

Because that was--

That was the silliest story.

Yeah. But that, of course, is--

Sit down, please. It's rolling.

OK, let's continue. Now, do you want to ask a question to lead her in?

No, we talk.

Yeah.

Well, and then if that was not bad, only with the one candle. We also didn't have any soap. We did not have soap to wash our clothes. But we didn't have soap to wash our bodies. And that is, of course, a very, very hard thing to cope with. And you don't realize it unless you're in it, how bad that is. So then one night, when we didn't hardly have any wood anymore, my husband and my neighbor were together.

And my neighbor said, Cees, that was my husband's name. We have to get some more wood. Because we can't do anything anymore. And I don't know what to cut. And he said, but I saw one more tree. And why don't we get that? And my husband said, no. I'm not going to steal a tree. But I thought, well, we have to. Everybody else did. And I told my husband, what are we going to do, because we don't have anything anymore.

Well, he agreed. And then we had to. It was just a must. And so that one night, it was pitch dark because the houses were all dark. There was no ping of light shining. And the street lanterns weren't shining. So it was pitch dark. And we went with the three of us. And we went out. I lived on a dead end street. And we lived-- we walked all to the end of the street and around the corner. And there were two trees left. And my husband said, you stay there on the corner and see if nobody is coming. Because the Germans were always going around to see if nothing happened.

So I stood there and I prayed to God, please make everything all right, because-- and so my husband and my friend, and our friend, they cut the tree. And then we had a long rope. And we took it home with us. So then for a while, we had wood enough.

And of course, when the time came for the beans, we had to-- you couldn't buy beans. And so you had to do the same thing as with the corn, with wheat, you had to go to each farmer and ask could we pick the beans, what you left on the field? And we had the same terrible of course. Sometimes you got right away. But sometimes you had to go to six or seven farmers.

And then we did have, oh, say by the night time, a half a pillowcase, full with green beans. And then we were really happy. And then when we were coming closer to where the more people lived, there we have a lot of bridges in Holland. And there were lots of times, there was a German soldier or two, and they stood there. And whenever somebody passed where they thought they had something, they would stop you.

And then they said what do you have there, in German, of course. And then we got out our back, and we opened up the bag. And we showed the beans. And then they would say, oh, you can't have that. And they took it away. And then they probably used it, or gave it to a good friend. But we didn't have it then. And we worked all day on our knees to get it.

So sometimes we really cried when we went home. But then, of course, we got a friend over, and they had four children. And his wife was sick. And he needed somebody to help them very, very bad. And he knew that we had a [NON-ENGLISH], this girl, in our house.

And he said, now, she is-- you always said she is so good. And I said, well she is. He said, do you think she would come

to my house, and she will do my family, help my family? He said, because I really need somebody. So we sat down and talked about it. And [NON-ENGLISH] said, well, you only have two kids. And they have four, and she is sick, and I was healthy.

So, I said, yeah. You're right. I said, I think you should do it. She said, I will. And so she went over to that family, and helped that family until the war was over. She was there. Of course, when [NON-ENGLISH] left, right away, they came to our house again. And the lady, the same lady, she said, yeah. She said, I have a very hard question now. She said, I have two ladies, and would you be willing to take them.

And my husband said, well, I don't know. But then when she told us the story. We said, yes. Because she told us that one of those two ladies, see, her name was Lisa. And she and her husband were in place in the Southern part of Holland. And they were in a house where they had 17 Jewish people. They had two teachers, lady teachers. They had a big house. And they hid 17 Jewish people. But for all those 17, they had to have hiding places.

So then Lisa also had a little girl. She was about five. And the little Jewish children, they brought those to farmers way back in the boondocks, very far away, so that nobody would ever notice. They would play with other children, and so they were never too worried about the little kids. But the father and mother would like to see the girl. So the farmer's lady told them that she would come over once a week, and bring the little girl. And then she would do whatever she had to do in town. And so she did.

And then one day, she brought this little girl over, and the little girl was full, covered with lice. And the mother felt so bad about that. And so she asked one of the ladies, could I keep my daughter for one night, because then I treat her hair, and then maybe she get rid of some of it, because it was that bad. And that was not because those people were dirty. But if you don't have soap, what are you going to do.

And so the lady said, well, I asked a doctor. And they had a doctor living beside them. And this doctor had told the ladies, I will help you wherever I can. But he did have the practice on the house. So he could not have any other people living with him. But he said whenever you need it, you just call on me. So one of the teachers went over there and asked if Lisa could sleep there that night, and the reason.

And they said sure, of course, when it was dark Lisa should come over and sleep there for that night. Because they only had 17 hiding places. And so the little girl could be with the father, if something would happen. And so Lisa went to bed that night. And in the middle of the night, she woke up and she heard a lot of noise. And she jumped out of bed. She went to the window and there was a paddy wagon in front of the teacher's house.

And she saw all the people. There were two soldiers with the bayonet up by the door. And two were by the paddy wagon. And all those people went one at a time to the paddy wagon, also the two teachers, and her husband and a little girl. And when she saw them go, she wanted to run and go with them. But the doctor, of course, had to keep her from doing that, because if she would have run out the doctor's house, they would have taken the doctor's family too.

And so they could not let her go. They had to do it that way.

And so she was so upset, and underground decided that was not the right place for her to be anymore, because they were going to look for her. And that's why they came to ask for her. But since she was in such bad shape, they wanted her aunt or aunt to go with her so that she had somebody to talk to. Now, we could understand that. And of course, we thought we should do that. We should help those people.

So they were coming to our house. And when they came, all the Dutch people had a paper like this. That is just like an passport. But you had to have your picture in it. And also, you have to have your fingerprints in it, and your name and everything. Now what underground did was, they stole those from everybody they could find. And then they changed the fingerprint, and they changed the picture. And if it was about the same age, then it was all right. They couldn't think anything of it.

And Lisa had one like that. Originally, the Jewish people had a big yellow star on it. So they knew right away. But this

was OK. So these men in the train, they had a raid. And they had raids all the time in the train. And this Lisa were sitting there. And this man looked at the picture. This German soldier, and he looked at her, and he looked at the picture again. And he gave the thing back to her. And he looked at her. Like, I feel sorry for you, lady. And he moved on.

And when she came to our house. She cried. She said, why didn't they take me with them? Maybe I would have seen my husband and my daughter. But he just let me go. She wanted to be taken away. So anyhow, when they were then living with us for a little while, of course, those people, they didn't have anything to do. They never could go outside. Nobody was supposed to know.

And of course, our little boy by that time was 4 and 1/2 and almost five. And we kept on telling him, now Johnny, don't tell anybody that Aunt Mary or Lisa is here. And before we had done that for the two other ones. And then we told him, if you tell, then they will shoot mommy and daddy. And my son never, had never said to nobody, but of course it was always a risky thing.

So to keep those two ladies busy, we would have, say, a blanket, and tear the threads out, and then they would knit things, all kinds of things. And one day, we got a little card in the mail. And it said, we want to come and see you this coming Sunday. And this was from a brother of my husband. And he was a wonderful person. But his wife was sympathizing with the Germans.

And so much that she would tell on anybody, on her own brother or sister she would tell. And we knew that. And I said to my husband, what are we going to do? Because she will tell on us. And I said, can't we reach him? But there was no telephone, and the mail was too late. And they would bring their own food. They usually did that anyhow, when they came to visit.

So anyhow, my husband said, well, we have to let them come. And so we made provisions for those two ladies to stay upstairs all day long. And of course, our bathroom was downstairs. So we had made provisions for that. And I would bring them their meals whenever I thought I saw a moment that I could do it. And this old lady had knitted a pair of beautiful socks for my son, knee socks. And with a cable in it, and they were really pretty.

And so they came, and everything worked out all right, and we didn't hear a peep upstairs. And then one moment my little boy went on his knees on a chair, and my sister-in-law said, oh Johnny, what beautiful socks. Did mama make those? No, the grandma made those.

No, he said-- she said, who made them. And my husband looked at me, and I looked at my husband. And we thought now we are sold. We were both shaking. And he said my grandma. And he just, it was so real, that they believed him right away. And but really what we did was teaching our kid to lie. But that was the only thing we could do.

So but what else? Oh, yeah. And then also my father and mother, they had a lady living with them, also a Jewish lady. And she was 76 years old. And she had 14 children. And from the 14, as far as we know, there are two still living. And the rest was all taken away with their families, her grandchildren, and her children, everything was all gone, when she came to my father and mother's house.

And she really liked to come over to our house. But that was 45 minutes walk, and no buses or anything. So my husband, one time he went all the way with a little wagon that he got from the milkman and he went to get her. And she came for three days and so for three days we had three ladies in the house. And when she was there, see, I was in the kitchen.

And she was in the living room with my husband. And two other ladies, they were upstairs. And they were always ready to leave. Everybody had to have a hiding place. So we did too. And in the hallway, you came out of the kitchen, there was a runner. And under the runner there we had a special thing which you could lift up like a lid. And if we lifted it up, then they could ride away from the upstairs jump in that hole. And that was what we called I think a crawl space, where they would jump in.

And we had told them if something would happen then we would not call names, because we were only with the three in

house, and they knew that. Then we would come like, pssst, real loud. And then they knew that there was really danger. And they had everything always in a small sheet, whatever they had. So if something happened there would be nothing found. And that time that they had that too.

So I was in the kitchen, and my husband came towards the kitchen. He opened the door and he said, Ann they're here. And I knew right away what he meant. And so I went to the steps, and I came like right away, pssst, and my husband rolled up the runner. And we lift up the lid and they went under and we covered it up and then I went with my husband to the living room. And when I looked out of the living room they were standing, the Dutch-- the German solders with a bayonet up were standing in front of our door on each side.

And then two other ones were standing a little farther, and two other ones were coming two houses past us. That's where a family lived where the man was in the-- in the German army. And his wife and three kids lived there. And she was sympathizing too. But she was-- she was a nice lady. But she didn't think like we thought. And it was close to the end of the war.

So they took her and her three kids in the paddy wagon, and then all those soldiers went in the paddy wagon. And they drove away. I think that was the biggest scare we had. It was really-- it was really very, very bad. And well this--

Let's stop right there.