

224

00:08:40,320 --> 00:08:41,070

Yeah.

225

00:08:41,070 --> 00:08:42,299

And you mentioned what?

226

00:08:42,299 --> 00:08:45,300

Holocaust and what was  
going on to the Jews

227

00:08:45,300 --> 00:08:46,560

in Europe and Poland.

228

00:08:46,560 --> 00:08:50,160

And didn't realize what  
the word meant, even.

229

00:08:50,160 --> 00:08:52,443

I don't think I'd heard  
the word "Holocaust."

230

00:08:52,443 --> 00:08:54,110

I was a little bit  
of a different child.

231

00:08:54,110 --> 00:08:56,790

I was a little bit  
running, playing, doing--

232

00:08:56,790 --> 00:08:59,490

very on the run, on the go.

233

00:08:59,490 --> 00:09:03,100

And it wasn't-- the house  
was always busy, so to say.

234

00:09:03,100 --> 00:09:07,140

So I didn't tune in  
necessarily to that.

235

00:09:07,140 --> 00:09:10,140

My older sister and brother,  
they heard it a lot.

236

00:09:10,140 --> 00:09:12,770

So tell me, when  
you mentioned this--

237

00:09:12,770 --> 00:09:18,990

OK, here's this Holocaust  
and what it represents.

238

00:09:18,990 --> 00:09:21,690

What kind of reaction  
did you get at home?

239

00:09:21,690 --> 00:09:23,760

I can't say I  
remember it exactly,

240

00:09:23,760 --> 00:09:25,462

what the reaction  
was, because it

241

00:09:25,462 --> 00:09:30,210

was-- it may have been  
subconsciously hushed-up type

242

00:09:30,210 --> 00:09:31,350

thing.

243

00:09:31,350 --> 00:09:33,900

But I don't remember

who even explained it

244  
00:09:33,900 --> 00:09:34,800  
to me at that point.

245  
00:09:34,800 --> 00:09:36,480  
But I think as  
the years went on,

246  
00:09:36,480 --> 00:09:39,030  
and then I probed  
a little more--

247  
00:09:39,030 --> 00:09:40,890  
because when the  
relatives would come over,

248  
00:09:40,890 --> 00:09:42,960  
like on a Saturday  
night or this,

249  
00:09:42,960 --> 00:09:44,730  
they would speak certain things.

250  
00:09:44,730 --> 00:09:47,520  
And I didn't realize what they  
were talking about when they

251  
00:09:47,520 --> 00:09:50,850  
would make reference to  
the war and the beatings

252  
00:09:50,850 --> 00:09:52,230  
and what happened.

253  
00:09:52,230 --> 00:09:52,950  
Yeah.

254  
00:09:52,950 --> 00:09:55,950  
Did the relatives also--  
were all of your relatives

255

00:09:55,950 --> 00:09:57,120  
also immigrants?

256  
00:09:57,120 --> 00:09:59,832  
Or were some Americans?

257  
00:09:59,832 --> 00:10:01,290  
Had there been  
parts of your family

258  
00:10:01,290 --> 00:10:03,123  
that had been in the  
States for generations?

259  
00:10:03,123 --> 00:10:04,710  
No, no, no, no.

260  
00:10:04,710 --> 00:10:07,710  
My mother's family was totally  
annihilated in the war.

261  
00:10:07,710 --> 00:10:09,540  
She came out with no one.

262  
00:10:09,540 --> 00:10:13,835  
My father survived with four  
brothers and his mother.

263  
00:10:13,835 --> 00:10:15,960  
And they are the people  
that you're mentioning now?

264  
00:10:15,960 --> 00:10:16,710  
That's correct.

265  
00:10:16,710 --> 00:10:19,015  
His brothers would come over.

266  
00:10:19,015 --> 00:10:20,265  
How did they end up in Boston?

267  
00:10:20,265 --> 00:10:24,090

268

00:10:24,090 --> 00:10:26,910

My father's older brother had--

269

00:10:26,910 --> 00:10:31,540

his wife had a distant  
cousin who sent for them.

270

00:10:31,540 --> 00:10:35,070

So when my father's  
brother, younger than him,

271

00:10:35,070 --> 00:10:37,740

came to Boston and settled in--

272

00:10:37,740 --> 00:10:39,890

because they didn't let  
you out of the DP camp

273

00:10:39,890 --> 00:10:41,310

if you didn't have  
anywhere to go.

274

00:10:41,310 --> 00:10:43,700

So he came to Boston.

275

00:10:43,700 --> 00:10:45,780

And after maybe I  
don't know how long,

276

00:10:45,780 --> 00:10:48,270

they sent papers for  
my father to come.

277

00:10:48,270 --> 00:10:52,470

278

00:10:52,470 --> 00:10:54,990

So it was basically  
your father's family

279

00:10:54,990 --> 00:10:58,320  
who would come over, and they  
would talk about these things.

280  
00:10:58,320 --> 00:11:00,720  
And it was not  
something where you

281  
00:11:00,720 --> 00:11:03,330  
connected the dots in  
the beginning of what

282  
00:11:03,330 --> 00:11:05,800  
they were talking about.

283  
00:11:05,800 --> 00:11:09,340  
Did you realize then after  
you came back from school,

284  
00:11:09,340 --> 00:11:11,770  
and there was this  
term "Holocaust,"

285  
00:11:11,770 --> 00:11:15,230  
that this meant  
also your parents?

286  
00:11:15,230 --> 00:11:20,980  
No, I don't think I  
connected the severity of it

287  
00:11:20,980 --> 00:11:23,120  
in seventh, eighth,  
or ninth grade.

288  
00:11:23,120 --> 00:11:25,730  
It may have been  
a few years later.

289  
00:11:25,730 --> 00:11:28,370  
Did your mother cry as far as--

290  
00:11:28,370 --> 00:11:30,560



My siblings have seen her cry.

291  
00:11:30,560 --> 00:11:32,176  
I didn't.

292  
00:11:32,176 --> 00:11:33,430  
Yeah, I didn't.

293  
00:11:33,430 --> 00:11:38,270  
I think I heard mentioned that  
she has cried about it, yeah.

294  
00:11:38,270 --> 00:11:38,855  
I haven't.

295  
00:11:38,855 --> 00:11:41,530

296  
00:11:41,530 --> 00:11:46,888  
Tell me a little bit about  
your parents' personalities.

297  
00:11:46,888 --> 00:11:48,680  
What kind of personality  
did your dad have?

298  
00:11:48,680 --> 00:11:50,780  
What kind of personality  
does your mom have?

299  
00:11:50,780 --> 00:11:54,020  
So my dad was  
older than my mom--

300  
00:11:54,020 --> 00:11:56,450  
many years.

301  
00:11:56,450 --> 00:11:59,750  
Again, you know, when  
you grow up in America,

302  
00:11:59,750 --> 00:12:00,710

they're trying to work.

303

00:12:00,710 --> 00:12:01,550

We're going to school.

304

00:12:01,550 --> 00:12:03,258

And again, it was the  
American-- like you

305

00:12:03,258 --> 00:12:06,320

say, playing and going,  
not necessarily European.

306

00:12:06,320 --> 00:12:08,810

So my father was a  
serious, hard-working man,

307

00:12:08,810 --> 00:12:14,150

very on the go, very busy,  
industrious, always doing.

308

00:12:14,150 --> 00:12:18,230

And it was only when he  
was in bed for 12 years,

309

00:12:18,230 --> 00:12:22,280

bedridden with severe  
arthritis in his 80s,

310

00:12:22,280 --> 00:12:24,350

that everything came  
out of him-- that he

311

00:12:24,350 --> 00:12:26,750

started telling his story.

312

00:12:26,750 --> 00:12:29,150

We heard things  
for the first time

313

00:12:29,150 --> 00:12:30,890

because he never spoke about it.

314

00:12:30,890 --> 00:12:33,230

My father had a very  
positive attitude,

315

00:12:33,230 --> 00:12:42,000

whereas here he saw the  
good in it and thanking God

316

00:12:42,000 --> 00:12:45,240

that he survived it and  
how good God was to him.

317

00:12:45,240 --> 00:12:46,970

I never heard anything--

318

00:12:46,970 --> 00:12:50,460

that he lost his brothers,  
which were all killed.

319

00:12:50,460 --> 00:12:52,230

He had a family of 10.

320

00:12:52,230 --> 00:12:53,910

Only four survived.

321

00:12:53,910 --> 00:12:55,140

And he lost everybody.

322

00:12:55,140 --> 00:12:57,650

But he never, never,  
never spoke about it.

323

00:12:57,650 --> 00:12:59,380

I know if it was too painful.

324

00:12:59,380 --> 00:13:02,580

But he would always comment  
how thankful he is to be alive

325

00:13:02,580 --> 00:13:04,010

and how--

326

00:13:04,010 --> 00:13:06,430

you know, he was a  
Sabbath observer,

327

00:13:06,430 --> 00:13:08,470

and they gave him  
very hard work to do.

328

00:13:08,470 --> 00:13:11,400

And he prided himself  
that I was able to survive

329

00:13:11,400 --> 00:13:15,870

the war, seven years, and  
not have to work on Saturday.

330

00:13:15,870 --> 00:13:17,640

So I would look at  
him and say, really?

331

00:13:17,640 --> 00:13:20,160

That's what you-- I mean,  
but who brought this war?

332

00:13:20,160 --> 00:13:22,200

I mean, it was horrific.

333

00:13:22,200 --> 00:13:24,660

He never questioned God.

334

00:13:24,660 --> 00:13:29,910

Never questioned why God did  
or why these things happen.

335

00:13:29,910 --> 00:13:32,790

His faith even strengthened.

336

00:13:32,790 --> 00:13:33,600

That's amazing.

337

00:13:33,600 --> 00:13:35,370

Very amazing.

338  
00:13:35,370 --> 00:13:38,850  
And I only got to realize  
this in the later years

339  
00:13:38,850 --> 00:13:42,380  
because it wasn't  
anything relevant to me

340  
00:13:42,380 --> 00:13:44,040  
at younger years.

341  
00:13:44,040 --> 00:13:45,870  
But later, when we  
start questioning,

342  
00:13:45,870 --> 00:13:48,560  
and we start thinking,  
then we say, hey.

343  
00:13:48,560 --> 00:13:52,620  
And we saw that my father was  
a man of faith, great faith.

344  
00:13:52,620 --> 00:13:56,670  
Because so many people came  
out with their faith broken.

345  
00:13:56,670 --> 00:13:58,950  
Yes, many, or most.

346  
00:13:58,950 --> 00:14:01,950  
My father-- as a matter of  
fact, in hiding in the woods,

347  
00:14:01,950 --> 00:14:05,670  
there was one man who took  
a cigarette to start smoking

348  
00:14:05,670 --> 00:14:06,510  
on the Sabbath.

349

00:14:06,510 --> 00:14:07,920  
They were hiding.

350  
00:14:07,920 --> 00:14:10,260  
So my father went over to  
him, because it was sort of

351  
00:14:10,260 --> 00:14:13,020  
like my father's little place.

352  
00:14:13,020 --> 00:14:14,680  
You can't smoke here, he said.

353  
00:14:14,680 --> 00:14:16,580  
You have to understand,  
today is Saturday--

354  
00:14:16,580 --> 00:14:17,690  
Shabbos.

355  
00:14:17,690 --> 00:14:21,450  
He goes, you have the Nazis  
that are looking for us.

356  
00:14:21,450 --> 00:14:23,430  
You have the  
Polocks, the Polocks

357  
00:14:23,430 --> 00:14:25,110  
that are eager to catch us.

358  
00:14:25,110 --> 00:14:27,820  
And there's only one God in  
heaven that's going to help us.

359  
00:14:27,820 --> 00:14:30,000  
And you're going against  
Him at this moment?

360  
00:14:30,000 --> 00:14:32,590  
Put that cigarette out  
now, or you're out of here.

361

00:14:32,590 --> 00:14:34,290

He was a little  
feisty, my father.

362

00:14:34,290 --> 00:14:35,850

He was a feisty man--

363

00:14:35,850 --> 00:14:40,650

very tough, very  
strong, and very--

364

00:14:40,650 --> 00:14:43,410

365

00:14:43,410 --> 00:14:44,760

that's how he saved himself.

366

00:14:44,760 --> 00:14:46,620

He was a big fighter.

367

00:14:46,620 --> 00:14:48,800

So what was your  
father's first name?

368

00:14:48,800 --> 00:14:49,570

Abraham.

369

00:14:49,570 --> 00:14:50,490

Abraham.

370

00:14:50,490 --> 00:14:51,450

And his last name?

371

00:14:51,450 --> 00:14:51,950

Burstyn.

372

00:14:51,950 --> 00:14:52,790

Burstyn.

373

00:14:52,790 --> 00:14:55,310

Yes.

374  
00:14:55,310 --> 00:14:57,330  
Well, let's start with him.

375  
00:14:57,330 --> 00:15:03,450  
Tell me a little bit about  
what you know of his early life

376  
00:15:03,450 --> 00:15:08,180  
and what kind of family  
he was born into.

377  
00:15:08,180 --> 00:15:09,790  
He was a great man.

378  
00:15:09,790 --> 00:15:12,720  
At the funeral, my brother  
was commenting what

379  
00:15:12,720 --> 00:15:17,530  
a very humble person he was,  
being that he was a hero.

380  
00:15:17,530 --> 00:15:22,080  
He, on his own, carried out  
heroic acts of all kinds.

381  
00:15:22,080 --> 00:15:24,000  
He grew up, as I said,  
in a little village

382  
00:15:24,000 --> 00:15:25,510  
outside of Poland.

383  
00:15:25,510 --> 00:15:26,490  
Outside of Chelm.

384  
00:15:26,490 --> 00:15:29,400  
Outside of Chelm,  
right-- outside of Chelm.

385  
00:15:29,400 --> 00:15:33,180



And they were very  
meager means--

386  
00:15:33,180 --> 00:15:34,950  
no money there.

387  
00:15:34,950 --> 00:15:39,900  
And one of actually 12  
or 13 children, but many

388  
00:15:39,900 --> 00:15:41,520  
died pre-war.

389  
00:15:41,520 --> 00:15:44,720  
His father was some sort  
of a business man-- cattle

390  
00:15:44,720 --> 00:15:46,050  
or whatever.

391  
00:15:46,050 --> 00:15:50,280  
His father died of natural  
causes at a young age

392  
00:15:50,280 --> 00:15:53,730  
and left his mom with  
many small children.

393  
00:15:53,730 --> 00:15:56,350  
My father at that  
point took the helm.

394  
00:15:56,350 --> 00:15:58,500  
He had to take  
care of the house.

395  
00:15:58,500 --> 00:16:01,620  
Was he the oldest boy?

396  
00:16:01,620 --> 00:16:03,330  
I'm not sure if  
he was the oldest,

397

00:16:03,330 --> 00:16:06,990

but one or two older ones may  
have been married already.

398

00:16:06,990 --> 00:16:11,400

So he possibly was the oldest  
in the home, with many siblings.

399

00:16:11,400 --> 00:16:12,630

And he took charge.

400

00:16:12,630 --> 00:16:13,620

He took charge.

401

00:16:13,620 --> 00:16:17,670

The mother was left as a  
widow with all these children.

402

00:16:17,670 --> 00:16:21,900

And he went to look for some  
sort of business, what to do.

403

00:16:21,900 --> 00:16:25,730

And the Jewish people were  
not involved in cement work.

404

00:16:25,730 --> 00:16:26,830

It just wasn't there.

405

00:16:26,830 --> 00:16:31,470

They were the book-- you know,  
studying, or bakers, tailors.

406

00:16:31,470 --> 00:16:33,790

He wanted to learn cement work.

407

00:16:33,790 --> 00:16:39,360

This-- we're talking  
1930, '31, '32, '33.

408

00:16:39,360 --> 00:16:42,700

And he went to see

people working in cement.

409

00:16:42,700 --> 00:16:43,710

And it's funny.

410

00:16:43,710 --> 00:16:46,950

He was beaten up many  
times because they knew

411

00:16:46,950 --> 00:16:49,020

that he wanted to see the work.

412

00:16:49,020 --> 00:16:50,670

He was literally  
like-- in other words,

413

00:16:50,670 --> 00:16:52,860

he didn't know how-- who was  
he going to learn it from?

414

00:16:52,860 --> 00:16:53,610

How was he going--

415

00:16:53,610 --> 00:16:55,590

So he wasn't hired as an  
apprentice by someone?

416

00:16:55,590 --> 00:16:56,580

No, not at all.

417

00:16:56,580 --> 00:16:57,510

He was looking.

418

00:16:57,510 --> 00:16:59,290

He had a feel for it.

419

00:16:59,290 --> 00:17:03,390

And it was very ambitious, very  
industrious, to do something.

420

00:17:03,390 --> 00:17:06,030

And he learned once he was--

you know, when I say beaten up,

421  
00:17:06,030 --> 00:17:08,062  
they--

422  
00:17:08,062 --> 00:17:10,020  
in other words, he was  
seeing how they made it.

423  
00:17:10,020 --> 00:17:12,750  
He could figure it  
out, once and twice.

424  
00:17:12,750 --> 00:17:16,680  
And sure enough, he  
started a cement factory.

425  
00:17:16,680 --> 00:17:18,089  
I have the picture somewhere.

426  
00:17:18,089 --> 00:17:19,380  
He started a cement factory.

427  
00:17:19,380 --> 00:17:21,900  
He may have been  
30 years old, 35.

428  
00:17:21,900 --> 00:17:24,540  
Do you know the  
date of his birth?

429  
00:17:24,540 --> 00:17:26,849  
No one knows that,  
but we're thinking

430  
00:17:26,849 --> 00:17:29,265  
it's something like 1900.

431  
00:17:29,265 --> 00:17:31,770  
We took the date May 1, 1900.

432  
00:17:31,770 --> 00:17:33,090

I'm not sure.

433  
00:17:33,090 --> 00:17:36,060  
But that means he had you  
when he was 57 years old?

434  
00:17:36,060 --> 00:17:38,500  
And my sister when  
he was 60 something.

435  
00:17:38,500 --> 00:17:40,130  
Wow.

436  
00:17:40,130 --> 00:17:42,130  
And your mother's birthday,  
just for the record?

437  
00:17:42,130 --> 00:17:45,010

438  
00:17:45,010 --> 00:17:49,510  
February 20, 1925.

439  
00:17:49,510 --> 00:17:51,280  
So she's really  
quite a bit younger--

440  
00:17:51,280 --> 00:17:51,868  
25 years.

441  
00:17:51,868 --> 00:17:53,160  
She's younger than your father.

442  
00:17:53,160 --> 00:17:54,580  
Much, yeah.

443  
00:17:54,580 --> 00:17:56,500  
We could say that  
when the war started,

444  
00:17:56,500 --> 00:17:58,970  
he was already

entering middle age.

445

00:17:58,970 --> 00:17:59,810

That's correct.

446

00:17:59,810 --> 00:18:01,190

Whereas she was still a girl.

447

00:18:01,190 --> 00:18:03,010

17, yeah.

448

00:18:03,010 --> 00:18:05,860

So he started his  
own cement business

449

00:18:05,860 --> 00:18:09,520

still in this small town  
outside Chelm in Poland.

450

00:18:09,520 --> 00:18:10,990

Yes.

451

00:18:10,990 --> 00:18:15,962

And is that how he helped  
support your grandmother

452

00:18:15,962 --> 00:18:17,170

and all those other children?

453

00:18:17,170 --> 00:18:18,083

Yes.

454

00:18:18,083 --> 00:18:19,000

That's pretty amazing.

455

00:18:19,000 --> 00:18:19,600

Yes.

456

00:18:19,600 --> 00:18:20,890

And there is a picture--

457

00:18:20,890 --> 00:18:22,360  
I don't know how we have it--

458  
00:18:22,360 --> 00:18:26,110  
of him standing as the  
foreman with the people making

459  
00:18:26,110 --> 00:18:26,650  
the cement.

460  
00:18:26,650 --> 00:18:29,300  
Even my grandma  
was in the picture.

461  
00:18:29,300 --> 00:18:30,250  
Yeah, they were very--

462  
00:18:30,250 --> 00:18:34,585  
she was also a very tough  
lady-- tough willed, strong.

463  
00:18:34,585 --> 00:18:35,710  
You got to know her, right?

464  
00:18:35,710 --> 00:18:36,700  
Yes.

465  
00:18:36,700 --> 00:18:39,940  
She survived the war,  
which was unusual

466  
00:18:39,940 --> 00:18:43,240  
because most people-- yeah.

467  
00:18:43,240 --> 00:18:44,830  
If he was entering  
middle age, she

468  
00:18:44,830 --> 00:18:48,130  
would have really been  
in upper middle at least.

469

00:18:48,130 --> 00:18:48,690  
Yes.

470  
00:18:48,690 --> 00:18:53,230  
She could have  
been easily 55, 60.

471  
00:18:53,230 --> 00:18:54,610  
Yeah.

472  
00:18:54,610 --> 00:18:55,810  
What was her first name?

473  
00:18:55,810 --> 00:18:56,590  
Esther.

474  
00:18:56,590 --> 00:18:58,090  
Esther Burstyn.

475  
00:18:58,090 --> 00:19:00,240  
Do you know what  
her maiden name was?

476  
00:19:00,240 --> 00:19:01,160  
Nuremberg.

477  
00:19:01,160 --> 00:19:01,940  
Nuremberg?

478  
00:19:01,940 --> 00:19:02,440  
Yeah.

479  
00:19:02,440 --> 00:19:03,620  
How interesting.

480  
00:19:03,620 --> 00:19:04,690  
Yeah.

481  
00:19:04,690 --> 00:19:08,160  
Maybe Nirenberg or  
something like that, yeah.



482

00:19:08,160 --> 00:19:14,960

And when the war  
started, what do you

483

00:19:14,960 --> 00:19:18,170

know of what happened  
to your father

484

00:19:18,170 --> 00:19:20,000

and the rest of his family?

485

00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:21,930

What happened?

486

00:19:21,930 --> 00:19:26,200

So 1939-- pretty much, they--

487

00:19:26,200 --> 00:19:30,890

at first, everyone was  
hearing what was going on.

488

00:19:30,890 --> 00:19:35,090

So they were all trying  
to think of, is this real?

489

00:19:35,090 --> 00:19:35,990

Is this not real?

490

00:19:35,990 --> 00:19:36,680

Where we go?

491

00:19:36,680 --> 00:19:37,610

What do we do?

492

00:19:37,610 --> 00:19:39,680

The people tried  
to save themselves.

493

00:19:39,680 --> 00:19:41,455

They didn't know to  
run away, to stay.

494

00:19:41,455 --> 00:19:43,580

Many people didn't believe  
it because they couldn't

495

00:19:43,580 --> 00:19:46,460

imagine what they were hearing.

496

00:19:46,460 --> 00:19:50,180

But sure enough, after a year or  
two of different slave laborers

497

00:19:50,180 --> 00:19:56,330

and certain people being  
herded into ghettos and this,

498

00:19:56,330 --> 00:19:58,880

one of his brothers-- at this  
point, his older brother,

499

00:19:58,880 --> 00:20:01,250

who had two or three children,  
was already taken to one

500

00:20:01,250 --> 00:20:03,370

of the camps to be killed--

501

00:20:03,370 --> 00:20:04,500

burned.

502

00:20:04,500 --> 00:20:11,080

And believe it or not, my  
father went to put himself in

503

00:20:11,080 --> 00:20:12,130

to save his brother.

504

00:20:12,130 --> 00:20:16,270

He said, he'll go to stay  
there and let his brother, who

505

00:20:16,270 --> 00:20:18,940

has a wife with children, out.

506  
00:20:18,940 --> 00:20:21,190  
And they wouldn't let him.

507  
00:20:21,190 --> 00:20:22,690  
They thought they  
were human beings.

508  
00:20:22,690 --> 00:20:25,960  
They wouldn't want-- and  
they went to ask a rabbi.

509  
00:20:25,960 --> 00:20:29,230  
And the rabbi said, you  
can't do a life for a life.

510  
00:20:29,230 --> 00:20:31,630  
That's what's meant  
happen for him.

511  
00:20:31,630 --> 00:20:32,500  
You can't do it.

512  
00:20:32,500 --> 00:20:34,840  
You can't take your life.

513  
00:20:34,840 --> 00:20:39,460  
They took him and this, and  
they wanted to do all kinds--

514  
00:20:39,460 --> 00:20:41,740  
my father and possibly  
another sibling

515  
00:20:41,740 --> 00:20:44,350  
also wanted to go change places.

516  
00:20:44,350 --> 00:20:47,430  
So one brother was killed  
already in the camp.

517  
00:20:47,430 --> 00:20:50,740

And then others were taken away.

518  
00:20:50,740 --> 00:20:54,880  
Somehow-- again, it  
might be a little

519  
00:20:54,880 --> 00:20:58,120  
sketchy as exact details.

520  
00:20:58,120 --> 00:21:02,650  
But as the war went on--  
let's say '39, '40--

521  
00:21:02,650 --> 00:21:07,270  
at that point, my father  
even went to the city hall,

522  
00:21:07,270 --> 00:21:09,170  
so to say.

523  
00:21:09,170 --> 00:21:11,330  
And as he approached  
the building,

524  
00:21:11,330 --> 00:21:15,120  
there were guardsmen,  
Nazis at that point.

525  
00:21:15,120 --> 00:21:15,980  
And he went in.

526  
00:21:15,980 --> 00:21:17,780  
He got in somehow.

527  
00:21:17,780 --> 00:21:21,200  
He claims that they  
were-- both of them were--

528  
00:21:21,200 --> 00:21:23,630  
either they were-- they  
weren't looking for a minute.

529

00:21:23,630 --> 00:21:25,470  
He got in, into the city hall.

530  
00:21:25,470 --> 00:21:30,180  
And he went up to the engineer  
of this, who knew the mayor--

531  
00:21:30,180 --> 00:21:32,540  
I don't know-- who knew  
my father as an engineer

532  
00:21:32,540 --> 00:21:34,020  
in cement.

533  
00:21:34,020 --> 00:21:36,222  
And he says, what  
are you doing here?

534  
00:21:36,222 --> 00:21:37,460  
He goes, are you crazy?

535  
00:21:37,460 --> 00:21:40,350  
What did you-- he had the  
yellow band at that point.

536  
00:21:40,350 --> 00:21:42,500  
And he said, listen,  
I need you to help me.

537  
00:21:42,500 --> 00:21:46,160  
He says, I have many  
forms from the cement.

538  
00:21:46,160 --> 00:21:47,780  
I have all kinds of things.

539  
00:21:47,780 --> 00:21:50,050  
I want to give it to the Polish.

540  
00:21:50,050 --> 00:21:54,800  
I don't want it to go into the  
Nazis' hands, this and that.

541

00:21:54,800 --> 00:21:57,860  
So then he said, and he says,  
give me a paper that I can work

542

00:21:57,860 --> 00:22:01,100  
or give me some sort  
of paper or whatever.

543

00:22:01,100 --> 00:22:02,960  
And the guy looked at my father.

544

00:22:02,960 --> 00:22:03,980  
And there was a joke--

545

00:22:03,980 --> 00:22:05,120  
well, we always repeat it--

546

00:22:05,120 --> 00:22:06,920  
I guess in German or Polish.

547

00:22:06,920 --> 00:22:09,400  
I'm not sure what  
they were speaking.

548

00:22:09,400 --> 00:22:13,280  
And he said to him, Burstyn,  
because they knew him

549

00:22:13,280 --> 00:22:14,810  
very well, you see.

550

00:22:14,810 --> 00:22:18,080  
My advice to you is  
to throw yourself

551

00:22:18,080 --> 00:22:20,240  
under the train  
tracks and don't fall

552

00:22:20,240 --> 00:22:22,550  
into the hands of the Nazis.

553

00:22:22,550 --> 00:22:24,152

Don't even try to do-- just--

554

00:22:24,152 --> 00:22:26,680

555

00:22:26,680 --> 00:22:27,650

so we joke today.

556

00:22:27,650 --> 00:22:29,780

We go, my advice  
to you, anything

557

00:22:29,780 --> 00:22:31,340

happens-- because they told him.

558

00:22:31,340 --> 00:22:35,060

And he tried as much as he  
could, but it didn't help.

559

00:22:35,060 --> 00:22:36,650

So this was a Polish man?

560

00:22:36,650 --> 00:22:38,600

It must have been  
a Polish man, but I

561

00:22:38,600 --> 00:22:42,320

think the house was already  
surrounded by Nazis, I think.

562

00:22:42,320 --> 00:22:46,522

The Polish man was there and  
says, stay out of their hands.

563

00:22:46,522 --> 00:22:48,830

You don't want to  
be caught by them.

564

00:22:48,830 --> 00:22:49,690

They knew already.

565

00:22:49,690 --> 00:22:51,590

It was-- you know.

566

00:22:51,590 --> 00:22:56,120

And then, somehow,  
whatever paper he had,

567

00:22:56,120 --> 00:22:57,320

they put him to work.

568

00:22:57,320 --> 00:22:59,180

He was a skilled laborer.

569

00:22:59,180 --> 00:23:01,560

So it was useful to the Germans.

570

00:23:01,560 --> 00:23:04,090

And that's how he was  
known as a [GERMAN]

571

00:23:04,090 --> 00:23:06,200

I guess-- a cement worker.

572

00:23:06,200 --> 00:23:08,100

[GERMAN]

573

00:23:08,100 --> 00:23:09,100

[GERMAN]

574

00:23:09,100 --> 00:23:12,380

[GERMAN] Something like that.

575

00:23:12,380 --> 00:23:15,500

And there were four  
brothers and the mother.

576

00:23:15,500 --> 00:23:16,610

And he, my father--

577

00:23:16,610 --> 00:23:20,160

they were known as



the Burstyn brothers.

578

00:23:20,160 --> 00:23:20,990

You know?

579

00:23:20,990 --> 00:23:22,250

In German, I guess.

580

00:23:22,250 --> 00:23:23,890

They knew.

581

00:23:23,890 --> 00:23:27,050

And he developed  
this plan somehow.

582

00:23:27,050 --> 00:23:30,800

And he got into one  
of these labor camps.

583

00:23:30,800 --> 00:23:34,400

And he ran-- they used to  
make forms for the roads,

584

00:23:34,400 --> 00:23:36,860

for the pipes, for the pipeline.

585

00:23:36,860 --> 00:23:38,750

And he worked on the cement.

586

00:23:38,750 --> 00:23:40,350

That's how it helped him.

587

00:23:40,350 --> 00:23:42,050

He saved himself.

588

00:23:42,050 --> 00:23:45,530

So in other words, he ended up  
having to work for the Germans.

589

00:23:45,530 --> 00:23:46,870

Yeah, in the labor camp.

590

00:23:46,870 --> 00:23:50,330

But he had the skill that  
was very useful for them

591

00:23:50,330 --> 00:23:51,080

at that time.

592

00:23:51,080 --> 00:23:52,160

At that time.

593

00:23:52,160 --> 00:23:53,900

It could be for six  
months or a month.

594

00:23:53,900 --> 00:23:55,370

You don't know at what point.

595

00:23:55,370 --> 00:23:56,550

They just kept you busy.

596

00:23:56,550 --> 00:23:59,790

You know, the tailors, the  
watchmakers-- they kept them,

597

00:23:59,790 --> 00:24:01,910

but they killed  
them off, because--

598

00:24:01,910 --> 00:24:03,320

this was a little skilled--

599

00:24:03,320 --> 00:24:04,500

more skilled.

600

00:24:04,500 --> 00:24:09,410

And more demand for it  
because they needed roads.

601

00:24:09,410 --> 00:24:12,380

They needed buildings.

602

00:24:12,380 --> 00:24:13,783  
That's interesting.

603  
00:24:13,783 --> 00:24:15,200  
And it's amazing,  
too, that he was

604  
00:24:15,200 --> 00:24:16,650  
able to keep his mother alive.

605  
00:24:16,650 --> 00:24:18,540  
Because how could  
she work on this?

606  
00:24:18,540 --> 00:24:19,700  
Yeah, at that age, right.

607  
00:24:19,700 --> 00:24:21,690  
Do you know what  
happened to them?

608  
00:24:21,690 --> 00:24:24,440  
I mean did they all  
spend most of these war

609  
00:24:24,440 --> 00:24:26,110  
years in the labor--

610  
00:24:26,110 --> 00:24:26,990  
in labor camps?

611  
00:24:26,990 --> 00:24:29,510  
So they were--

612  
00:24:29,510 --> 00:24:31,910  
I think-- 39, 40.

613  
00:24:31,910 --> 00:24:33,530  
They must have been in that--

614  
00:24:33,530 --> 00:24:34,740  
it was by the bahnhof.

615  
00:24:34,740 --> 00:24:35,900  
You ever hear of bahnhof?

616  
00:24:35,900 --> 00:24:36,970  
By the train station.

617  
00:24:36,970 --> 00:24:37,610  
Bahnhof.

618  
00:24:37,610 --> 00:24:39,680  
Bahnhof means the  
train station--

619  
00:24:39,680 --> 00:24:40,430  
any train station.

620  
00:24:40,430 --> 00:24:41,180  
Any train station.

621  
00:24:41,180 --> 00:24:45,230  
So somehow, they  
called it the bahnhof.

622  
00:24:45,230 --> 00:24:47,390  
It was on [? Koliova ?] Street.

623  
00:24:47,390 --> 00:24:50,240  
The bahnhof-- where  
the trains went--

624  
00:24:50,240 --> 00:24:52,125  
the [GERMAN] You know,  
the street from the--

625  
00:24:52,125 --> 00:24:53,000  
The street from the--

626  
00:24:53,000 --> 00:24:54,440  
Right.

627

00:24:54,440 --> 00:24:57,500  
So that train station,  
I guess, being

628  
00:24:57,500 --> 00:24:59,750  
from Chelm, that's where  
they heard it everywhere,

629  
00:24:59,750 --> 00:25:02,000  
because that's where my  
mother ultimately came into.

630  
00:25:02,000 --> 00:25:06,260  
So my father worked at that  
labor camp with the cement.

631  
00:25:06,260 --> 00:25:09,800  
Interestingly enough, he had  
a certain amount of clout.

632  
00:25:09,800 --> 00:25:11,840  
Then they always--  
and the mother

633  
00:25:11,840 --> 00:25:14,510  
worked, and they did  
all kinds of work.

634  
00:25:14,510 --> 00:25:16,670  
I guess because he  
was able to negotiate,

635  
00:25:16,670 --> 00:25:19,400  
so to say, to get  
them all to work.

636  
00:25:19,400 --> 00:25:21,320  
They all did something.

637  
00:25:21,320 --> 00:25:23,420  
And then they always  
brought new people

638

00:25:23,420 --> 00:25:27,500  
because this was-- this  
labor camp was the transit

639  
00:25:27,500 --> 00:25:30,620  
spot, where they  
would bring people,

640  
00:25:30,620 --> 00:25:33,050  
do what they could with them,  
and then go for-- either

641  
00:25:33,050 --> 00:25:36,510  
to Sobibor or to go further.

642  
00:25:36,510 --> 00:25:39,140  
So they brought a bunch  
of people, and they--

643  
00:25:39,140 --> 00:25:43,110  
my mom, as she was running  
away, you know, was [? trying ?]

644  
00:25:43,110 --> 00:25:44,270  
to my father--

645  
00:25:44,270 --> 00:25:46,940  
she ended up coming into here--

646  
00:25:46,940 --> 00:25:50,060

647  
00:25:50,060 --> 00:25:52,610  
herded in, in all kinds of ways.

648  
00:25:52,610 --> 00:25:57,380  
Somehow, she was working  
in that labor camp.

649  
00:25:57,380 --> 00:25:59,390  
It was very hard work.

650

00:25:59,390 --> 00:26:04,100  
It says here she was cutting  
stones and dragging stones with

651  
00:26:04,100 --> 00:26:08,620  
wheelbarrows and very hard--  
talking at 14 it broke out,

652  
00:26:08,620 --> 00:26:09,700  
till 16--

653  
00:26:09,700 --> 00:26:12,910  
14 to 16, she was  
working labor camp.

654  
00:26:12,910 --> 00:26:16,390  
And when she got here,  
she was about 16, 17.

655  
00:26:16,390 --> 00:26:18,510  
She was working  
all kinds of jobs.

656  
00:26:18,510 --> 00:26:21,460  
And they used to get  
a raw potato if they

657  
00:26:21,460 --> 00:26:23,665  
found one or they smuggled one.

658  
00:26:23,665 --> 00:26:24,880  
And that was their food.

659  
00:26:24,880 --> 00:26:28,240  
There was no food, of course--  
zero food at the labor.

660  
00:26:28,240 --> 00:26:32,290  
A piece of bread was thrown  
at them or watered-down soup.

661  
00:26:32,290 --> 00:26:34,690  
So when they had

a potato, they had

662

00:26:34,690 --> 00:26:36,490

to do everything sneakingly.

663

00:26:36,490 --> 00:26:39,760

These cement workers,

they had a fire

664

00:26:39,760 --> 00:26:42,820

going on some sort

of tire or something.

665

00:26:42,820 --> 00:26:46,993

So people would always walk by,

putting their potato somehow.

666

00:26:46,993 --> 00:26:48,160

Have you heard such a story?

667

00:26:48,160 --> 00:26:48,410

Yeah?

668

00:26:48,410 --> 00:26:48,970

Tell me.

669

00:26:48,970 --> 00:26:49,678

Tell me about it.

670

00:26:49,678 --> 00:26:51,610

So they would put in the potato.

671

00:26:51,610 --> 00:26:52,990

And after their

day of work, they

672

00:26:52,990 --> 00:26:54,760

would come back for the potato.

673

00:26:54,760 --> 00:26:57,040

But it was survival.



674

00:26:57,040 --> 00:26:58,030

They had to survive.

675

00:26:58,030 --> 00:26:59,650

Many people took those potatoes.

676

00:26:59,650 --> 00:27:02,290

And when you came,  
your potato was gone.

677

00:27:02,290 --> 00:27:05,680

However, my father saw my  
mother putting the potato.

678

00:27:05,680 --> 00:27:07,420

And he would save her a potato--

679

00:27:07,420 --> 00:27:09,790

when it was ready,  
when it was baked.

680

00:27:09,790 --> 00:27:12,580

Slowly, slowly-- we  
always joke that's how

681

00:27:12,580 --> 00:27:16,920

the romance, if you call  
it, has started right there.

682

00:27:16,920 --> 00:27:18,580

So she would put the potato.

683

00:27:18,580 --> 00:27:20,770

The next day, he had it for her.

684

00:27:20,770 --> 00:27:22,450

And it was another  
day and another day.

685

00:27:22,450 --> 00:27:25,240

Different work  
went on like that.

686

00:27:25,240 --> 00:27:31,870

And somehow, he managed to get her to work for him in that

687

00:27:31,870 --> 00:27:35,170

area because there was always-- he had to have people working

688

00:27:35,170 --> 00:27:37,450

with the cement, with the rocks, with the pebbles--

689

00:27:37,450 --> 00:27:37,950

whatever.

690

00:27:37,950 --> 00:27:40,030

It was grinding.

691

00:27:40,030 --> 00:27:43,450

How she-- I'm not sure it was three days or a week.

692

00:27:43,450 --> 00:27:47,410

Anyways, one day, my mother was sitting outside,

693

00:27:47,410 --> 00:27:52,820

she said, like this, in one of the--

694

00:27:52,820 --> 00:27:55,210

there were many of the--

695

00:27:55,210 --> 00:28:00,300

all kinds of-- they used to come, these big SS Nazi

696

00:28:00,300 --> 00:28:01,860

generals.

697

00:28:01,860 --> 00:28:03,820

And he said, Sarah, come here.

698

00:28:03,820 --> 00:28:05,350

They called everyone "Sarah."

699

00:28:05,350 --> 00:28:07,470

That's who they  
called every Jewish--

700

00:28:07,470 --> 00:28:08,160

come here.

701

00:28:08,160 --> 00:28:09,640

And in a second--

702

00:28:09,640 --> 00:28:12,130

till today, she says, why  
was I sitting outside?

703

00:28:12,130 --> 00:28:13,930

What was I thinking?

704

00:28:13,930 --> 00:28:16,090

You have to stay out of sight.

705

00:28:16,090 --> 00:28:19,240

He just grabbed her and  
immediately pushed her

706

00:28:19,240 --> 00:28:20,260

into a lineup.

707

00:28:20,260 --> 00:28:23,020

There were all the people  
ready to be herded out.

708

00:28:23,020 --> 00:28:24,010

They kept them moving.

709

00:28:24,010 --> 00:28:28,070

They kept them there  
for a week or two.

710  
00:28:28,070 --> 00:28:29,140  
So she was in the line.

711  
00:28:29,140 --> 00:28:30,738  
And my father got wind of it.

712  
00:28:30,738 --> 00:28:31,780  
And he comes running out.

713  
00:28:31,780 --> 00:28:33,190  
And he sees her in the line.

714  
00:28:33,190 --> 00:28:35,710  
And he sees the gate  
open and the truck

715  
00:28:35,710 --> 00:28:37,930  
that they're going  
to herd them onto.

716  
00:28:37,930 --> 00:28:41,770  
Anyways, he runs out, and he's  
thinking he knew these people.

717  
00:28:41,770 --> 00:28:43,540  
He said, hey, that's my helper.

718  
00:28:43,540 --> 00:28:44,380  
I need her.

719  
00:28:44,380 --> 00:28:46,030  
She does all my work.

720  
00:28:46,030 --> 00:28:47,580  
He goes, don't worry, Burstyn.

721  
00:28:47,580 --> 00:28:49,827  
Tomorrow, all new  
girls are coming.

722

00:28:49,827 --> 00:28:51,660  
You're going to have a  
whole bunch tomorrow.

723  
00:28:51,660 --> 00:28:53,300  
You're going to have  
a whole truckload.

724  
00:28:53,300 --> 00:28:54,820  
So he goes, no, I need her.

725  
00:28:54,820 --> 00:28:56,290  
She's the working--  
I trained her.

726  
00:28:56,290 --> 00:28:57,960  
She has to work.

727  
00:28:57,960 --> 00:28:58,720  
And he said, no.

728  
00:28:58,720 --> 00:29:01,780  
And he went to another guy,  
who, again, kicked him.

729  
00:29:01,780 --> 00:29:06,370  
And he hurt-- like my mother  
says, he like rolled around.

730  
00:29:06,370 --> 00:29:09,170  
He got up again, and he  
went to a very old man.

731  
00:29:09,170 --> 00:29:10,530  
I have the name written down.

732  
00:29:10,530 --> 00:29:12,280  
He's called a certain name--

733  
00:29:12,280 --> 00:29:13,720  
maybe 90 years old.

734

00:29:13,720 --> 00:29:15,710  
And he said, please,  
you got to help me.

735  
00:29:15,710 --> 00:29:16,590  
I need my worker.

736  
00:29:16,590 --> 00:29:17,450  
She works for me.

737  
00:29:17,450 --> 00:29:18,160  
I need her.

738  
00:29:18,160 --> 00:29:19,330  
Please, help me.

739  
00:29:19,330 --> 00:29:22,780  
I guess being that he had  
that sort of protection,

740  
00:29:22,780 --> 00:29:25,900  
the old man came with  
a cane, my mother says.

741  
00:29:25,900 --> 00:29:27,670  
And he says [GERMAN].

742  
00:29:27,670 --> 00:29:28,490  
[SPEAKING GERMAN]

743  
00:29:28,490 --> 00:29:30,250  
[GERMAN]

744  
00:29:30,250 --> 00:29:32,230  
He banged three times.

745  
00:29:32,230 --> 00:29:33,970  
So they didn't say  
"please leave."

746  
00:29:33,970 --> 00:29:37,090  
They took her, and they

pushed her out of the line.

747

00:29:37,090 --> 00:29:39,340

And what happens when they  
pushed her out of the line,

748

00:29:39,340 --> 00:29:42,190

being surrounded with dogs?

749

00:29:42,190 --> 00:29:44,170

So she was 17.

750

00:29:44,170 --> 00:29:45,045

The dog bit her.

751

00:29:45,045 --> 00:29:46,420

You know, she  
started to tell you

752

00:29:46,420 --> 00:29:48,170

she has a big hole  
right here in her foot.

753

00:29:48,170 --> 00:29:49,390

The dog bit her.

754

00:29:49,390 --> 00:29:51,350

Let's cut for a second.

755

00:29:51,350 --> 00:29:55,120

Yeah, I doubt if  
it-- oh, God, I'm--

756

00:29:55,120 --> 00:29:58,990

So your mother was pulled out,  
and then dogs came around.

757

00:29:58,990 --> 00:30:03,520

And she started-- when she  
talked to me off-camera,

758

00:30:03,520 --> 00:30:05,090

she said that the dogs bit her.

759

00:30:05,090 --> 00:30:05,590

Yes.

760

00:30:05,590 --> 00:30:07,048

So that's what  
you're referring to?

761

00:30:07,048 --> 00:30:09,170

Yes, one dog, I think.

762

00:30:09,170 --> 00:30:12,550

Right here-- bit out  
a chunk of her foot.

763

00:30:12,550 --> 00:30:13,480

Right above the knee?

764

00:30:13,480 --> 00:30:14,210

That's correct.

765

00:30:14,210 --> 00:30:15,010

On the inner knee?

766

00:30:15,010 --> 00:30:15,970

On the inner leg?

767

00:30:15,970 --> 00:30:17,560

Yes, ma'am, right there.

768

00:30:17,560 --> 00:30:18,970

Bit it right there.

769

00:30:18,970 --> 00:30:21,070

And of course, they  
just left her there,

770

00:30:21,070 --> 00:30:25,540

bleeding and in pain  
and crying and whatever.



771

00:30:25,540 --> 00:30:28,360

And they just went  
on, business as usual.

772

00:30:28,360 --> 00:30:30,130

And they herded out  
all those people

773

00:30:30,130 --> 00:30:32,770

through the gate that was open.

774

00:30:32,770 --> 00:30:36,040

And interestingly  
enough, some people

775

00:30:36,040 --> 00:30:39,100

made it to Auschwitz  
or to the crematorium.

776

00:30:39,100 --> 00:30:41,980

It seems from this place, they  
took them to the nearest ditch

777

00:30:41,980 --> 00:30:43,750

and shot those people--

778

00:30:43,750 --> 00:30:46,450

just shot them, to  
the nearest ditch,

779

00:30:46,450 --> 00:30:49,030

right where they were working.

780

00:30:49,030 --> 00:30:50,660

So that all those people went.

781

00:30:50,660 --> 00:30:53,050

So now my father  
somehow caught--

782

00:30:53,050 --> 00:30:55,450

again, this is so third-hand.

783  
00:30:55,450 --> 00:30:58,810  
I mean, it's just  
how I've heard it.

784  
00:30:58,810 --> 00:31:01,630  
My father quickly  
took her, or whoever

785  
00:31:01,630 --> 00:31:03,010  
brought her back to the room.

786  
00:31:03,010 --> 00:31:06,010  
They were in with  
my grandmother.

787  
00:31:06,010 --> 00:31:09,510  
And he had to treat her.

788  
00:31:09,510 --> 00:31:12,540  
Again, he was shrewd  
and sharp, my father.

789  
00:31:12,540 --> 00:31:15,035  
He somehow would take,  
smuggle, get something.

790  
00:31:15,035 --> 00:31:15,660  
[PHONE RINGING]

791  
00:31:15,660 --> 00:31:19,960  
Please, buy us some medicines,  
who you would send--

792  
00:31:19,960 --> 00:31:21,276  
OK, let's cut.

793  
00:31:21,276 --> 00:31:21,776  
Cutting.

794  
00:31:21,776 --> 00:31:25,087

795  
00:31:25,087 --> 00:31:26,980  
Speak.

796  
00:31:26,980 --> 00:31:32,440  
So your father had  
to use his wits

797  
00:31:32,440 --> 00:31:35,890  
to get medicines for  
your mother for her leg

798  
00:31:35,890 --> 00:31:43,180  
to heal and use whatever pool,  
whatever contacts he had.

799  
00:31:43,180 --> 00:31:45,790  
How did things develop for him?

800  
00:31:45,790 --> 00:31:47,020  
For his brothers?

801  
00:31:47,020 --> 00:31:51,780  
Did your mother then become  
part of your father's family

802  
00:31:51,780 --> 00:31:52,660  
in a way?

803  
00:31:52,660 --> 00:31:53,500  
Was she alone?

804  
00:31:53,500 --> 00:31:54,900  
Was there other people there?

805  
00:31:54,900 --> 00:31:59,360

806  
00:31:59,360 --> 00:32:04,190  
Interestingly enough,  
yeah, I guess it-- somehow

807

00:32:04,190 --> 00:32:05,960

he did take a liking to her.

808

00:32:05,960 --> 00:32:13,010

And she did work  
with all of them.

809

00:32:13,010 --> 00:32:19,070

The brothers even pointed  
out, you have us and your mom.

810

00:32:19,070 --> 00:32:21,470

We can't really  
save someone else.

811

00:32:21,470 --> 00:32:25,760

There was a little  
jealousy or concern.

812

00:32:25,760 --> 00:32:28,430

You know, you got  
to be very careful.

813

00:32:28,430 --> 00:32:29,840

Now's not the time.

814

00:32:29,840 --> 00:32:30,420

Leave her be.

815

00:32:30,420 --> 00:32:33,560

But my father realized she  
was an orphan and had nobody.

816

00:32:33,560 --> 00:32:36,470

He realized right away  
that she had nobody.

817

00:32:36,470 --> 00:32:40,160

And interestingly  
enough, when you

818

00:32:40,160 --> 00:32:42,500

want to put a positive  
spin on something,

819  
00:32:42,500 --> 00:32:45,290  
we say that dog  
bite saved her life.

820  
00:32:45,290 --> 00:32:48,650  
Because when my mom  
had typhus, and they

821  
00:32:48,650 --> 00:32:53,210  
wanted to immediately remove  
her, my father was able to say,

822  
00:32:53,210 --> 00:32:54,578  
this is from the dog bite.

823  
00:32:54,578 --> 00:32:55,370  
Don't you remember?

824  
00:32:55,370 --> 00:32:56,570  
She was bitten.

825  
00:32:56,570 --> 00:32:58,590  
She doesn't have typhus.

826  
00:32:58,590 --> 00:33:01,100  
And he would make her work  
with high temperature.

827  
00:33:01,100 --> 00:33:02,750  
You know, they iced her down.

828  
00:33:02,750 --> 00:33:04,480  
But he did it somehow.

829  
00:33:04,480 --> 00:33:06,060  
And she did have typhus.

830  
00:33:06,060 --> 00:33:07,400  
He somehow treated that.

831  
00:33:07,400 --> 00:33:10,090  
But he was able to say it  
was from the dog bite--

832  
00:33:10,090 --> 00:33:12,860  
an infection and  
different things.

833  
00:33:12,860 --> 00:33:14,090  
They accepted her.

834  
00:33:14,090 --> 00:33:14,820  
She worked.

835  
00:33:14,820 --> 00:33:17,780  
She became one of the crew, yes.

836  
00:33:17,780 --> 00:33:20,140  
Let's break for a second  
and see what the phone says.

837  
00:33:20,140 --> 00:33:21,430  
OK.

838  
00:33:21,430 --> 00:33:23,150  
Speak.

839  
00:33:23,150 --> 00:33:27,230  
All right, so what  
happened then?

840  
00:33:27,230 --> 00:33:29,000  
Your mother becomes  
part of the crew.

841  
00:33:29,000 --> 00:33:32,400  
He takes an interest, or he  
kind of becomes her protector.

842  
00:33:32,400 --> 00:33:36,710  
And how do things develop in

the labor camp with the cement?

843

00:33:36,710 --> 00:33:39,712

And when do things change?

844

00:33:39,712 --> 00:33:41,420

So being that they  
were there, let's say,

845

00:33:41,420 --> 00:33:45,380

about a year and a half,  
they worked constantly.

846

00:33:45,380 --> 00:33:50,150

And again, I don't know  
all the details so much.

847

00:33:50,150 --> 00:33:54,440

But I do know that he was,  
like you said, protecting her.

848

00:33:54,440 --> 00:33:57,140

And they had a very  
strong regimen to work.

849

00:33:57,140 --> 00:33:58,940

He got her permission to stay.

850

00:33:58,940 --> 00:34:01,880

And they stayed for, I  
guess, a good year, working.

851

00:34:01,880 --> 00:34:03,720

It was hard work.

852

00:34:03,720 --> 00:34:06,140

It was very-- they  
gave so much work,

853

00:34:06,140 --> 00:34:09,260

it was almost humanly  
impossible to do it.

854

00:34:09,260 --> 00:34:12,080

Like I said, they had  
to do so much work.

855

00:34:12,080 --> 00:34:15,260

And come Saturday,  
my father somehow

856

00:34:15,260 --> 00:34:18,620

devised a plan to do  
all that, to double up,

857

00:34:18,620 --> 00:34:21,260

so that on Saturday, he  
shouldn't have to do work,

858

00:34:21,260 --> 00:34:24,679

but to pretend to be working  
so that he shouldn't desecrate

859

00:34:24,679 --> 00:34:26,437

the Sabbath.

860

00:34:26,437 --> 00:34:27,979

And that was a lot  
of work because it

861

00:34:27,979 --> 00:34:29,060

was impossible to do.

862

00:34:29,060 --> 00:34:30,800

But he devised plans.

863

00:34:30,800 --> 00:34:32,389

They would pretend to work.

864

00:34:32,389 --> 00:34:34,670

They would pretend  
to bang and hammer.

865

00:34:34,670 --> 00:34:38,150

They would pretend to do the



things that they ordinarily

866

00:34:38,150 --> 00:34:40,670

wouldn't, or they  
did it in a way

867

00:34:40,670 --> 00:34:44,750

to do what would be permissible  
on that-- to save the Saturday.

868

00:34:44,750 --> 00:34:48,620

That was his focus under  
such dire circumstances--

869

00:34:48,620 --> 00:34:52,880

to make sure that they kept on  
to the Judaism that they had--

870

00:34:52,880 --> 00:34:55,429

the religion-- to  
whatever they could.

871

00:34:55,429 --> 00:34:58,130

I guess it gave them that  
strength, that courage.

872

00:34:58,130 --> 00:35:00,710

They never questioned God.

873

00:35:00,710 --> 00:35:04,640

But as time was going on,  
they were very vigilant.

874

00:35:04,640 --> 00:35:05,450

They were aware.

875

00:35:05,450 --> 00:35:06,980

They had to pay attention.

876

00:35:06,980 --> 00:35:10,525

They saw more and more people  
getting wiped out of the camp.

877

00:35:10,525 --> 00:35:11,150

[PHONE RINGING]

878

00:35:11,150 --> 00:35:13,010

As, again, the tailors went out.

879

00:35:13,010 --> 00:35:14,490

The watch men went out.

880

00:35:14,490 --> 00:35:18,830

They kept on to these [GERMAN]  
because they were useful.

881

00:35:18,830 --> 00:35:20,540

Then my father  
was catching wind.

882

00:35:20,540 --> 00:35:23,300

Somehow, the past  
weeks, they were

883

00:35:23,300 --> 00:35:25,280

thinking of an escape plan.

884

00:35:25,280 --> 00:35:29,060

How, what, when-- my  
father and the brothers

885

00:35:29,060 --> 00:35:31,970

had some sort of idea of this.

886

00:35:31,970 --> 00:35:35,540

What they did, if they broke  
through the front fence, or--

887

00:35:35,540 --> 00:35:36,890

I don't know.

888

00:35:36,890 --> 00:35:39,280

But one morning, my  
father had a dream.

889

00:35:39,280 --> 00:35:40,850  
They were already planning this.

890

00:35:40,850 --> 00:35:42,050  
And in the dream--

891

00:35:42,050 --> 00:35:44,150  
you've heard many  
people have had dreams

892

00:35:44,150 --> 00:35:47,090  
from dead parents or siblings.

893

00:35:47,090 --> 00:35:49,520  
And he says, [YIDDISH].

894

00:35:49,520 --> 00:35:51,460  
Run.

895

00:35:51,460 --> 00:35:52,940  
And who was speaking to him?

896

00:35:52,940 --> 00:35:56,680  
His uncle-- his Uncle Baruch  
Labe, that was his name--

897

00:35:56,680 --> 00:35:58,070  
Baruch Labe, an uncle.

898

00:35:58,070 --> 00:36:00,230  
My uncle came to me in a dream.

899

00:36:00,230 --> 00:36:01,070  
[YIDDISH]

900

00:36:01,070 --> 00:36:04,690

901

00:36:04,690 --> 00:36:06,920  
In other words, get out.

902

00:36:06,920 --> 00:36:07,420

They were--

903

00:36:07,420 --> 00:36:08,270

The camp is burning.

904

00:36:08,270 --> 00:36:08,810

Right.

905

00:36:08,810 --> 00:36:10,610

You better run for your life.

906

00:36:10,610 --> 00:36:14,690

And slowly, 5:00 in the morning,  
him, his three brothers,

907

00:36:14,690 --> 00:36:18,530

and my mother and his mother and  
I think another sister-in-law,

908

00:36:18,530 --> 00:36:21,040

they somehow ran  
out of the camp.

909

00:36:21,040 --> 00:36:22,610

5:00 in the morning--  
it was dark.

910

00:36:22,610 --> 00:36:26,200

They were running and  
running, and sure enough, they

911

00:36:26,200 --> 00:36:27,430

were shooting at them.

912

00:36:27,430 --> 00:36:31,010

And I don't know if  
there was a chase,

913

00:36:31,010 --> 00:36:33,110

but they were running fast.

914  
00:36:33,110 --> 00:36:34,650  
So as my mother says--

915  
00:36:34,650 --> 00:36:36,620  
I mean, this is factual.

916  
00:36:36,620 --> 00:36:39,830  
They were running like  
their life depended on it.

917  
00:36:39,830 --> 00:36:42,590  
My mother said the  
boys, the four brothers,

918  
00:36:42,590 --> 00:36:46,220  
knew the roads because they were  
from that area, from business.

919  
00:36:46,220 --> 00:36:48,650  
But my mother and  
the other girl,

920  
00:36:48,650 --> 00:36:51,070  
who became a sister-in-law,  
they didn't really know.

921  
00:36:51,070 --> 00:36:54,890  
They couldn't run, keep up that  
pace, with the grandmother.

922  
00:36:54,890 --> 00:36:58,260  
So many of them, they  
fell as they were running.

923  
00:36:58,260 --> 00:37:00,840  
And there were comments  
like, forget about it.

924  
00:37:00,840 --> 00:37:01,340  
Leave it.

925  
00:37:01,340 --> 00:37:02,440

Let's go.

926

00:37:02,440 --> 00:37:05,150

But he says-- my mother tells  
the story that my father

927

00:37:05,150 --> 00:37:09,000

crawled back on all fours  
to drag her through the--

928

00:37:09,000 --> 00:37:11,480

it was the woods or  
something-- to drag her out.

929

00:37:11,480 --> 00:37:14,000

And somehow they escaped.

930

00:37:14,000 --> 00:37:17,420

The word came later  
that-- they said, wow,

931

00:37:17,420 --> 00:37:19,910

the Burstyn [GERMAN]  
They thought

932

00:37:19,910 --> 00:37:21,350

we were going to kill them?

933

00:37:21,350 --> 00:37:23,960

They were surprised,  
the Germans.

934

00:37:23,960 --> 00:37:26,410

They really thought  
we're going to kill them?

935

00:37:26,410 --> 00:37:29,255

Because they felt that  
they were loyal to them,

936

00:37:29,255 --> 00:37:31,130

that they were working  
to them, but my father

937  
00:37:31,130 --> 00:37:32,300  
knew that they were next.

938  
00:37:32,300 --> 00:37:34,100  
It was a matter of time.

939  
00:37:34,100 --> 00:37:35,150  
Isn't that interesting?

940  
00:37:35,150 --> 00:37:36,540  
Yeah, it was.

941  
00:37:36,540 --> 00:37:41,630  
And I mean it's a very  
strange kind of reaction

942  
00:37:41,630 --> 00:37:45,138  
that the German overlords would  
have said, why would they think

943  
00:37:45,138 --> 00:37:46,430  
that we would have killed them?

944  
00:37:46,430 --> 00:37:48,530  
Something to that extent.

945  
00:37:48,530 --> 00:37:50,600  
They showed a little snake.

946  
00:37:50,600 --> 00:37:55,520  
So that is a new phase that  
they enter, which is hiding.

947  
00:37:55,520 --> 00:37:56,210  
Yes.

948  
00:37:56,210 --> 00:37:58,210  
And let's break for a second.

949  
00:37:58,210 --> 00:38:02,100

And you can take  
a look and see--

950  
00:38:02,100 --> 00:38:03,088  
We're ready?

951  
00:38:03,088 --> 00:38:06,046  
Yeah.

952  
00:38:06,046 --> 00:38:06,546  
Speed.

953  
00:38:06,546 --> 00:38:11,160

954  
00:38:11,160 --> 00:38:13,590  
So they managed to run away.

955  
00:38:13,590 --> 00:38:17,520  
And so that starts a new phase.

956  
00:38:17,520 --> 00:38:18,578  
And what happens then?

957  
00:38:18,578 --> 00:38:20,370  
I mean, look, we're--  
again, we're focusing

958  
00:38:20,370 --> 00:38:23,580  
on your father's  
story at this point.

959  
00:38:23,580 --> 00:38:24,330  
What does he do?

960  
00:38:24,330 --> 00:38:26,550  
Where do they go?

961  
00:38:26,550 --> 00:38:29,630  
How do they survive?

962



00:38:29,630 --> 00:38:30,200  
Interesting.

963  
00:38:30,200 --> 00:38:33,500  
When we asked my mom that question, she has no idea.

964  
00:38:33,500 --> 00:38:36,590  
They don't even know themselves how they survived.

965  
00:38:36,590 --> 00:38:38,560  
It seems that--

966  
00:38:38,560 --> 00:38:41,960  
I can't say it just happens, but they--

967  
00:38:41,960 --> 00:38:44,900  
knowing the woods-- maybe  
[? Poplovich ?] Woods?

968  
00:38:44,900 --> 00:38:46,640  
There must be a name to them.

969  
00:38:46,640 --> 00:38:50,780  
They went to the woods and started digging and digging.

970  
00:38:50,780 --> 00:38:53,520  
And they just dug living graves.

971  
00:38:53,520 --> 00:38:55,220  
And that were their hideouts.

972  
00:38:55,220 --> 00:38:57,050  
At one point, my father built something.

973  
00:38:57,050 --> 00:39:00,470  
At one point, they had about 14 people already.

974

00:39:00,470 --> 00:39:02,330

And then my father  
just, out of the blue,

975

00:39:02,330 --> 00:39:05,210

on some sort of  
inclination, he decided

976

00:39:05,210 --> 00:39:06,800

he didn't want to stay there.

977

00:39:06,800 --> 00:39:09,350

And he left that group,  
and he went further

978

00:39:09,350 --> 00:39:12,200

in a different direction,  
which ultimately they

979

00:39:12,200 --> 00:39:14,330

found that other  
group and killed them.

980

00:39:14,330 --> 00:39:16,820

They found them in the  
war-- that hideout.

981

00:39:16,820 --> 00:39:17,910

It was risky.

982

00:39:17,910 --> 00:39:20,900

They came sometimes  
with dogs, with people.

983

00:39:20,900 --> 00:39:23,360

And they found--  
they went further,

984

00:39:23,360 --> 00:39:29,200

and they dug out an  
area in the ground.

985

00:39:29,200 --> 00:39:33,840

At one point, there were 14,  
15, 16 people in a living grave.

986

00:39:33,840 --> 00:39:38,260

And they would cover it up with  
branches and twigs and leaves

987

00:39:38,260 --> 00:39:40,520

and all kinds of things.

988

00:39:40,520 --> 00:39:43,900

It's very hard to recall  
exactly, but the fact is there

989

00:39:43,900 --> 00:39:48,520

was no food, no  
clothes, no heat.

990

00:39:48,520 --> 00:39:50,660

They were drenched from rain.

991

00:39:50,660 --> 00:39:54,100

We're thinking mattresses,  
blankets, beds?

992

00:39:54,100 --> 00:39:56,650

No, they sat in a  
sitting position.

993

00:39:56,650 --> 00:40:00,640

They couldn't even stand up to  
straighten out their bodies--

994

00:40:00,640 --> 00:40:03,700

close to two years, two  
winters and a summer-- winter,

995

00:40:03,700 --> 00:40:05,590

summer, winter, summer.

996

00:40:05,590 --> 00:40:07,015

It was tough.

997  
00:40:07,015 --> 00:40:08,890  
Well, they must have  
had food from somewhere.

998  
00:40:08,890 --> 00:40:11,440  
So at night-- at night--

999  
00:40:11,440 --> 00:40:15,670  
the four brothers, the  
four men, would go out.

1000  
00:40:15,670 --> 00:40:17,320  
And there was a nightlife.

1001  
00:40:17,320 --> 00:40:20,680  
They would get  
potatoes, potato peels--

1002  
00:40:20,680 --> 00:40:23,110  
like my mother says, garbage.

1003  
00:40:23,110 --> 00:40:26,200  
There were some  
people that even had--

1004  
00:40:26,200 --> 00:40:28,810  
we call them the  
Righteous of the World--

1005  
00:40:28,810 --> 00:40:31,120  
who would bake bread at times.

1006  
00:40:31,120 --> 00:40:33,700  
They would find somebody  
who would give them bread.

1007  
00:40:33,700 --> 00:40:36,010  
Whoever did risked  
themselves as well.

1008  
00:40:36,010 --> 00:40:37,660

This was wartime.

1009  
00:40:37,660 --> 00:40:41,950  
This was 1943, '44, '45.

1010  
00:40:41,950 --> 00:40:43,450  
So they had a risk.

1011  
00:40:43,450 --> 00:40:45,550  
And they would go  
out and get potatoes.

1012  
00:40:45,550 --> 00:40:47,200  
And they would get peels--

1013  
00:40:47,200 --> 00:40:49,930  
nothing substantial-- and bread.

1014  
00:40:49,930 --> 00:40:52,120  
And my mother said they  
were so happy for the winter

1015  
00:40:52,120 --> 00:40:56,740  
because they had snow to  
drink and to wash themselves.

1016  
00:40:56,740 --> 00:40:58,630  
You're talking  
sanitary conditions.

1017  
00:40:58,630 --> 00:41:01,720  
You're talking a lot of  
details, which people ask.

1018  
00:41:01,720 --> 00:41:04,030  
And my mother  
says, I don't know.

1019  
00:41:04,030 --> 00:41:04,680  
I don't know.

1020  
00:41:04,680 --> 00:41:06,340

I really don't know  
even the answer.

1021  
00:41:06,340 --> 00:41:07,970  
It wasn't easy.

1022  
00:41:07,970 --> 00:41:09,430  
And they would go in the snow.

1023  
00:41:09,430 --> 00:41:12,450  
They would clear up the tracks.

1024  
00:41:12,450 --> 00:41:14,080  
In the winter, there  
were many times,

1025  
00:41:14,080 --> 00:41:18,540  
she says, that they  
were lucky that they

1026  
00:41:18,540 --> 00:41:19,673  
didn't come with dogs.

1027  
00:41:19,673 --> 00:41:21,090  
Many times, the  
Germans, when they

1028  
00:41:21,090 --> 00:41:23,760  
walked through these  
woods, came alone.

1029  
00:41:23,760 --> 00:41:26,820  
So my mother used to hear them  
talk-- you imagine the fear,

1030  
00:41:26,820 --> 00:41:28,050  
being underground.

1031  
00:41:28,050 --> 00:41:31,860  
And you hear big--

1032  
00:41:31,860 --> 00:41:34,500

the big soldiers, coming along.

1033  
00:41:34,500 --> 00:41:38,130  
And my mother heard  
like saying, [GERMAN]..

1034  
00:41:38,130 --> 00:41:38,970  
Always further.

1035  
00:41:38,970 --> 00:41:39,600  
Always further.

1036  
00:41:39,600 --> 00:41:40,720  
Yeah, that's right.

1037  
00:41:40,720 --> 00:41:41,330  
[GERMAN]

1038  
00:41:41,330 --> 00:41:43,200  
So I-- Ma, what does that mean?

1039  
00:41:43,200 --> 00:41:43,890  
"Nothing here.

1040  
00:41:43,890 --> 00:41:44,590  
Let's go.

1041  
00:41:44,590 --> 00:41:45,750  
[GERMAN]

1042  
00:41:45,750 --> 00:41:48,150  
So my mother kept hearing that.

1043  
00:41:48,150 --> 00:41:49,890  
My mother does say  
that they had four

1044  
00:41:49,890 --> 00:41:52,320  
birds on top of that grave.

1045  
00:41:52,320 --> 00:41:54,440

She always says that  
there were four birds

1046  
00:41:54,440 --> 00:41:56,920  
she considers was angels.

1047  
00:41:56,920 --> 00:41:58,930  
But again, they were  
sitting in tight quarters.

1048  
00:41:58,930 --> 00:41:59,920  
You can ask my mom.

1049  
00:41:59,920 --> 00:42:00,820  
She doesn't remember.

1050  
00:42:00,820 --> 00:42:01,670  
She can't answer.

1051  
00:42:01,670 --> 00:42:03,460  
She-- you're talking Kleenex.

1052  
00:42:03,460 --> 00:42:05,650  
You're talking  
sweaters, scarves--

1053  
00:42:05,650 --> 00:42:08,855  
nothing, a year and  
a half, two years.

1054  
00:42:08,855 --> 00:42:11,390  
And the men went and got food.

1055  
00:42:11,390 --> 00:42:15,850  
So they remembered living the  
starved life their whole life.

1056  
00:42:15,850 --> 00:42:19,580  
They always refer to  
it, that in the war,

1057  
00:42:19,580 --> 00:42:21,530



we didn't have what to eat.

1058  
00:42:21,530 --> 00:42:23,210  
Now we're told not to eat.

1059  
00:42:23,210 --> 00:42:25,130  
We finally have food  
we're not allowed

1060  
00:42:25,130 --> 00:42:27,000  
to eat for health reasons.

1061  
00:42:27,000 --> 00:42:30,410  
But this is a story which  
is very hard to comprehend.

1062  
00:42:30,410 --> 00:42:32,700  
You're talking a  
17-year-old, 18-year-old,

1063  
00:42:32,700 --> 00:42:36,680  
19-year-old girl living in  
these conditions in great

1064  
00:42:36,680 --> 00:42:40,760  
trepidation, in great fear,  
not knowing the next minute--

1065  
00:42:40,760 --> 00:42:43,220  
they heard shootings, always.

1066  
00:42:43,220 --> 00:42:45,230  
So at one point, some--

1067  
00:42:45,230 --> 00:42:49,100  
God had mercy and kept  
them out of harm's way.

1068  
00:42:49,100 --> 00:42:52,490

1069  
00:42:52,490 --> 00:42:54,750

As you were growing up,  
did you know your mother

1070  
00:42:54,750 --> 00:42:57,110  
as a fearful person?

1071  
00:42:57,110 --> 00:42:58,820  
Fearful in what way?

1072  
00:42:58,820 --> 00:43:03,650  
Well, she was constantly  
afraid when she was in hiding.

1073  
00:43:03,650 --> 00:43:06,840  
But was being fearful  
part of her personality?

1074  
00:43:06,840 --> 00:43:07,512  
Yeah, no.

1075  
00:43:07,512 --> 00:43:08,690  
Interesting.

1076  
00:43:08,690 --> 00:43:12,130  
I know what that means, when  
people that are always fearful

1077  
00:43:12,130 --> 00:43:13,370  
or this.

1078  
00:43:13,370 --> 00:43:14,240  
No.

1079  
00:43:14,240 --> 00:43:18,020  
I see pictures of my mom  
when she had like a sister--

1080  
00:43:18,020 --> 00:43:19,740  
when I'm, say, two years old.

1081  
00:43:19,740 --> 00:43:23,300  
And she looked beautiful,

well-adjusted, dressed.

1082

00:43:23,300 --> 00:43:24,620

You know, I can't even imagine.

1083

00:43:24,620 --> 00:43:27,260

People always say the word, "I'm so depressed."

1084

00:43:27,260 --> 00:43:28,710

And they were curled up in bed.

1085

00:43:28,710 --> 00:43:31,490

I don't know how she got herself together.

1086

00:43:31,490 --> 00:43:34,370

Even now, she wants to make sure she looks right.

1087

00:43:34,370 --> 00:43:35,120

I don't get it.

1088

00:43:35,120 --> 00:43:38,330

She'll put on-- whether it's this or a pearl or.

1089

00:43:38,330 --> 00:43:40,240

She never did manicures and beauty parlors.

1090

00:43:40,240 --> 00:43:42,627

She wasn't that type, but she worked very hard.

1091

00:43:42,627 --> 00:43:44,960

But she has pictures where she looks like a human being.

1092

00:43:44,960 --> 00:43:46,640

You would think they would be savages.

1093

00:43:46,640 --> 00:43:49,200

You'd think they would  
not come out normal.

1094

00:43:49,200 --> 00:43:51,740

And my father also  
worked very hard

1095

00:43:51,740 --> 00:43:54,870

in America-- tried  
to go on with life.

1096

00:43:54,870 --> 00:43:57,770

Liked nice things.

1097

00:43:57,770 --> 00:43:59,630

How did that story end?

1098

00:43:59,630 --> 00:44:02,660

That is, the part that was--

1099

00:44:02,660 --> 00:44:06,560

when they're hiding  
in the forest?

1100

00:44:06,560 --> 00:44:08,050

What was the end of that?

1101

00:44:08,050 --> 00:44:11,910

1102

00:44:11,910 --> 00:44:14,190

It seems in 1945--

1103

00:44:14,190 --> 00:44:15,420

is that when the Russians?

1104

00:44:15,420 --> 00:44:18,600

So don't forget, they probably  
had underground working.

1105

00:44:18,600 --> 00:44:21,300  
And they heard that  
the war is ending.

1106  
00:44:21,300 --> 00:44:24,030  
And they heard that a few  
kilometers away, there

1107  
00:44:24,030 --> 00:44:25,750  
were some Russians.

1108  
00:44:25,750 --> 00:44:27,680  
And so there was--

1109  
00:44:27,680 --> 00:44:33,180  
they send out, I guess,  
a decoy, a lady who--

1110  
00:44:33,180 --> 00:44:38,680  
she spoke Russian, I think, and  
German to assess the situation.

1111  
00:44:38,680 --> 00:44:40,560  
And she saw the  
Russian Army coming.

1112  
00:44:40,560 --> 00:44:41,940  
And she went over and asked.

1113  
00:44:41,940 --> 00:44:43,598  
And she said, yes, yes.

1114  
00:44:43,598 --> 00:44:45,390  
And they weren't sure  
because they thought,

1115  
00:44:45,390 --> 00:44:46,692  
maybe you're bringing me spies.

1116  
00:44:46,692 --> 00:44:48,150  
My mother said it  
wasn't that easy.

1117  
00:44:48,150 --> 00:44:49,530  
You couldn't just walk out.

1118  
00:44:49,530 --> 00:44:51,180  
You don't know if it's a trap.

1119  
00:44:51,180 --> 00:44:55,320  
But the Russians liberated them.

1120  
00:44:55,320 --> 00:44:58,110  
And then they made  
their way westward?

1121  
00:44:58,110 --> 00:45:02,580  
And then, I guess, they  
went straight to Landsberg,

1122  
00:45:02,580 --> 00:45:04,560  
to the DP camp.

1123  
00:45:04,560 --> 00:45:05,310  
OK.

1124  
00:45:05,310 --> 00:45:08,010  
So let's pause here,  
because at some point,

1125  
00:45:08,010 --> 00:45:09,900  
your mother's story  
and your father's story

1126  
00:45:09,900 --> 00:45:11,100  
becomes the same.

1127  
00:45:11,100 --> 00:45:11,730  
Correct.

1128  
00:45:11,730 --> 00:45:16,800  
Let's go back to the  
part where your mother--

1129

00:45:16,800 --> 00:45:19,280  
we're talking just  
about her story.

1130  
00:45:19,280 --> 00:45:22,670  
So she is born in 1925, you say.

1131  
00:45:22,670 --> 00:45:25,360  
And her first name was what?

1132  
00:45:25,360 --> 00:45:26,030  
Leah.

1133  
00:45:26,030 --> 00:45:27,640  
And what was her maiden name?

1134  
00:45:27,640 --> 00:45:28,140  
Aller.

1135  
00:45:28,140 --> 00:45:29,990  
A-L-L-E-R.

1136  
00:45:29,990 --> 00:45:30,770  
All right.

1137  
00:45:30,770 --> 00:45:32,420  
Did she have  
brothers and sisters?

1138  
00:45:32,420 --> 00:45:33,710  
Yes.

1139  
00:45:33,710 --> 00:45:35,840  
Who were her  
brothers and sisters?

1140  
00:45:35,840 --> 00:45:38,460  
So she had an older sister.

1141  
00:45:38,460 --> 00:45:41,270  
Her name was Hannah Etel.

1142

00:45:41,270 --> 00:45:45,120

And then her brother  
[? Zurich, ?] and then her.

1143

00:45:45,120 --> 00:45:47,150

And then they had a  
young sister, Sima,

1144

00:45:47,150 --> 00:45:50,490

who died before the  
war in an accident.

1145

00:45:50,490 --> 00:45:52,420

She fell off a wagon.

1146

00:45:52,420 --> 00:45:53,270

Yeah.

1147

00:45:53,270 --> 00:45:56,160

And what was her father's name?

1148

00:45:56,160 --> 00:45:57,060

Do you know?

1149

00:45:57,060 --> 00:45:58,282

Shmuel Yitzhak.

1150

00:45:58,282 --> 00:45:59,990

I don't know what they  
call it in Hebrew.

1151

00:45:59,990 --> 00:46:03,170

Maybe [? Shmulek, ?]  
[? Shmeal. ?] I'm not sure.

1152

00:46:03,170 --> 00:46:03,920

Aller?

1153

00:46:03,920 --> 00:46:04,550

Aller.

1154



00:46:04,550 --> 00:46:06,260  
And her mother's name?

1155  
00:46:06,260 --> 00:46:11,210  
Was [? Hiasura, ?]  
which is like Sarah.

1156  
00:46:11,210 --> 00:46:14,960  
So they called-- she told me  
they called her [? Sorca. ?]

1157  
00:46:14,960 --> 00:46:15,750  
[? Sorca. ?]

1158  
00:46:15,750 --> 00:46:16,800  
Yeah.

1159  
00:46:16,800 --> 00:46:19,160  
So she's born in 1925.

1160  
00:46:19,160 --> 00:46:19,700  
Yes.

1161  
00:46:19,700 --> 00:46:22,290  
The war starts in 1939.

1162  
00:46:22,290 --> 00:46:22,790  
Right.

1163  
00:46:22,790 --> 00:46:24,920  
Your mother's 14 years old.

1164  
00:46:24,920 --> 00:46:26,890  
What happens?

1165  
00:46:26,890 --> 00:46:30,110  
So she finished school  
till about seventh grade.

1166  
00:46:30,110 --> 00:46:31,350  
That was it.

1167

00:46:31,350 --> 00:46:35,810

And then slowly,  
they immediately

1168

00:46:35,810 --> 00:46:40,160

was taken out, still  
living at home somewhat.

1169

00:46:40,160 --> 00:46:42,110

But they took everyone--

1170

00:46:42,110 --> 00:46:43,545

slave labor.

1171

00:46:43,545 --> 00:46:45,545

There was a river there,  
the [? Ucherka ?] River

1172

00:46:45,545 --> 00:46:46,220

or something.

1173

00:46:46,220 --> 00:46:47,080

In Chelm?

1174

00:46:47,080 --> 00:46:49,370

In Chelm, where  
they had to go out.

1175

00:46:49,370 --> 00:46:51,860

And they were digging a  
river, for no other reason,

1176

00:46:51,860 --> 00:46:56,930

my mother says, than to keep  
them busy or to torture them,

1177

00:46:56,930 --> 00:46:58,790

where they had to  
dig in the river,

1178

00:46:58,790 --> 00:47:01,490

and dig to widen the river.

1179  
00:47:01,490 --> 00:47:04,930  
It's probably  
documented, that river.

1180  
00:47:04,930 --> 00:47:07,610  
And she would go and come  
home, go and come home.

1181  
00:47:07,610 --> 00:47:11,690  
And slowly, slowly, they would  
start putting in ghettos.

1182  
00:47:11,690 --> 00:47:15,020  
They slowly, slowly took  
families out of their home,

1183  
00:47:15,020 --> 00:47:16,280  
confiscated.

1184  
00:47:16,280 --> 00:47:18,710  
They had to leave  
with nothing whatever.

1185  
00:47:18,710 --> 00:47:20,050  
Didn't get much.

1186  
00:47:20,050 --> 00:47:22,370  
My mother even says, when  
they packed away the Passover

1187  
00:47:22,370 --> 00:47:25,430  
dishes, little did she know she  
would never see anything again.

1188  
00:47:25,430 --> 00:47:28,100  
They just like-- left as-is.

1189  
00:47:28,100 --> 00:47:29,650  
Nothing.

1190  
00:47:29,650 --> 00:47:32,470

And they slowly put them  
in ghettos and ghettos.

1191  
00:47:32,470 --> 00:47:36,290  
Were both her mother and  
father alive at that time?

1192  
00:47:36,290 --> 00:47:37,550  
Yes.

1193  
00:47:37,550 --> 00:47:40,190  
So both parents were  
alive when the war begins?

1194  
00:47:40,190 --> 00:47:41,840  
Yes.

1195  
00:47:41,840 --> 00:47:43,600  
And were they a  
well-to-do family?

1196  
00:47:43,600 --> 00:47:44,240  
No, no.

1197  
00:47:44,240 --> 00:47:45,005  
They were poor.

1198  
00:47:45,005 --> 00:47:51,398  
Very-- they never  
knew rich people,

1199  
00:47:51,398 --> 00:47:53,190  
so they didn't think  
of themselves as poor.

1200  
00:47:53,190 --> 00:47:55,800  
She thought of herself  
as very average, but very

1201  
00:47:55,800 --> 00:47:57,590  
poor-- one room, dirt floor.

1202

00:47:57,590 --> 00:47:59,280  
Her mother, she says,  
always gave people

1203  
00:47:59,280 --> 00:48:01,710  
food to eat--  
whoever needed food.

1204  
00:48:01,710 --> 00:48:05,220  
Very hard-working-- my  
mother would walk, say,

1205  
00:48:05,220 --> 00:48:07,340  
a mile or something--  
kilometers--

1206  
00:48:07,340 --> 00:48:09,190  
to a well to get water.

1207  
00:48:09,190 --> 00:48:10,090  
There was no water--

1208  
00:48:10,090 --> 00:48:11,050  
no water.

1209  
00:48:11,050 --> 00:48:12,350  
There was no electric.

1210  
00:48:12,350 --> 00:48:15,960  
Talking 1939-- no  
electric, no water.

1211  
00:48:15,960 --> 00:48:19,560  
She had to pump the water,  
bring it home, go back.

1212  
00:48:19,560 --> 00:48:20,580  
The poverty was there.

1213  
00:48:20,580 --> 00:48:22,440  
But it was wholesome, this home.

1214

00:48:22,440 --> 00:48:26,380

She remembers the warmth and the  
love of the home-- her mother

1215

00:48:26,380 --> 00:48:28,680

and her father, kind, loving.

1216

00:48:28,680 --> 00:48:31,800

Her sister, her  
brother-- very sensitive,

1217

00:48:31,800 --> 00:48:33,250

all of them together.

1218

00:48:33,250 --> 00:48:34,680

Seems that way.

1219

00:48:34,680 --> 00:48:37,480

Very caring for one another.

1220

00:48:37,480 --> 00:48:39,480

That's what she  
transmitted to you?

1221

00:48:39,480 --> 00:48:42,210

Yes, that's correct.

1222

00:48:42,210 --> 00:48:44,760

So little by little,  
they're pressured.

1223

00:48:44,760 --> 00:48:48,930

And they're herded  
into a ghetto.

1224

00:48:48,930 --> 00:48:50,880

What happens then?

1225

00:48:50,880 --> 00:48:52,620

So as they were  
working in this ghetto,

1226

00:48:52,620 --> 00:48:54,780  
it was also the same routine--

1227  
00:48:54,780 --> 00:48:57,570  
going and coming and  
going and coming.

1228  
00:48:57,570 --> 00:49:00,480  
But then-- again, I  
don't know the year.

1229  
00:49:00,480 --> 00:49:04,635  
I would imagine '41 because  
two years was slave labor--

1230  
00:49:04,635 --> 00:49:07,130  
1941 was Judenrat.

1231  
00:49:07,130 --> 00:49:08,900  
OK, there was the  
Jewish Council.

1232  
00:49:08,900 --> 00:49:09,750  
Right.

1233  
00:49:09,750 --> 00:49:11,830  
And then they started--

1234  
00:49:11,830 --> 00:49:13,700  
or Judenrein.

1235  
00:49:13,700 --> 00:49:15,090  
Judenrein, where they were--

1236  
00:49:15,090 --> 00:49:16,980  
Judenrein means extermination.

1237  
00:49:16,980 --> 00:49:17,575  
Right.

1238  
00:49:17,575 --> 00:49:19,470  
Basically, make

it clean of Jews.

1239  
00:49:19,470 --> 00:49:20,700  
Make it clean of Jews.

1240  
00:49:20,700 --> 00:49:23,180  
And that's where  
their trouble began.

1241  
00:49:23,180 --> 00:49:28,770  
And everything went-- there  
was no way of knowing anything.

1242  
00:49:28,770 --> 00:49:30,330  
And everyone started running.

1243  
00:49:30,330 --> 00:49:33,120  
Whatever it was, you would see  
people going in the street,

1244  
00:49:33,120 --> 00:49:35,420  
grabbing people,  
shooting people.

1245  
00:49:35,420 --> 00:49:37,920  
You were just exposed to this--

1246  
00:49:37,920 --> 00:49:40,160  
just like my mother  
mentioned, where

1247  
00:49:40,160 --> 00:49:43,920  
there would be three Jewish  
people with their beards

1248  
00:49:43,920 --> 00:49:45,590  
in prayer shawls.

1249  
00:49:45,590 --> 00:49:47,340  
And just-- would shoot them.

1250  
00:49:47,340 --> 00:49:49,890



They would say,  
where is your God?

1251  
00:49:49,890 --> 00:49:50,640  
Where is your God?

1252  
00:49:50,640 --> 00:49:52,223  
And they would shoot  
them, right then.

1253  
00:49:52,223 --> 00:49:55,530  
And they did awful,  
very painful things.

1254  
00:49:55,530 --> 00:49:57,150  
She saw all these things.

1255  
00:49:57,150 --> 00:50:01,530  
She saw a nursing mother being  
shot with the baby being shot.

1256  
00:50:01,530 --> 00:50:03,660  
They saw all these  
gruesome acts,

1257  
00:50:03,660 --> 00:50:06,350  
where they went into a  
synagogue mercilessly.

1258  
00:50:06,350 --> 00:50:08,090  
They just-- they didn't know.

1259  
00:50:08,090 --> 00:50:12,750  
And at this age, really, it was  
14, 15, 16-- her and her sister

1260  
00:50:12,750 --> 00:50:13,850  
ran.

1261  
00:50:13,850 --> 00:50:17,430  
And they ran into a  
basement, both of them.

1262  
00:50:17,430 --> 00:50:19,930  
And everything happens fast.

1263  
00:50:19,930 --> 00:50:22,350  
So one went to the left,  
and one went to the right.

1264  
00:50:22,350 --> 00:50:26,710  
And before she knew it,  
they were in hiding.

1265  
00:50:26,710 --> 00:50:28,420  
She says her sister,  
who was older

1266  
00:50:28,420 --> 00:50:31,210  
than her, four years older,  
gave her her ring and said,

1267  
00:50:31,210 --> 00:50:32,020  
keep this.

1268  
00:50:32,020 --> 00:50:33,310  
You're going to need it.

1269  
00:50:33,310 --> 00:50:35,380  
She goes, why did my  
sister give me the ring?

1270  
00:50:35,380 --> 00:50:36,910  
Why did she think--  
she said maybe

1271  
00:50:36,910 --> 00:50:40,330  
I'll be able to save myself  
to buy a piece of bread.

1272  
00:50:40,330 --> 00:50:42,790  
That's what it boiled down to.

1273  
00:50:42,790 --> 00:50:44,680  
And they were hiding

in that basement.

1274  
00:50:44,680 --> 00:50:47,810  
And all of a sudden,  
one of-- these

1275  
00:50:47,810 --> 00:50:49,610  
are girls, not  
knowing what to do.

1276  
00:50:49,610 --> 00:50:50,350  
Where do you go?

1277  
00:50:50,350 --> 00:50:53,800  
Everyone's scattered.

1278  
00:50:53,800 --> 00:50:56,710  
A Pollock came, a Polish man--

1279  
00:50:56,710 --> 00:50:57,970  
their neighbor.

1280  
00:50:57,970 --> 00:51:01,600  
And the way my mother says,  
he's like, oh, my God.

1281  
00:51:01,600 --> 00:51:02,750  
What are you doing here?

1282  
00:51:02,750 --> 00:51:03,520  
He looked at them.

1283  
00:51:03,520 --> 00:51:04,180  
What are you?

1284  
00:51:04,180 --> 00:51:06,580  
Very close friends--  
they played hide and go

1285  
00:51:06,580 --> 00:51:08,200  
seek and all these games.

1286

00:51:08,200 --> 00:51:10,150

And he was already  
under German orders.

1287

00:51:10,150 --> 00:51:12,070

He was in uniform with guns.

1288

00:51:12,070 --> 00:51:14,210

He had to work for the Germans.

1289

00:51:14,210 --> 00:51:15,270

And he turned them in.

1290

00:51:15,270 --> 00:51:16,400

He had no choice.

1291

00:51:16,400 --> 00:51:17,920

He had to turn them in.

1292

00:51:17,920 --> 00:51:19,850

He had no choice.

1293

00:51:19,850 --> 00:51:22,420

They played all  
the years together.

1294

00:51:22,420 --> 00:51:26,210

And then he knew them, and  
he didn't-- he was shocked.

1295

00:51:26,210 --> 00:51:28,870

And at that point,  
when they took my--

1296

00:51:28,870 --> 00:51:30,970

again, took her  
sister, took her.

1297

00:51:30,970 --> 00:51:34,810

She doesn't know what happened,  
where she ended up, how.

1298

00:51:34,810 --> 00:51:37,960

But she knows that she  
never saw a sister again.

1299

00:51:37,960 --> 00:51:42,940

And she somehow ended up on  
some sort of truck or running

1300

00:51:42,940 --> 00:51:45,910

straight to that bahnhof,  
to that labor camp,

1301

00:51:45,910 --> 00:51:47,380

where she ended  
up, not knowing--

1302

00:51:47,380 --> 00:51:49,600

but she did know that  
her mother father--

1303

00:51:49,600 --> 00:51:52,030

she did see them being  
taken away and shot.

1304

00:51:52,030 --> 00:51:53,777

She saw that.

1305

00:51:53,777 --> 00:51:55,360

And the sister-- she  
doesn't know what

1306

00:51:55,360 --> 00:51:57,580

happened, but she  
never saw her again.

1307

00:51:57,580 --> 00:52:01,360

Now the brother, interestingly  
enough, the brother

1308

00:52:01,360 --> 00:52:06,680

was away learning in a  
school in [? Otwock. ?]

1309

00:52:06,680 --> 00:52:09,232

Oh, yeah, [? Otwock. ?]

I've heard of it.

1310

00:52:09,232 --> 00:52:11,315

My mother says it's like

from New York to Boston--

1311

00:52:11,315 --> 00:52:12,520

I don't know, that distance.

1312

00:52:12,520 --> 00:52:14,440

And he learned there.

1313

00:52:14,440 --> 00:52:19,520

And the rabbi of that arranged

for that whole yeshiva,

1314

00:52:19,520 --> 00:52:22,850

that whole school, to be

transported to Shanghai.

1315

00:52:22,850 --> 00:52:25,030

I don't know if you know,

there was a whole yeshiva

1316

00:52:25,030 --> 00:52:26,560

that was saved.

1317

00:52:26,560 --> 00:52:29,960

Hundreds of students

went to China.

1318

00:52:29,960 --> 00:52:31,700

And he said, no, I can't go.

1319

00:52:31,700 --> 00:52:34,730

I must go back and see

my mother-- his mother.

1320

00:52:34,730 --> 00:52:36,080

She won't survive it.

1321  
00:52:36,080 --> 00:52:37,200  
They were very close.

1322  
00:52:37,200 --> 00:52:38,980  
They had this bond.

1323  
00:52:38,980 --> 00:52:43,580  
And he went with his  
religious articles with him.

1324  
00:52:43,580 --> 00:52:46,400  
And he walked, my mother  
said, by foot, or hitched.

1325  
00:52:46,400 --> 00:52:47,390  
Or I don't know.

1326  
00:52:47,390 --> 00:52:49,010  
I don't know how she explained.

1327  
00:52:49,010 --> 00:52:51,680  
But he came with his  
clothes tattered and things.

1328  
00:52:51,680 --> 00:52:54,590  
And he was beaten along  
the way, and they--

1329  
00:52:54,590 --> 00:52:58,040  
all kinds of-- and without  
shoes, till he made it home.

1330  
00:52:58,040 --> 00:52:59,900  
And he did see the mother.

1331  
00:52:59,900 --> 00:53:04,288  
But then my mother says, if he  
would have just gone to China,

1332  
00:53:04,288 --> 00:53:05,330  
he would have been alive.

1333  
00:53:05,330 --> 00:53:06,980  
What was he thinking?

1334  
00:53:06,980 --> 00:53:09,440  
And my mother-- he  
wanted to see his mother.

1335  
00:53:09,440 --> 00:53:12,890  
He felt very much she wanted--

1336  
00:53:12,890 --> 00:53:15,830  
my mother says that  
her mother used to say,

1337  
00:53:15,830 --> 00:53:18,743  
either we all survive,  
or we all die.

1338  
00:53:18,743 --> 00:53:20,160  
But if anyone  
survives, it's going

1339  
00:53:20,160 --> 00:53:22,250  
to be terrible for anybody.

1340  
00:53:22,250 --> 00:53:25,760  
So that's how sensitive  
her feelings of that pain--

1341  
00:53:25,760 --> 00:53:29,540  
why should somebody-- why  
should one survive and not

1342  
00:53:29,540 --> 00:53:30,680  
have everyone else?

1343  
00:53:30,680 --> 00:53:31,400  
They were close.

1344  
00:53:31,400 --> 00:53:32,525  
They always had each other.



1345  
00:53:32,525 --> 00:53:34,010  
There was a bond.

1346  
00:53:34,010 --> 00:53:36,890  
You have them in your  
families and that.

1347  
00:53:36,890 --> 00:53:41,990  
And then he came, and my mother  
saw him at that same bahnhof.

1348  
00:53:41,990 --> 00:53:45,770  
Because Chelm, from that area,  
that was a route to Sobibor.

1349  
00:53:45,770 --> 00:53:47,450  
That was in that  
route, the bahnhof.

1350  
00:53:47,450 --> 00:53:49,790  
I guess that was from  
my father's village.

1351  
00:53:49,790 --> 00:53:52,160  
It was the collecting area.

1352  
00:53:52,160 --> 00:53:55,670  
And as a matter of fact,  
she did see him there once.

1353  
00:53:55,670 --> 00:54:00,280  
And she tells me always, she saw  
him looking at her longingly.

1354  
00:54:00,280 --> 00:54:03,920  
And she couldn't do anything  
because my mother says--

1355  
00:54:03,920 --> 00:54:05,647  
like she told you,  
dogs and guns.

1356

00:54:05,647 --> 00:54:07,230

Everything-- you  
couldn't go anywhere,

1357

00:54:07,230 --> 00:54:09,313

couldn't go to the bathroom,  
couldn't do anything.

1358

00:54:09,313 --> 00:54:10,580

There was no bathroom.

1359

00:54:10,580 --> 00:54:11,240

They had guns.

1360

00:54:11,240 --> 00:54:12,710

You couldn't step out of line.

1361

00:54:12,710 --> 00:54:16,430

Anything that looked-- of  
a wince or a look, a wink,

1362

00:54:16,430 --> 00:54:17,040

they shot you.

1363

00:54:17,040 --> 00:54:18,290

There was no-- they were shot.

1364

00:54:18,290 --> 00:54:20,360

People were shot for  
anything-- asking for--

1365

00:54:20,360 --> 00:54:23,120

stretching out your hand, or  
getting another piece of bread,

1366

00:54:23,120 --> 00:54:23,870

or anything.

1367

00:54:23,870 --> 00:54:25,530

They shot you on the spot.

1368

00:54:25,530 --> 00:54:29,630

That was their fear  
tactic, to instill a fear

1369

00:54:29,630 --> 00:54:32,010

that you're going to obey.

1370

00:54:32,010 --> 00:54:33,740

They had the guns.

1371

00:54:33,740 --> 00:54:38,000

They had the ammunition  
to a bunch of weaklings--

1372

00:54:38,000 --> 00:54:41,090

women, small children, men.

1373

00:54:41,090 --> 00:54:44,390

Usually, the people that  
were studying or this, they

1374

00:54:44,390 --> 00:54:47,450

weren't raised to be fighters  
and killers and murderers.

1375

00:54:47,450 --> 00:54:50,930

So my mother's question  
is, how are they heroes?

1376

00:54:50,930 --> 00:54:53,030

Because they came with  
a gun over their head?

1377

00:54:53,030 --> 00:54:55,262

So she would see my brother,  
and he wanted something.

1378

00:54:55,262 --> 00:54:56,720

Till today, she  
doesn't know what--

1379

00:54:56,720 --> 00:54:58,100

she couldn't do anything.

1380  
00:54:58,100 --> 00:54:59,390  
What could she do?

1381  
00:54:59,390 --> 00:55:05,230  
And then she got word that they  
took him out from the bahnhof,

1382  
00:55:05,230 --> 00:55:07,415  
they told you, to  
a nearby gravesite.

1383  
00:55:07,415 --> 00:55:08,830  
And he was shot.

1384  
00:55:08,830 --> 00:55:11,120  
They didn't even take  
them to the crematoriums.

1385  
00:55:11,120 --> 00:55:12,250  
They shot them outside.

1386  
00:55:12,250 --> 00:55:14,370  
They couldn't get  
rid of the people.

1387  
00:55:14,370 --> 00:55:15,610  
And how does she know that?

1388  
00:55:15,610 --> 00:55:21,070  
Because my father's  
brothers, one of their jobs,

1389  
00:55:21,070 --> 00:55:22,660  
other than the  
cement or whatnot,

1390  
00:55:22,660 --> 00:55:25,750  
was they buried the  
people that they shot.

1391  
00:55:25,750 --> 00:55:28,330

They took the Jewish  
people to throw dirt

1392  
00:55:28,330 --> 00:55:31,420  
over the people they  
shot in the mass grave.

1393  
00:55:31,420 --> 00:55:36,580  
So your uncles, whom you knew,  
were doing this kind of work.

1394  
00:55:36,580 --> 00:55:40,540  
And it could be that in  
Boston, after the war, when

1395  
00:55:40,540 --> 00:55:42,460  
they would come  
over to your house,

1396  
00:55:42,460 --> 00:55:44,110  
and they would  
talk about things?

1397  
00:55:44,110 --> 00:55:45,230  
I don't know.

1398  
00:55:45,230 --> 00:55:46,210  
I really don't.

1399  
00:55:46,210 --> 00:55:46,960  
I wasn't there.

1400  
00:55:46,960 --> 00:55:47,560  
I didn't hear.

1401  
00:55:47,560 --> 00:55:50,650  
But I don't think they spoke  
about it because my cousins

1402  
00:55:50,650 --> 00:55:51,730  
don't know much, either.

1403

00:55:51,730 --> 00:55:55,150  
I don't think it was spoken.

1404  
00:55:55,150 --> 00:55:57,730  
So how did you find out  
all that you found out?

1405  
00:55:57,730 --> 00:56:01,570  
When my father was in bed for  
12 years with that bad arth--

1406  
00:56:01,570 --> 00:56:03,520  
here in this  
building, from, let's

1407  
00:56:03,520 --> 00:56:09,440  
say-- he was about, let's say,  
from 75 till 90 years old.

1408  
00:56:09,440 --> 00:56:11,080  
Or 77.

1409  
00:56:11,080 --> 00:56:12,490  
So that would have been--

1410  
00:56:12,490 --> 00:56:16,390  
if he was born around  
1900, that would have been

1411  
00:56:16,390 --> 00:56:20,090  
from the late 1970s until 1990.

1412  
00:56:20,090 --> 00:56:20,590  
Right.

1413  
00:56:20,590 --> 00:56:22,504  
He died in 19--

1414  
00:56:22,504 --> 00:56:23,590  
wait a second.

1415  
00:56:23,590 --> 00:56:28,440

He died 1997.

1416  
00:56:28,440 --> 00:56:31,890  
So he died at age 97?

1417  
00:56:31,890 --> 00:56:36,980  
It was 1997 that he died, right?

1418  
00:56:36,980 --> 00:56:38,600  
So we have 1900.

1419  
00:56:38,600 --> 00:56:40,820  
Was he 97?

1420  
00:56:40,820 --> 00:56:42,620  
95?

1421  
00:56:42,620 --> 00:56:44,570  
Maybe he was 95 years old--

1422  
00:56:44,570 --> 00:56:45,710  
1902.

1423  
00:56:45,710 --> 00:56:48,320  
I don't know the birthday.

1424  
00:56:48,320 --> 00:56:50,300  
He did die in 1997.

1425  
00:56:50,300 --> 00:56:51,810  
That I know.

1426  
00:56:51,810 --> 00:56:54,740  
And so in those 12  
years before his death,

1427  
00:56:54,740 --> 00:56:55,940  
that's when he talked?

1428  
00:56:55,940 --> 00:56:57,980  
well that's where I

heard most of the stories

1429  
00:56:57,980 --> 00:57:00,170  
because I used to  
live out of town.

1430  
00:57:00,170 --> 00:57:03,410  
But my siblings would make--  
but they never spoke about it.

1431  
00:57:03,410 --> 00:57:04,460  
My mother never spoke.

1432  
00:57:04,460 --> 00:57:07,370  
Again, my father spoke  
about the positive things.

1433  
00:57:07,370 --> 00:57:10,520  
You asked what was  
my mother like?

1434  
00:57:10,520 --> 00:57:11,120  
Fearful?

1435  
00:57:11,120 --> 00:57:13,050  
What was my father's  
personality?

1436  
00:57:13,050 --> 00:57:15,470  
My father was optimistic  
and positive, like the man,

1437  
00:57:15,470 --> 00:57:16,430  
Mr. Friedman.

1438  
00:57:16,430 --> 00:57:18,420  
They didn't want to talk  
in the past anymore.

1439  
00:57:18,420 --> 00:57:19,100  
They didn't want  
to know about it.



1440  
00:57:19,100 --> 00:57:20,000  
It was done.

1441  
00:57:20,000 --> 00:57:21,500  
They would talk  
about the positive--

1442  
00:57:21,500 --> 00:57:24,230  
that they saved themselves,  
that God helped them,

1443  
00:57:24,230 --> 00:57:27,410  
that they had messengers  
that saved them,

1444  
00:57:27,410 --> 00:57:33,530  
that they were spared, and  
that they were able to survive.

1445  
00:57:33,530 --> 00:57:37,730  
Whereas my mother was, as a  
woman, very tearful and upset.

1446  
00:57:37,730 --> 00:57:40,400  
But I never heard her  
speak of the gory details

1447  
00:57:40,400 --> 00:57:42,230  
also until of late.

1448  
00:57:42,230 --> 00:57:44,180  
However, she may have  
spoken to my sister.

1449  
00:57:44,180 --> 00:57:45,600  
She probably did.

1450  
00:57:45,600 --> 00:57:47,600  
She would speak about her  
mother and her sister.

1451  
00:57:47,600 --> 00:57:51,740

She gave her the ring, and  
she had a beautiful picture.

1452  
00:57:51,740 --> 00:57:53,510  
They were running, and  
she left the blouse

1453  
00:57:53,510 --> 00:57:55,070  
with the only picture she had.

1454  
00:57:55,070 --> 00:57:58,005  
She sewed in a  
picture of her family.

1455  
00:57:58,005 --> 00:57:58,630  
But that's all.

1456  
00:57:58,630 --> 00:58:01,250  
I don't know if they spoke  
at those Saturday night--

1457  
00:58:01,250 --> 00:58:02,030  
I don't know.

1458  
00:58:02,030 --> 00:58:03,830  
Because my grandmother, also--

1459  
00:58:03,830 --> 00:58:06,050  
she lived-- I even  
slept in her room

1460  
00:58:06,050 --> 00:58:07,940  
so that she shouldn't  
sleep alone.

1461  
00:58:07,940 --> 00:58:09,030  
Very strong.

1462  
00:58:09,030 --> 00:58:11,750  
They didn't-- unless I  
didn't know about it.

1463

00:58:11,750 --> 00:58:13,700  
The pain was definitely there.

1464  
00:58:13,700 --> 00:58:14,450  
You could feel it?

1465  
00:58:14,450 --> 00:58:15,860  
Yeah, yeah.

1466  
00:58:15,860 --> 00:58:16,850  
How would you feel it?

1467  
00:58:16,850 --> 00:58:18,330  
How would it express itself?

1468  
00:58:18,330 --> 00:58:21,800  
Because one of my  
father's brothers

1469  
00:58:21,800 --> 00:58:24,770  
was very verbal  
and very sensitive.

1470  
00:58:24,770 --> 00:58:26,540  
He was forced to remember.

1471  
00:58:26,540 --> 00:58:29,525  
He didn't let any event  
go by without remembering.

1472  
00:58:29,525 --> 00:58:31,010  
You know zachor?

1473  
00:58:31,010 --> 00:58:32,150  
They have the pin--

1474  
00:58:32,150 --> 00:58:34,340  
remember, never forget.

1475  
00:58:34,340 --> 00:58:35,270  
Remember.

1476

00:58:35,270 --> 00:58:38,120

So he constantly drilled you.

1477

00:58:38,120 --> 00:58:40,250

If you made a wedding  
or a bar mitzvah,

1478

00:58:40,250 --> 00:58:43,730

whatever event you had,  
you had to remember

1479

00:58:43,730 --> 00:58:45,230

what we went through.

1480

00:58:45,230 --> 00:58:48,740

And he was-- but again,  
I didn't hear it so much

1481

00:58:48,740 --> 00:58:50,310

in the conversations.

1482

00:58:50,310 --> 00:58:53,600

So it was remember that  
this happened, but not

1483

00:58:53,600 --> 00:58:55,310

remember in the detail?

1484

00:58:55,310 --> 00:58:57,770

No.

1485

00:58:57,770 --> 00:58:59,720

They probably  
spared the children.

1486

00:58:59,720 --> 00:59:03,003

They probably wouldn't  
want to tell the children.

1487

00:59:03,003 --> 00:59:04,670

And they probably  
couldn't verbalize it.

1488  
00:59:04,670 --> 00:59:08,090  
It's very hard to verb-- you  
see, they have to bury it,

1489  
00:59:08,090 --> 00:59:09,230  
like this man we met.

1490  
00:59:09,230 --> 00:59:10,190  
He had to bury it.

1491  
00:59:10,190 --> 00:59:14,060  
He's not going to now unbury  
it because it's closed.

1492  
00:59:14,060 --> 00:59:16,440  
Your mother never gave  
an interview to anybody?

1493  
00:59:16,440 --> 00:59:17,740  
No.

1494  
00:59:17,740 --> 00:59:23,240  
And we tried now, today,  
and she says, I can't.

1495  
00:59:23,240 --> 00:59:24,680  
She'll speak freeform.

1496  
00:59:24,680 --> 00:59:25,307  
You know?

1497  
00:59:25,307 --> 00:59:27,140  
That's why I have that  
little tape recorder,

1498  
00:59:27,140 --> 00:59:29,570  
because I'll never know at  
what moment she'll tell me

1499  
00:59:29,570 --> 00:59:32,750  
a detail, if she remembers.

1500  
00:59:32,750 --> 00:59:35,810  
Her uncle, who was a  
very tall, big man,

1501  
00:59:35,810 --> 00:59:39,530  
who had a brewery, a  
wine brewery, big--

1502  
00:59:39,530 --> 00:59:42,300  
she said like 6 foot 4, big man.

1503  
00:59:42,300 --> 00:59:46,220  
And she remembers how the Nazis  
came in and hit him on the head

1504  
00:59:46,220 --> 00:59:47,150  
and killed him.

1505  
00:59:47,150 --> 00:59:49,190  
She remembers all these things.

1506  
00:59:49,190 --> 00:59:52,520  
So they must've had some  
sort of way to survive.

1507  
00:59:52,520 --> 00:59:54,950  
Like my brother says,  
Ma is a survivor.

1508  
00:59:54,950 --> 00:59:56,210  
Don't you get it?

1509  
00:59:56,210 --> 00:59:58,250  
Because she's not well.

1510  
00:59:58,250 --> 01:00:02,450  
And she knows how to fend for  
herself, to make sure she has.

1511  
01:00:02,450 --> 01:00:04,950  
So he says, you know,

mom's a survivor.

1512  
01:00:04,950 --> 01:00:06,200  
What that means, I don't know.

1513  
01:00:06,200 --> 01:00:08,600  
But they have to  
know how to survive--

1514  
01:00:08,600 --> 01:00:11,360  
to get the help they  
need when they need it.

1515  
01:00:11,360 --> 01:00:13,620  
But she's been  
through everything.

1516  
01:00:13,620 --> 01:00:14,120  
Everything.

1517  
01:00:14,120 --> 01:00:18,130  
She's been-- what more could  
there be of, like she said,

1518  
01:00:18,130 --> 01:00:21,800  
dogs and being shot and  
seeing everyone killed?

1519  
01:00:21,800 --> 01:00:24,230  
These are words I  
say very lightly.

1520  
01:00:24,230 --> 01:00:28,490  
But for a person to bring that  
up and to say it and to just--

1521  
01:00:28,490 --> 01:00:30,792  
what did I just say?

1522  
01:00:30,792 --> 01:00:32,250  
Think of her mother  
and her father.

1523

01:00:32,250 --> 01:00:33,950

She loved her mother  
and her father.

1524

01:00:33,950 --> 01:00:36,050

Now, at this age--

1525

01:00:36,050 --> 01:00:39,410

up to two, three years ago,  
she was much more verbal.

1526

01:00:39,410 --> 01:00:42,080

Why did they do that? she  
would say to the caretakers.

1527

01:00:42,080 --> 01:00:44,180

These caretakers never  
heard of the Holocaust.

1528

01:00:44,180 --> 01:00:45,500

They're Jamaican.

1529

01:00:45,500 --> 01:00:48,290

They took research to hear  
about it because why would they

1530

01:00:48,290 --> 01:00:49,910

kill my mother and father?

1531

01:00:49,910 --> 01:00:53,060

Why would you take a million  
children and burn them?

1532

01:00:53,060 --> 01:00:55,010

These are questions  
they all have.

1533

01:00:55,010 --> 01:00:56,820

And they don't want  
to bring it up anymore

1534

01:00:56,820 --> 01:00:58,890



because there's no answers.

1535  
01:00:58,890 --> 01:00:59,900  
And the pain is there.

1536  
01:00:59,900 --> 01:01:01,160  
The pain is there.

1537  
01:01:01,160 --> 01:01:03,290  
And the suffering is there.

1538  
01:01:03,290 --> 01:01:04,190  
You still see it.

1539  
01:01:04,190 --> 01:01:05,300  
You still feel it.

1540  
01:01:05,300 --> 01:01:06,590  
Yeah, sure.

1541  
01:01:06,590 --> 01:01:07,240  
In them.

1542  
01:01:07,240 --> 01:01:10,070  
Yeah, sure, a lot of pain,  
a lot of pain, and all that.

1543  
01:01:10,070 --> 01:01:11,760  
You can have a  
whole conversation,

1544  
01:01:11,760 --> 01:01:12,710  
everything going well.

1545  
01:01:12,710 --> 01:01:13,850  
Look how lucky I am.

1546  
01:01:13,850 --> 01:01:14,780  
And I did this.

1547  
01:01:14,780 --> 01:01:15,720

God is so good.

1548  
01:01:15,720 --> 01:01:17,370  
And as religious  
people, we pray.

1549  
01:01:17,370 --> 01:01:18,650  
And this-- look at this.

1550  
01:01:18,650 --> 01:01:20,600  
God helped us, and we did this.

1551  
01:01:20,600 --> 01:01:23,690  
And then she goes, but  
where was God in the war?

1552  
01:01:23,690 --> 01:01:25,700  
Couldn't bomb--  
like this man just

1553  
01:01:25,700 --> 01:01:28,100  
said, couldn't bomb  
those railroad tracks?

1554  
01:01:28,100 --> 01:01:29,630  
Couldn't you bomb this?

1555  
01:01:29,630 --> 01:01:31,810  
Couldn't you blow  
up the crematorium?

1556  
01:01:31,810 --> 01:01:35,127  
It didn't take much for  
America to wake up and do it.

1557  
01:01:35,127 --> 01:01:36,710  
Many people didn't  
believe it, or they

1558  
01:01:36,710 --> 01:01:38,060  
didn't want to believe it.

1559

01:01:38,060 --> 01:01:40,010  
That's what this  
man we met was upset

1560  
01:01:40,010 --> 01:01:41,750  
about because he  
said it's political,

1561  
01:01:41,750 --> 01:01:44,800  
at the cost of 6 million lives.

1562  
01:01:44,800 --> 01:01:48,950

1563  
01:01:48,950 --> 01:01:51,350  
How has this become  
part of your life,

1564  
01:01:51,350 --> 01:01:54,590  
and how has it shaped you?

1565  
01:01:54,590 --> 01:01:58,730  
In every which way  
because we now realize

1566  
01:01:58,730 --> 01:02:00,830  
that we have our own group.

1567  
01:02:00,830 --> 01:02:03,320  
It's called Survivors  
of Survivors.

1568  
01:02:03,320 --> 01:02:06,280  
And we are now an  
entity in and of itself.

1569  
01:02:06,280 --> 01:02:09,260  
Like an organization  
that is formed,

1570  
01:02:09,260 --> 01:02:11,860  
that has bylaws, that is  
incorporated and everything?

1571  
01:02:11,860 --> 01:02:15,800  
Well, not to such an extent,  
but it definitely could be.

1572  
01:02:15,800 --> 01:02:17,000  
We all suffer.

1573  
01:02:17,000 --> 01:02:20,150  
We all suffer because  
being a survivor

1574  
01:02:20,150 --> 01:02:22,050  
has their things to deal with.

1575  
01:02:22,050 --> 01:02:24,530  
Now, how does a  
child of a survivor--

1576  
01:02:24,530 --> 01:02:28,310  
how do we deal when we see  
parents in a moment of despair,

1577  
01:02:28,310 --> 01:02:30,020  
sadness, crying?

1578  
01:02:30,020 --> 01:02:32,180  
How do we deal with  
someone asking you,

1579  
01:02:32,180 --> 01:02:33,590  
they killed my  
mother and father.

1580  
01:02:33,590 --> 01:02:35,180  
They shot my brother.

1581  
01:02:35,180 --> 01:02:36,140  
They killed my sister.

1582  
01:02:36,140 --> 01:02:38,290  
We didn't have any food.

1583  
01:02:38,290 --> 01:02:41,390  
And we pick up all these  
things-- not to be wasteful,

1584  
01:02:41,390 --> 01:02:43,010  
not to throw food away.

1585  
01:02:43,010 --> 01:02:44,620  
My mother has never--

1586  
01:02:44,620 --> 01:02:45,830  
and I say never--

1587  
01:02:45,830 --> 01:02:46,790  
thrown out food.

1588  
01:02:46,790 --> 01:02:48,230  
And I mean never.

1589  
01:02:48,230 --> 01:02:53,570  
In America, that's-- whatever we  
left over landed on her plate.

1590  
01:02:53,570 --> 01:02:56,570  
And there was no such thing  
as throwing away food.

1591  
01:02:56,570 --> 01:02:59,850  
And she would say,  
what, are you kidding?

1592  
01:02:59,850 --> 01:03:01,670  
What I would do for a potato.

1593  
01:03:01,670 --> 01:03:04,175  
Until today, a potato  
was her main food.

1594  
01:03:04,175 --> 01:03:06,980  
If you would give her a baked  
potato, it is in heaven.

1595  
01:03:06,980 --> 01:03:09,480  
These are things that  
you grow up, again, just

1596  
01:03:09,480 --> 01:03:10,820  
through osmosis.

1597  
01:03:10,820 --> 01:03:12,710  
And you ask now, how  
does it affect us?

1598  
01:03:12,710 --> 01:03:15,320  
It affects us because  
now, looking back,

1599  
01:03:15,320 --> 01:03:17,300  
you see certain behaviors.

1600  
01:03:17,300 --> 01:03:20,840  
And you see people now  
that are complaining

1601  
01:03:20,840 --> 01:03:22,400  
or upset about all  
kinds of things.

1602  
01:03:22,400 --> 01:03:23,750  
They lost their job.

1603  
01:03:23,750 --> 01:03:25,450  
They this, they that.

1604  
01:03:25,450 --> 01:03:28,430  
And I'm saying to myself,  
hello, that's what

1605  
01:03:28,430 --> 01:03:29,660  
you're depressed about?

1606  
01:03:29,660 --> 01:03:33,435  
I couldn't-- when I went

to college at 18 or 19,

1607

01:03:33,435 --> 01:03:35,060

there was a very--  
among the Americans,

1608

01:03:35,060 --> 01:03:36,550

they were very depressed.

1609

01:03:36,550 --> 01:03:37,300

They're not there.

1610

01:03:37,300 --> 01:03:38,592

They couldn't find their shoes.

1611

01:03:38,592 --> 01:03:39,820

They didn't get their--

1612

01:03:39,820 --> 01:03:43,520

and they really get into a  
clamor about being upset.

1613

01:03:43,520 --> 01:03:47,630

Depressed-- used to have people  
killed and murdered and burned.

1614

01:03:47,630 --> 01:03:50,690

Why are you using the word  
"depressed" over this?

1615

01:03:50,690 --> 01:03:55,566

Even if you-- whatever  
it is, you know?

1616

01:03:55,566 --> 01:03:57,560

I have friends that--

1617

01:03:57,560 --> 01:04:02,770

very close with-- whatever it  
is, whatever the loss may be,

1618

01:04:02,770 --> 01:04:05,770

it's not someone murdering  
their whole family.

1619  
01:04:05,770 --> 01:04:07,540  
Survivors of survivors--

1620  
01:04:07,540 --> 01:04:11,530  
I only have one or two friends,  
and we can talk for hours

1621  
01:04:11,530 --> 01:04:14,380  
because we have an unspoken  
language between us

1622  
01:04:14,380 --> 01:04:17,050  
that we now understand  
how I'm different

1623  
01:04:17,050 --> 01:04:18,610  
than my American friends.

1624  
01:04:18,610 --> 01:04:21,070  
American friends were  
raised with bowling,

1625  
01:04:21,070 --> 01:04:23,290  
roller skates, pizza parties.

1626  
01:04:23,290 --> 01:04:25,570  
They went on vacations  
with the parents.

1627  
01:04:25,570 --> 01:04:32,210  
The parents were very involved  
with their education and going.

1628  
01:04:32,210 --> 01:04:34,270  
We weren't like that.

1629  
01:04:34,270 --> 01:04:37,090  
Our parents held on  
to us for dear life.



1630

01:04:37,090 --> 01:04:40,210

We were very much sheltered,  
like don't let anything happen.

1631

01:04:40,210 --> 01:04:41,050

Call me.

1632

01:04:41,050 --> 01:04:43,810

Where are you?

1633

01:04:43,810 --> 01:04:45,440

My father would  
always make sure--

1634

01:04:45,440 --> 01:04:49,030

I don't want to date myself,  
but we had dimes to call home.

1635

01:04:49,030 --> 01:04:49,630

Just call.

1636

01:04:49,630 --> 01:04:51,297

I don't care when you  
come, but call me.

1637

01:04:51,297 --> 01:04:54,280

We had a five-minute leeway  
till I made that call.

1638

01:04:54,280 --> 01:04:56,590

And if you said you were  
coming 9:00, by 9:04,

1639

01:04:56,590 --> 01:04:57,860

I want to hear from you.

1640

01:04:57,860 --> 01:04:59,560

It was that fear.

1641

01:04:59,560 --> 01:05:01,450

Don't take rides with strangers.

1642

01:05:01,450 --> 01:05:03,310

Don't go out at night.

1643

01:05:03,310 --> 01:05:05,630

Be careful who  
you're talking to.

1644

01:05:05,630 --> 01:05:08,417

But it wasn't in a  
bad way because we

1645

01:05:08,417 --> 01:05:09,500

didn't know what it meant.

1646

01:05:09,500 --> 01:05:10,750

He cares for us.

1647

01:05:10,750 --> 01:05:13,360

My American friends  
didn't have that.

1648

01:05:13,360 --> 01:05:17,170

They could come  
whenever they wanted to.

1649

01:05:17,170 --> 01:05:18,250

I said, what?

1650

01:05:18,250 --> 01:05:20,380

There was no worry  
of the parents.

1651

01:05:20,380 --> 01:05:21,130

Are you all right?

1652

01:05:21,130 --> 01:05:22,090

Are you OK?

1653

01:05:22,090 --> 01:05:25,870

And my friends-- my friends,  
survivors' survivors,

1654

01:05:25,870 --> 01:05:26,915  
you look at the children.

1655

01:05:26,915 --> 01:05:27,415  
Are you OK?

1656

01:05:27,415 --> 01:05:28,360  
Are you all right?

1657

01:05:28,360 --> 01:05:31,460  
The American system  
is different.

1658

01:05:31,460 --> 01:05:34,690  
It's a very different.

1659

01:05:34,690 --> 01:05:36,740  
Did you ever want  
to run away from it?

1660

01:05:36,740 --> 01:05:37,240  
No.

1661

01:05:37,240 --> 01:05:40,960  
Thank God, I--  
thank God I didn't.

1662

01:05:40,960 --> 01:05:44,020  
Others may have.

1663

01:05:44,020 --> 01:05:47,100  
See, when you--  
you have to know,

1664

01:05:47,100 --> 01:05:50,250  
I wasn't exposed  
to the brutal part.

1665

01:05:50,250 --> 01:05:53,390  
By the time-- I  
came along fourth.

1666

01:05:53,390 --> 01:05:54,780

And I was, let's say--

1667

01:05:54,780 --> 01:05:55,890

The fourth child.

1668

01:05:55,890 --> 01:05:57,240

The fourth child.

1669

01:05:57,240 --> 01:06:02,085

So possibly my mother  
already vented it all.

1670

01:06:02,085 --> 01:06:05,430

I think my two older  
siblings got the brunt of it,

1671

01:06:05,430 --> 01:06:07,980

meaning that they  
were still raw--

1672

01:06:07,980 --> 01:06:09,840

that my parents were still raw.

1673

01:06:09,840 --> 01:06:11,053

They were still immigrants.

1674

01:06:11,053 --> 01:06:11,720

They were green.

1675

01:06:11,720 --> 01:06:12,803

They didn't speak English.

1676

01:06:12,803 --> 01:06:14,660

They didn't know anything.

1677

01:06:14,660 --> 01:06:16,020

And it was very--

1678

01:06:16,020 --> 01:06:19,050

but yet my mother was always

there for us, cooking,

1679

01:06:19,050 --> 01:06:21,690

cleaning, always.

1680

01:06:21,690 --> 01:06:24,720

I never saw my mother  
crying or upset.

1681

01:06:24,720 --> 01:06:27,210

Always worked very hard.

1682

01:06:27,210 --> 01:06:30,120

I think I may have heard  
little things-- that that

1683

01:06:30,120 --> 01:06:33,540

was the therapy, the working  
hard till you wear yourself

1684

01:06:33,540 --> 01:06:34,560

out.

1685

01:06:34,560 --> 01:06:36,020

Because she worked very hard.

1686

01:06:36,020 --> 01:06:41,400

She always managed to  
be a very hard worker.

1687

01:06:41,400 --> 01:06:42,900

And what about  
your own children?

1688

01:06:42,900 --> 01:06:45,810

1689

01:06:45,810 --> 01:06:48,390

How has this been  
transmitted to them?

1690

01:06:48,390 --> 01:06:51,690

It probably has, because  
as I'm getting older,

1691  
01:06:51,690 --> 01:06:56,050  
and I deal with the brutalities,  
and as a mother, I'm thinking,

1692  
01:06:56,050 --> 01:06:57,110  
wow.

1693  
01:06:57,110 --> 01:06:58,170  
My mother and father--

1694  
01:06:58,170 --> 01:06:59,760  
think about it.

1695  
01:06:59,760 --> 01:07:02,010  
You say, did you ever  
want to run away from it?

1696  
01:07:02,010 --> 01:07:04,680  
Did you ever have a problem with  
your mother and your father?

1697  
01:07:04,680 --> 01:07:06,540  
And you think to  
yourself, how are you

1698  
01:07:06,540 --> 01:07:11,130  
going to be angry at parents  
who never had a childhood?

1699  
01:07:11,130 --> 01:07:12,960  
How can my mother  
relate to a teenager

1700  
01:07:12,960 --> 01:07:14,390  
if she was never a teenager?

1701  
01:07:14,390 --> 01:07:17,275  
So a teenager is a very  
rebellious stage in life.

1702  
01:07:17,275 --> 01:07:18,150  
You hate your mother.

1703  
01:07:18,150 --> 01:07:19,470  
You hate your father.

1704  
01:07:19,470 --> 01:07:21,780  
My parents were older than us.

1705  
01:07:21,780 --> 01:07:24,750  
We became caretakers  
all our life.

1706  
01:07:24,750 --> 01:07:27,900  
Like you said, you  
calculated my father's age.

1707  
01:07:27,900 --> 01:07:30,750  
So he started not being  
well-- doctors appointments.

1708  
01:07:30,750 --> 01:07:33,180  
My sisters, they lived here--

1709  
01:07:33,180 --> 01:07:34,860  
always going to the  
doctors with them.

1710  
01:07:34,860 --> 01:07:36,810  
Always taking care of them.

1711  
01:07:36,810 --> 01:07:38,790  
How do you not pity them?

1712  
01:07:38,790 --> 01:07:41,780  
You can't have that  
relationship, like to--

1713  
01:07:41,780 --> 01:07:43,690  
I hate my father,  
I hate my mother.

1714

01:07:43,690 --> 01:07:47,060

It didn't happen  
because you were so--

1715

01:07:47,060 --> 01:07:49,800

they were so fragile  
in your hands.

1716

01:07:49,800 --> 01:07:52,860

You looked at them like, wow,  
how did you survive that?

1717

01:07:52,860 --> 01:07:56,145

Look what we go through  
raise children financially

1718

01:07:56,145 --> 01:07:57,180

and to work.

1719

01:07:57,180 --> 01:08:00,180

How do you get married and  
have children after such a war?

1720

01:08:00,180 --> 01:08:02,520

How can you have  
any frame of mind

1721

01:08:02,520 --> 01:08:05,340

to do anything with  
the daily struggles?

1722

01:08:05,340 --> 01:08:07,170

To wash them, to clean them?

1723

01:08:07,170 --> 01:08:11,550

You're broken in heart,  
broken in spirit, devastated.

1724

01:08:11,550 --> 01:08:12,580

You lost everyone.

1725

01:08:12,580 --> 01:08:13,530



My mother-- nobody.

1726

01:08:13,530 --> 01:08:16,410

And when I say nobody,  
I mean nobody--

1727

01:08:16,410 --> 01:08:19,229

not an uncle, not an aunt,  
not a sister, not a--

1728

01:08:19,229 --> 01:08:20,189

nobody.

1729

01:08:20,189 --> 01:08:23,796

All of a sudden, this  
older man had mercy on her.

1730

01:08:23,796 --> 01:08:27,220

And my father was very  
protective of her.

1731

01:08:27,220 --> 01:08:28,740

That's the other joke--

1732

01:08:28,740 --> 01:08:30,000

very.

1733

01:08:30,000 --> 01:08:32,580

He never let anyone look at her.

1734

01:08:32,580 --> 01:08:34,643

She was very pretty.

1735

01:08:34,643 --> 01:08:36,060

We'll see her  
picture in a minute.

1736

01:08:36,060 --> 01:08:37,290

She was very pretty.

1737

01:08:37,290 --> 01:08:39,060

And not-- it wasn't

as much as the pretty.

1738  
01:08:39,060 --> 01:08:40,240  
I guess young.

1739  
01:08:40,240 --> 01:08:41,819  
So my father used  
to make a joke.

1740  
01:08:41,819 --> 01:08:43,069  
Like when you have--

1741  
01:08:43,069 --> 01:08:44,010  
how does the joke go?

1742  
01:08:44,010 --> 01:08:46,149  
When you have-- in  
Europe was horses.

1743  
01:08:46,149 --> 01:08:47,790  
He worked with horses.

1744  
01:08:47,790 --> 01:08:52,087  
When you have good horses,  
you don't sleep at night

1745  
01:08:52,087 --> 01:08:54,420  
because you think people are  
going to steal your horses.

1746  
01:08:54,420 --> 01:08:56,628  
And when you have a pretty  
wife, you know, every day,

1747  
01:08:56,628 --> 01:08:57,300  
where's my wife?

1748  
01:08:57,300 --> 01:09:01,109  
It was a joke, but the thing  
was, she was very pretty.

1749  
01:09:01,109 --> 01:09:05,819

And he really cherished  
her, took care of her.

1750  
01:09:05,819 --> 01:09:08,910  
And like she told you,  
he died in her hands.

1751  
01:09:08,910 --> 01:09:12,330  
She took care of him in  
bed, 12 years straight--

1752  
01:09:12,330 --> 01:09:14,399  
13, 14 years.

1753  
01:09:14,399 --> 01:09:18,390  
Well, one thing that  
comes through very clearly

1754  
01:09:18,390 --> 01:09:22,319  
in your telling is  
the great deal of love

1755  
01:09:22,319 --> 01:09:24,590  
that there is between  
the generations.

1756  
01:09:24,590 --> 01:09:28,439  
It really-- in the way that you  
describe what happened to them

1757  
01:09:28,439 --> 01:09:33,120  
and how you grew up.

1758  
01:09:33,120 --> 01:09:37,740  
But I also want to defend that  
rebellious teenager, whoever

1759  
01:09:37,740 --> 01:09:39,960  
that rebellious teenager is.

1760  
01:09:39,960 --> 01:09:42,660  
They have a right to be  
rebellious because that's

1761  
01:09:42,660 --> 01:09:43,859  
a normal stage of life.

1762  
01:09:43,859 --> 01:09:45,370  
That's exactly it.

1763  
01:09:45,370 --> 01:09:48,270  
And they have a right to  
be able to go through it

1764  
01:09:48,270 --> 01:09:50,760  
and to be able to  
break away from parents

1765  
01:09:50,760 --> 01:09:54,710  
and see all the bad things  
about parents and all of that.

1766  
01:09:54,710 --> 01:09:55,890  
That's normal.

1767  
01:09:55,890 --> 01:09:57,720  
Right.

1768  
01:09:57,720 --> 01:10:00,180  
Did you feel guilt?

1769  
01:10:00,180 --> 01:10:03,330  
Or do you think that  
for second generation,

1770  
01:10:03,330 --> 01:10:06,570  
for the generations  
that are removed,

1771  
01:10:06,570 --> 01:10:09,350  
there is a feeling of  
guilt, where you're caught?

1772  
01:10:09,350 --> 01:10:11,610  
That you can't allow

yourself to feel

1773

01:10:11,610 --> 01:10:15,100  
that because they're so fragile  
and they went through so much?

1774

01:10:15,100 --> 01:10:18,060  
I would imagine  
many people have--

1775

01:10:18,060 --> 01:10:20,060  
I didn't have that experience.

1776

01:10:20,060 --> 01:10:21,700  
I'm not sure why.

1777

01:10:21,700 --> 01:10:25,300  
But even in my siblings,  
I can't say for sure

1778

01:10:25,300 --> 01:10:30,180  
because my siblings have  
done unbelievable things

1779

01:10:30,180 --> 01:10:31,230  
for my parents.

1780

01:10:31,230 --> 01:10:34,080  
But of course,  
there are people who

1781

01:10:34,080 --> 01:10:37,400  
rebelled about the hovering  
over-- didn't want that.

1782

01:10:37,400 --> 01:10:39,160  
It was very-- the  
parents would--

1783

01:10:39,160 --> 01:10:41,160  
you couldn't do anything.

1784

01:10:41,160 --> 01:10:42,400  
You really had to get away.

1785  
01:10:42,400 --> 01:10:45,810  
Sometimes, you had to leave  
home because it was too much.

1786  
01:10:45,810 --> 01:10:48,450  
They were afraid of losing their  
children in terms of something

1787  
01:10:48,450 --> 01:10:49,840  
should happen to them.

1788  
01:10:49,840 --> 01:10:52,890  
So there were people that  
did have to go away or did

1789  
01:10:52,890 --> 01:10:53,940  
had to leave.

1790  
01:10:53,940 --> 01:10:56,340  
I, myself, personally  
didn't want

1791  
01:10:56,340 --> 01:10:59,190  
to go away because I  
didn't want to miss them.

1792  
01:10:59,190 --> 01:11:01,712  
I felt, thank God I have them.

1793  
01:11:01,712 --> 01:11:03,420  
I didn't want anything  
to happen to them.

1794  
01:11:03,420 --> 01:11:04,740  
And why should they--

1795  
01:11:04,740 --> 01:11:08,590  
why should I create them  
to miss another person?

1796

01:11:08,590 --> 01:11:12,690

So you didn't feel that  
kind of claustrophobia?

1797

01:11:12,690 --> 01:11:13,860

No, I didn't.

1798

01:11:13,860 --> 01:11:14,890

I don't think I did.

1799

01:11:14,890 --> 01:11:16,740

I'm forgetting a little bit.

1800

01:11:16,740 --> 01:11:19,630

Now, as I mentioned,  
I live in New York,

1801

01:11:19,630 --> 01:11:21,090

and my mother's all alone.

1802

01:11:21,090 --> 01:11:21,930

Here in Miami?

1803

01:11:21,930 --> 01:11:23,250

Yes.

1804

01:11:23,250 --> 01:11:25,960

And then everyone tells  
me, you belong in New York.

1805

01:11:25,960 --> 01:11:28,170

I have, thank God,  
my family there.

1806

01:11:28,170 --> 01:11:30,030

But you saw what she looks like.

1807

01:11:30,030 --> 01:11:31,090

How do I leave her alone?

1808

01:11:31,090 --> 01:11:32,820

She can't handle a caretaker.

1809

01:11:32,820 --> 01:11:35,370

She can't-- she feels,  
I have no family.

1810

01:11:35,370 --> 01:11:37,980

So I tell people, my mom--  
you have to understand,

1811

01:11:37,980 --> 01:11:40,260

my mom is abandoned again.

1812

01:11:40,260 --> 01:11:41,880

She lost two children.

1813

01:11:41,880 --> 01:11:42,960

She has nobody.

1814

01:11:42,960 --> 01:11:44,310

How do you think she feels?

1815

01:11:44,310 --> 01:11:48,000

I feel that she  
feels abandoned again

1816

01:11:48,000 --> 01:11:50,100

because she'll  
many times mention,

1817

01:11:50,100 --> 01:11:52,690

I lost two children already.

1818

01:11:52,690 --> 01:11:54,900

I lost two children.

1819

01:11:54,900 --> 01:11:56,700

I can't imagine that.

1820

01:11:56,700 --> 01:11:59,440

To have to bury  
your own children



1821  
01:11:59,440 --> 01:12:03,110  
is something you don't want  
anyone to have to experience.

1822  
01:12:03,110 --> 01:12:04,650  
They were just children.

1823  
01:12:04,650 --> 01:12:07,570  
They were both, like she says,  
my two favorite children.

1824  
01:12:07,570 --> 01:12:08,880  
I know how that makes me feel.

1825  
01:12:08,880 --> 01:12:11,280  
But they were her two  
favorite children.

1826  
01:12:11,280 --> 01:12:13,570  
My brother was a hero.

1827  
01:12:13,570 --> 01:12:16,440  
He was a pillar in the  
community of Miami Beach.

1828  
01:12:16,440 --> 01:12:18,690  
He did for everyone.

1829  
01:12:18,690 --> 01:12:22,047  
He was a person who you could  
ask anyone in Miami Beach.

1830  
01:12:22,047 --> 01:12:23,130  
There was no one like him.

1831  
01:12:23,130 --> 01:12:26,490  
He extended himself to  
all kinds of people--

1832  
01:12:26,490 --> 01:12:30,130  
the ill, the poor, anybody.

1833

01:12:30,130 --> 01:12:36,720

And my sister was with my mom  
all the years, all the years.

1834

01:12:36,720 --> 01:12:40,860

My older brother always  
made decisions in life

1835

01:12:40,860 --> 01:12:46,110

to choose certain schools to  
go to be nearby to his parents.

1836

01:12:46,110 --> 01:12:50,550

And even now, wherever  
he is on vacations.

1837

01:12:50,550 --> 01:12:54,120

And my siblings  
have a sixth sense.

1838

01:12:54,120 --> 01:12:57,480

When my father was not well,  
my brother, the older one,

1839

01:12:57,480 --> 01:13:00,765

was in Colorado on vacation.

1840

01:13:00,765 --> 01:13:02,990

In the middle of the  
night, he sensed something.

1841

01:13:02,990 --> 01:13:04,580

And he doesn't know  
what he sensed.

1842

01:13:04,580 --> 01:13:07,530

In the morning, he found out  
that my dad had a heart attack.

1843

01:13:07,530 --> 01:13:09,860

He called like 7:00  
in the morning.

1844  
01:13:09,860 --> 01:13:10,678  
Is everything OK?

1845  
01:13:10,678 --> 01:13:11,720  
He goes, why do you call?

1846  
01:13:11,720 --> 01:13:12,300  
He goes, I don't know.

1847  
01:13:12,300 --> 01:13:13,070  
It was very--

1848  
01:13:13,070 --> 01:13:15,260  
I woke up at 1:00  
in the morning,

1849  
01:13:15,260 --> 01:13:16,730  
and I checked all the kids.

1850  
01:13:16,730 --> 01:13:20,570  
I checked-- and then he goes,  
yeah, Dad had a heart attack.

1851  
01:13:20,570 --> 01:13:22,310  
It was in our time.

1852  
01:13:22,310 --> 01:13:24,735  
But he's been like  
that across the board.

1853  
01:13:24,735 --> 01:13:27,770  
He goes, don't you know yet that  
I'm very in tune to everyone?

1854  
01:13:27,770 --> 01:13:30,800  
He tells it to me  
over and over again.

1855  
01:13:30,800 --> 01:13:36,400  
All of my siblings, all of  
them are, because this--

1856

01:13:36,400 --> 01:13:39,640

somehow, I don't know if my  
parents made us this way, or.

1857

01:13:39,640 --> 01:13:42,540

Don't forget, being  
religious keeps you very--

1858

01:13:42,540 --> 01:13:44,740

you have to honor your  
mother and father.

1859

01:13:44,740 --> 01:13:46,510

And you have to--

1860

01:13:46,510 --> 01:13:47,920

what does it mean you have to?

1861

01:13:47,920 --> 01:13:49,540

We are raised.

1862

01:13:49,540 --> 01:13:53,250

That's our privilege,  
to honor our parents.

1863

01:13:53,250 --> 01:13:55,270

And you wouldn't want  
to harm someone that's

1864

01:13:55,270 --> 01:13:57,490

been harmed so much in life.

1865

01:13:57,490 --> 01:13:59,260

And you can't blame  
her for certain things

1866

01:13:59,260 --> 01:14:00,793

that she may not know.

1867

01:14:00,793 --> 01:14:01,700

Of course not.

1868  
01:14:01,700 --> 01:14:02,710  
Right.

1869  
01:14:02,710 --> 01:14:05,740  
Many people came here,  
and they got secularized.

1870  
01:14:05,740 --> 01:14:07,150  
They traveled.

1871  
01:14:07,150 --> 01:14:08,950  
They had wonderful lives.

1872  
01:14:08,950 --> 01:14:10,600  
Our parents didn't.

1873  
01:14:10,600 --> 01:14:12,970  
My mother was homebound  
her whole life,

1874  
01:14:12,970 --> 01:14:15,460  
always working, taking  
care of my father.

1875  
01:14:15,460 --> 01:14:17,230  
Didn't have an easy life.

1876  
01:14:17,230 --> 01:14:19,850  
But she made the  
house very pleasant.

1877  
01:14:19,850 --> 01:14:22,520  
She was very happy to be  
home, always with a smile.

1878  
01:14:22,520 --> 01:14:23,020  
You know?

1879  
01:14:23,020 --> 01:14:26,220  
So I don't think we felt--

1880

01:14:26,220 --> 01:14:27,843

Well, that's priceless.

1881

01:14:27,843 --> 01:14:28,510

It is priceless.

1882

01:14:28,510 --> 01:14:29,810

That's why I'm here.

1883

01:14:29,810 --> 01:14:31,750

That's why I'm here.

1884

01:14:31,750 --> 01:14:35,960

I only say it, not to  
pride myself or not,

1885

01:14:35,960 --> 01:14:38,500

but in good conscience,  
it's very hard for me

1886

01:14:38,500 --> 01:14:41,800

to go back to New York  
because she's very--

1887

01:14:41,800 --> 01:14:46,570

when she sees-- the caretakers  
are wonderful, very good.

1888

01:14:46,570 --> 01:14:51,130

And my other siblings live  
here, but everyone's busy--

1889

01:14:51,130 --> 01:14:54,670

not necessarily busy, but my  
mother needs full-time care.

1890

01:14:54,670 --> 01:14:58,390

So I stay here for a month,  
two months at a time,

1891

01:14:58,390 --> 01:15:00,700

because when I leave, she--

1892  
01:15:00,700 --> 01:15:02,050  
again, I'm alone.

1893  
01:15:02,050 --> 01:15:04,780  
And I know in my mind,  
that's what I interpret.

1894  
01:15:04,780 --> 01:15:06,820  
Great, now my mother's  
abandoned again.

1895  
01:15:06,820 --> 01:15:07,320  
How--

1896  
01:15:07,320 --> 01:15:09,190  
Did she say that to you?

1897  
01:15:09,190 --> 01:15:15,205  
She feels that-- look, what  
am I living so long for?

1898  
01:15:15,205 --> 01:15:16,750  
And I have no family.

1899  
01:15:16,750 --> 01:15:22,710  
She often repeats and  
repeats, [YIDDISH]..

1900  
01:15:22,710 --> 01:15:23,740  
You know what that is.

1901  
01:15:23,740 --> 01:15:24,730  
[YIDDISH], sister.

1902  
01:15:24,730 --> 01:15:26,935  
[SPEAKING YIDDISH], yeah.

1903  
01:15:26,935 --> 01:15:30,430  
[SPEAKING YIDDISH]

1904

01:15:30,430 --> 01:15:31,385  
The whole family.

1905  
01:15:31,385 --> 01:15:32,980  
Sister, brother mother, father.

1906  
01:15:32,980 --> 01:15:34,970  
Everyone killed, and this.

1907  
01:15:34,970 --> 01:15:36,940  
I'm left alone.

1908  
01:15:36,940 --> 01:15:41,980  
She still relates to  
that loss in a way more

1909  
01:15:41,980 --> 01:15:43,870  
than I lost my  
husband because she

1910  
01:15:43,870 --> 01:15:46,660  
realizes he was 95 years old.

1911  
01:15:46,660 --> 01:15:48,730  
She realizes that's a normal--

1912  
01:15:48,730 --> 01:15:50,070  
that's an age you can die.

1913  
01:15:50,070 --> 01:15:51,040  
I have to let go.

1914  
01:15:51,040 --> 01:15:52,030  
It's my husband.

1915  
01:15:52,030 --> 01:15:54,760  
But she can't get over the loss.

1916  
01:15:54,760 --> 01:15:58,150  
See, when her husband  
died, she lost her husband.



1917

01:15:58,150 --> 01:16:00,580

But she did  
everything she could.

1918

01:16:00,580 --> 01:16:03,670

She bathed him and washed  
him and did everything in bed

1919

01:16:03,670 --> 01:16:04,550

for 12 years.

1920

01:16:04,550 --> 01:16:07,600

She prayed with him,  
did everything with him.

1921

01:16:07,600 --> 01:16:09,280

Never took caretakers.

1922

01:16:09,280 --> 01:16:13,010

And I say it because it was  
with love, joy, and honor.

1923

01:16:13,010 --> 01:16:14,260

And that's how we were raised.

1924

01:16:14,260 --> 01:16:15,940

That's how she took  
care of my father.

1925

01:16:15,940 --> 01:16:18,610

People walked in and  
marveled and said,

1926

01:16:18,610 --> 01:16:20,320

I'll never get  
this type of care.

1927

01:16:20,320 --> 01:16:23,230

People marveled because  
they never saw it.

1928

01:16:23,230 --> 01:16:25,200

They never saw it.

1929

01:16:25,200 --> 01:16:27,950

They really never saw it.

1930

01:16:27,950 --> 01:16:31,670

Gertie, you have given  
an amazing testimony.

1931

01:16:31,670 --> 01:16:35,365

And it's a testament  
to your parents.

1932

01:16:35,365 --> 01:16:36,580

I hope so.

1933

01:16:36,580 --> 01:16:37,330

You have.

1934

01:16:37,330 --> 01:16:38,830

Thank you.

1935

01:16:38,830 --> 01:16:40,480

I really appreciate it.

1936

01:16:40,480 --> 01:16:44,320

And because it was  
so hard for your mom

1937

01:16:44,320 --> 01:16:49,122

at this age to be able  
to tell her story,

1938

01:16:49,122 --> 01:16:50,080

you've done it for her.

1939

01:16:50,080 --> 01:16:50,800

Thank you.

1940

01:16:50,800 --> 01:16:51,580

I hope so.

1941

01:16:51,580 --> 01:16:52,750

Yeah.

1942

01:16:52,750 --> 01:16:54,940

After we finish our  
interview, we're

1943

01:16:54,940 --> 01:16:58,160

going to show a few  
items that you have.

1944

01:16:58,160 --> 01:16:59,740

So we're going to film them.

1945

01:16:59,740 --> 01:17:01,900

And I'll ask you  
to describe them.

1946

01:17:01,900 --> 01:17:06,070

But unless there's something  
else you want to say,

1947

01:17:06,070 --> 01:17:08,890

I think that we've  
covered the bases.

1948

01:17:08,890 --> 01:17:12,130

Is there anything  
else you'd want to add

1949

01:17:12,130 --> 01:17:15,510

to what we've talked about?

1950

01:17:15,510 --> 01:17:20,080

I think I-- yeah, let's see.

1951

01:17:20,080 --> 01:17:23,570

My father was a big hero.

1952

01:17:23,570 --> 01:17:27,520

The reason I am so--

1953

01:17:27,520 --> 01:17:29,710

I feel that we have  
this strength is because

1954

01:17:29,710 --> 01:17:31,330

of the strength that he had.

1955

01:17:31,330 --> 01:17:36,070

Because our mission really is  
in whatever way to preserve

1956

01:17:36,070 --> 01:17:38,230

the tradition that he gave us.

1957

01:17:38,230 --> 01:17:40,390

And we owe that  
testament to him,

1958

01:17:40,390 --> 01:17:43,390

because we always say where  
there's questions of religion

1959

01:17:43,390 --> 01:17:45,930

and doubts that we  
don't have the answers.

1960

01:17:45,930 --> 01:17:48,880

And we all question because  
there has to be questions.

1961

01:17:48,880 --> 01:17:51,880

But we always say, why  
don't we just continue

1962

01:17:51,880 --> 01:17:53,230

where dad left off?

1963

01:17:53,230 --> 01:17:57,130

Because if he managed to  
get through those years,

1964

01:17:57,130 --> 01:17:58,480

why are we questioning?

1965

01:17:58,480 --> 01:18:00,220

He already dealt with it.

1966

01:18:00,220 --> 01:18:03,970

If he could-- let's

just grandfather it in

1967

01:18:03,970 --> 01:18:07,900

and just continue going because

he already lost everybody.

1968

01:18:07,900 --> 01:18:10,360

He saw murders and everything.

1969

01:18:10,360 --> 01:18:11,890

He saw a lot of things.

1970

01:18:11,890 --> 01:18:13,600

But what gave him that strength?

1971

01:18:13,600 --> 01:18:15,310

How do we continue?

1972

01:18:15,310 --> 01:18:18,550

And he gave it to us

through our religion.

1973

01:18:18,550 --> 01:18:21,730

When he came here, many

people Americanized.

1974

01:18:21,730 --> 01:18:23,890

And my father was

very firm to send us

1975

01:18:23,890 --> 01:18:26,920

to the yeshiva for

a Jewish education.

1976

01:18:26,920 --> 01:18:27,970

Many people didn't.

1977

01:18:27,970 --> 01:18:31,030

They went to day school, or they  
did other-- it was very costly.

1978

01:18:31,030 --> 01:18:32,010

It was a lot of money.

1979

01:18:32,010 --> 01:18:33,160

They had no money--

1980

01:18:33,160 --> 01:18:34,650

zero money.

1981

01:18:34,650 --> 01:18:38,020

But he persevered, and he fought  
with the tuition committees,

1982

01:18:38,020 --> 01:18:40,240

and he got to make sure.

1983

01:18:40,240 --> 01:18:43,390

To him it was of  
paramount importance.

1984

01:18:43,390 --> 01:18:45,400

You asked what  
language we spoke.

1985

01:18:45,400 --> 01:18:47,290

Him and my mother  
spoke perfect Polish,

1986

01:18:47,290 --> 01:18:49,570

but they didn't allow  
it in the house.

1987

01:18:49,570 --> 01:18:51,850

And when we learned  
English, he said

1988

01:18:51,850 --> 01:18:54,160  
don't speak English  
in this house.

1989  
01:18:54,160 --> 01:18:55,950  
You speak Yiddish in this house.

1990  
01:18:55,950 --> 01:18:58,180  
And as a result,  
we know Yiddish.

1991  
01:18:58,180 --> 01:19:01,360  
As a result, my older brother  
with travels and business

1992  
01:19:01,360 --> 01:19:04,570  
and his career will overhear  
people speaking Yiddish.

1993  
01:19:04,570 --> 01:19:07,540  
Wherever he is, he can  
get in on a conversation

1994  
01:19:07,540 --> 01:19:08,830  
through the Yiddish.

1995  
01:19:08,830 --> 01:19:11,740  
My parents never  
wanted to Americanize.

1996  
01:19:11,740 --> 01:19:13,150  
That wasn't the goal.

1997  
01:19:13,150 --> 01:19:15,220  
That was nothing they  
ever wanted to do--

1998  
01:19:15,220 --> 01:19:16,870  
not in a bad way,  
meaning they didn't

1999  
01:19:16,870 --> 01:19:20,150  
want to give up their

heritage into the melting pot.

2000

01:19:20,150 --> 01:19:22,930

They're good,  
law-abiding citizens,

2001

01:19:22,930 --> 01:19:24,100

and they tried very much.

2002

01:19:24,100 --> 01:19:26,440

And we contributed a lot.

2003

01:19:26,440 --> 01:19:29,950

We were all working and, thank  
God, doing different things.

2004

01:19:29,950 --> 01:19:31,790

But it's that strength--

2005

01:19:31,790 --> 01:19:33,970

the love which you mentioned--

2006

01:19:33,970 --> 01:19:37,030

that strength of our  
Bible, of our religion,

2007

01:19:37,030 --> 01:19:41,680

of our faith that allows  
us to go forward and pray

2008

01:19:41,680 --> 01:19:48,990

to God that we live up to have  
our own personal salvations.

2009

01:19:48,990 --> 01:19:53,410

Oh, I couldn't have ended  
it on a better note.

2010

01:19:53,410 --> 01:19:54,160

Thank you.

2011

01:19:54,160 --> 01:19:55,330



You're welcome.

2012

01:19:55,330 --> 01:20:00,220

And I will say that this  
concludes the United States

2013

01:20:00,220 --> 01:20:05,010

Holocaust Memorial Museum  
interview with Mrs. Gertrude

2014

01:20:05,010 --> 01:20:12,310

Burstyn Schafer on January  
16, 2019 in Miami, Florida.

2015

01:20:12,310 --> 01:20:14,700

That's right.

2016

01:20:14,700 --> 01:20:17,310

OK, we've got two items.

2017

01:20:17,310 --> 01:20:19,230

Cut.

2018

01:20:19,230 --> 01:20:20,230

Speak.

2019

01:20:20,230 --> 01:20:22,810

OK, Gertie, who is this?

2020

01:20:22,810 --> 01:20:24,970

Who is this a photograph of?

2021

01:20:24,970 --> 01:20:28,780

So this is my mom, Leah Burstyn.

2022

01:20:28,780 --> 01:20:35,020

It seems to me it was probably  
after the war in Landsberg.

2023

01:20:35,020 --> 01:20:37,960

And that's where she  
went with your father

2024  
01:20:37,960 --> 01:20:39,885  
after they were liberated  
by the Russians.

2025  
01:20:39,885 --> 01:20:40,510  
That's correct.

2026  
01:20:40,510 --> 01:20:43,300  
Was the whole family-- did  
the whole-- the four brothers

2027  
01:20:43,300 --> 01:20:44,920  
and grandma also go with Them

2028  
01:20:44,920 --> 01:20:46,690  
They went to Landsberg, yes.

2029  
01:20:46,690 --> 01:20:50,140  
That was the DP camp till  
they would find out-- they

2030  
01:20:50,140 --> 01:20:53,840  
all went to different  
places from there, yeah.

2031  
01:20:53,840 --> 01:20:56,200  
Is that where your  
parents got married?

2032  
01:20:56,200 --> 01:20:57,160  
Yes.

2033  
01:20:57,160 --> 01:20:57,930  
Yeah.

2034  
01:20:57,930 --> 01:20:58,430  
Yeah.

2035  
01:20:58,430 --> 01:21:00,700

2036

01:21:00,700 --> 01:21:02,530

Thank you for showing that.

2037

01:21:02,530 --> 01:21:04,648

And we'll have one more item.

2038

01:21:04,648 --> 01:21:06,115

And then you can't move again.

2039

01:21:06,115 --> 01:21:08,560

Don't move because  
we can see your arms.

2040

01:21:08,560 --> 01:21:10,030

Speak.

2041

01:21:10,030 --> 01:21:13,790

OK, tell me, Gertie,  
what are we seeing here--

2042

01:21:13,790 --> 01:21:18,590

this little dress that's in  
this beautiful boxed frame?

2043

01:21:18,590 --> 01:21:22,280

Very, very, very sentimental.

2044

01:21:22,280 --> 01:21:27,440

My older sister Sarah,  
who passed away in 2011--

2045

01:21:27,440 --> 01:21:29,510

she was born in Munich, Germany.

2046

01:21:29,510 --> 01:21:36,650

After they were in the DP  
camp in Landsberg, in 1947,

2047

01:21:36,650 --> 01:21:39,140

they had to travel to the  
hospital from Landsberg

2048

01:21:39,140 --> 01:21:40,400  
to Munich.

2049

01:21:40,400 --> 01:21:44,780  
Then when she was two  
years old, in the DP camp,

2050

01:21:44,780 --> 01:21:48,950  
somebody made this dress  
for her from a parachute.

2051

01:21:48,950 --> 01:21:51,920  
So we're not sure if  
it was from the US Army

2052

01:21:51,920 --> 01:21:53,000  
or from the Russian.

2053

01:21:53,000 --> 01:21:54,050  
We're not really sure.

2054

01:21:54,050 --> 01:21:56,990  
But my mother says they  
used to be parachutes

2055

01:21:56,990 --> 01:21:58,615  
that would land there.

2056

01:21:58,615 --> 01:22:01,250  
It was still, I guess,  
after war, still

2057

01:22:01,250 --> 01:22:04,780  
somewhat of a war  
zone, so to say.

2058

01:22:04,780 --> 01:22:09,020  
And somebody-- a lady was--  
there were many seamstresses.

2059

01:22:09,020 --> 01:22:11,950  
And they sewed my sister

this beautiful dress.

2060

01:22:11,950 --> 01:22:14,620

And this was my  
sister's pride and joy.

2061

01:22:14,620 --> 01:22:17,270

And my sister always  
kept it in her drawer.

2062

01:22:17,270 --> 01:22:20,330

It was a fond memory for her.

2063

01:22:20,330 --> 01:22:24,300

She was very careful in  
how she took care of it.

2064

01:22:24,300 --> 01:22:27,230

And after she passed  
away, we came across it.

2065

01:22:27,230 --> 01:22:31,050

And my older brother Sammy  
was very touched by it.

2066

01:22:31,050 --> 01:22:33,730

And he said, let's  
preserve this--

2067

01:22:33,730 --> 01:22:34,800

the fabric.

2068

01:22:34,800 --> 01:22:35,540

And it's intact.

2069

01:22:35,540 --> 01:22:37,790

It's in excellent condition.

2070

01:22:37,790 --> 01:22:42,440

It didn't tear, and it  
shows no wear in any place.

2071

01:22:42,440 --> 01:22:43,200  
It's beautiful.

2072  
01:22:43,200 --> 01:22:43,700  
Yes.

2073  
01:22:43,700 --> 01:22:45,260  
It's just beautiful.

2074  
01:22:45,260 --> 01:22:45,910  
Yes.

2075  
01:22:45,910 --> 01:22:48,210  
And so carefully sewn.

2076  
01:22:48,210 --> 01:22:53,100  
It's from a real  
parachute material, yes.

2077  
01:22:53,100 --> 01:22:53,710  
Wow.

2078  
01:22:53,710 --> 01:22:57,770  
And so this material--  
this dress is, I would say,

2079  
01:22:57,770 --> 01:23:00,800  
62 years old--

2080  
01:23:00,800 --> 01:23:02,600  
62 years old.

2081  
01:23:02,600 --> 01:23:06,560  
You figure 1959 till today.

2082  
01:23:06,560 --> 01:23:09,380  
Well, then it would be-- if  
your sister Sarah was born,

2083  
01:23:09,380 --> 01:23:10,790  
it's even older.

2084

01:23:10,790 --> 01:23:13,190

It would be 72 years  
old, wouldn't it be?

2085

01:23:13,190 --> 01:23:14,280

Or something like that?

2086

01:23:14,280 --> 01:23:14,780

Right.

2087

01:23:14,780 --> 01:23:15,650

Or 70 years old?

2088

01:23:15,650 --> 01:23:19,220

64, 74-- she would have been 74.

2089

01:23:19,220 --> 01:23:23,150

72 years old-- correct, right.

2090

01:23:23,150 --> 01:23:25,460

Or 70 if she got it when  
she was two years old.

2091

01:23:25,460 --> 01:23:26,780

Two.

2092

01:23:26,780 --> 01:23:29,990

It's just such a  
lovely, lovely item.

2093

01:23:29,990 --> 01:23:34,280

And you would never know that  
it was made from a parachute

2094

01:23:34,280 --> 01:23:35,900

unless you told us that story.

2095

01:23:35,900 --> 01:23:36,560

Right.

2096

01:23:36,560 --> 01:23:38,750

Whoever made it had such skill.

2097

01:23:38,750 --> 01:23:39,440

Yeah.

2098

01:23:39,440 --> 01:23:40,730

They stuffed the sleeves.

2099

01:23:40,730 --> 01:23:42,050

They did it to preserve it.

2100

01:23:42,050 --> 01:23:43,200

And it's been preserved.

2101

01:23:43,200 --> 01:23:45,410

It was kept just in a little--

2102

01:23:45,410 --> 01:23:48,272

maybe a pillow  
case, all the years.

2103

01:23:48,272 --> 01:23:48,980

Yeah, she had it.

2104

01:23:48,980 --> 01:23:52,250

Well, thank you for showing  
that and sharing that with us.

2105

01:23:52,250 --> 01:23:53,640

Thanks again.

2106

01:23:53,640 --> 01:23:55,190

You're welcome.