

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:17,580

2

00:00:17,580 --> 00:00:18,546

Take 1.

3

00:00:18,546 --> 00:00:20,370

[BEEP]

4

00:00:20,370 --> 00:00:23,110

5

00:00:23,110 --> 00:00:27,400

Mr. Komski, can you tell me
what happened to everyday life

6

00:00:27,400 --> 00:00:29,270

when the Germans
occupied Poland?

7

00:00:29,270 --> 00:00:32,360

8

00:00:32,360 --> 00:00:37,950

Well, first, I was in
Krakow after I have

9

00:00:37,950 --> 00:00:42,370

come a few days after the war.

10

00:00:42,370 --> 00:00:46,780

And it just a very miserable
life, because there

11

00:00:46,780 --> 00:00:50,120

was actually no food.

12

00:00:50,120 --> 00:00:53,110

We had to go-- in order
to buy a loaf of bread,

13

00:00:53,110 --> 00:00:56,590

I had to get up at 4
o'clock in the morning

14

00:00:56,590 --> 00:01:00,250

and go to the bakery and stand
in line for several hours

15

00:01:00,250 --> 00:01:03,580

before I got a loaf of
bread and absolutely nothing

16

00:01:03,580 --> 00:01:05,980

to buy immediately.

17

00:01:05,980 --> 00:01:09,650

And, of course, you
have to have a spectacle

18

00:01:09,650 --> 00:01:14,320

of seeing all those soldiers
roaming around the streets.

19

00:01:14,320 --> 00:01:18,310

20

00:01:18,310 --> 00:01:21,070

The first encounter
with the soldiers,

21

00:01:21,070 --> 00:01:25,710

you know, when I was
stopped on the street.

22

00:01:25,710 --> 00:01:31,230

And I had the impression that
he wants to ask me a question.

23

00:01:31,230 --> 00:01:35,130

And instead, he kicked
me without reason.

24

00:01:35,130 --> 00:01:39,720

And this is where I
realized that the Poland is

25

00:01:39,720 --> 00:01:45,300

in war, that we have been
occupied, that things are not

26

00:01:45,300 --> 00:01:46,630

normal anymore.

27

00:01:46,630 --> 00:01:49,560

28

00:01:49,560 --> 00:01:55,620

It struck me as something
so unjust that he struck me.

29

00:01:55,620 --> 00:01:57,420

I didn't do anything to him.

30

00:01:57,420 --> 00:02:02,830

And I remember it almost
vividly today as it was then.

31

00:02:02,830 --> 00:02:06,080

32

00:02:06,080 --> 00:02:08,240

What did you decide to do?

33

00:02:08,240 --> 00:02:13,340

And why did you decide
to join the resistance?

34

00:02:13,340 --> 00:02:16,420

Well, it was a
spontaneous thing.

35

00:02:16,420 --> 00:02:24,160

You know, I had several friends
of mine were in the military

36

00:02:24,160 --> 00:02:28,720
and in the action
at that year 1939

37

00:02:28,720 --> 00:02:31,390
and they all came back home.

38

00:02:31,390 --> 00:02:35,770
And first of all,
it was nothing--

39

00:02:35,770 --> 00:02:43,440
it was just a situation
where except of trying

40

00:02:43,440 --> 00:02:49,830
to stay away from a German view,
there was nothing else to do.

41

00:02:49,830 --> 00:02:53,100
It was late fall.

42

00:02:53,100 --> 00:02:55,950
And there were no schools.

43

00:02:55,950 --> 00:03:00,870
There was absolutely
no activity allowed.

44

00:03:00,870 --> 00:03:04,260
There was a police
out all the time.

45

00:03:04,260 --> 00:03:10,290
So spontaneous our
spontaneous behavior

46

00:03:10,290 --> 00:03:16,260
was to organize something,
an action, against them.

47

00:03:16,260 --> 00:03:19,740

And at the beginning,
it was just a--

48
00:03:19,740 --> 00:03:33,950
we are trying to
find a proper people

49
00:03:33,950 --> 00:03:38,405
and enrol them into the action.

50
00:03:38,405 --> 00:03:43,700

51
00:03:43,700 --> 00:03:46,670
So how did you go about doing--

52
00:03:46,670 --> 00:03:47,692
Take 2.

53
00:03:47,692 --> 00:03:50,650
[BEEP]

54
00:03:50,650 --> 00:03:52,950
OK, Mr. Komski, go ahead.

55
00:03:52,950 --> 00:03:53,450
Yeah.

56
00:03:53,450 --> 00:04:02,470
And at the beginning, you know
this whole affair was just

57
00:04:02,470 --> 00:04:06,800
on trial, just something
that we are trying to-- we

58
00:04:06,800 --> 00:04:16,440
have no experience in
doing things like that.

59
00:04:16,440 --> 00:04:25,160
So it was probably-- from

the outside it probably

60

00:04:25,160 --> 00:04:26,960

look funny at the beginning.

61

00:04:26,960 --> 00:04:30,620

You know there was no guidance.

62

00:04:30,620 --> 00:04:36,680

There were no higher authorities
that were established.

63

00:04:36,680 --> 00:04:40,250

And there were no
connections at the beginning.

64

00:04:40,250 --> 00:04:43,820

It was, as I say,
spontaneous thing.

65

00:04:43,820 --> 00:04:49,640

A few months later,
the thing grew up

66

00:04:49,640 --> 00:04:54,060

into several activities.

67

00:04:54,060 --> 00:04:58,520

First of all, there was one,
listen to the underground,

68

00:04:58,520 --> 00:05:02,230

to the forbidden radios.

69

00:05:02,230 --> 00:05:11,570

And then we tried to print
a sort of newsletter.

70

00:05:11,570 --> 00:05:14,830

This was the second thing.

71

00:05:14,830 --> 00:05:19,480

And, of course,
build the membership

72
00:05:19,480 --> 00:05:24,372
and organize into the units.

73
00:05:24,372 --> 00:05:37,690
But I was mainly active in
this newsletter business,

74
00:05:37,690 --> 00:05:43,600
because there's always
something to do with it.

75
00:05:43,600 --> 00:05:48,360
And also I just finished
the Academy of Art.

76
00:05:48,360 --> 00:05:55,190
So I could compose.

77
00:05:55,190 --> 00:06:01,490
I could do the lettering,
which was necessary.

78
00:06:01,490 --> 00:06:09,600
A lot of things
was done by hand.

79
00:06:09,600 --> 00:06:13,240
And this is the thing
that I could do.

80
00:06:13,240 --> 00:06:17,410
And, of course, there
is another thing,

81
00:06:17,410 --> 00:06:28,480
a headline story went always
with a caricature or cartoon.

82
00:06:28,480 --> 00:06:31,510
And this is where

I became useful,

83

00:06:31,510 --> 00:06:33,670

because I could do this.

84

00:06:33,670 --> 00:06:38,950

As a matter of fact,

later on after war

85

00:06:38,950 --> 00:06:44,320

when my case was in

the Bavarian court,

86

00:06:44,320 --> 00:06:52,120

I won my case because I

could testify to the fact

87

00:06:52,120 --> 00:06:55,960

that I was doing the

caricature of Hitler himself.

88

00:06:55,960 --> 00:06:58,930

And that is why the court--

89

00:06:58,930 --> 00:07:02,430

90

00:07:02,430 --> 00:07:05,740

why I won my case.

91

00:07:05,740 --> 00:07:17,440

Otherwise, there, for example,

were cases for other than that,

92

00:07:17,440 --> 00:07:23,800

just like regular activity

against the German army

93

00:07:23,800 --> 00:07:28,790

and Germany was

considered a normal thing.

94

00:07:28,790 --> 00:07:31,370
The judge would not refuse--

95
00:07:31,370 --> 00:07:36,505
refuse to see any offense.

96
00:07:36,505 --> 00:07:41,040

97
00:07:41,040 --> 00:07:45,930
Can you describe how you
hid and crossed borders

98
00:07:45,930 --> 00:07:50,580
and finally ended up getting
turned over to the Gestapo?

99
00:07:50,580 --> 00:07:55,920
Yeah, after a while, it became
very dangerous to stay at home.

100
00:07:55,920 --> 00:08:00,396
At that time, I was already
in my hometown Rzeszow,

101
00:08:00,396 --> 00:08:05,790
a small town with
a German garrison,

102
00:08:05,790 --> 00:08:12,660
which was stationed in
the high school building.

103
00:08:12,660 --> 00:08:18,750
And, of course, they were
snooping around, the soldiers,

104
00:08:18,750 --> 00:08:21,840
looking especially for a radio.

105
00:08:21,840 --> 00:08:25,830
And the organization
was in danger

106

00:08:25,830 --> 00:08:36,669

that it might be known
to Germany after a while.

107

00:08:36,669 --> 00:08:46,170

So I decided to leave the
hometown and go to France.

108

00:08:46,170 --> 00:08:51,420

And in France, the army
was being organized.

109

00:08:51,420 --> 00:08:55,500

The government in exile was
at that time in France--

110

00:08:55,500 --> 00:08:58,920

this is 1940, beginning of 1940.

111

00:08:58,920 --> 00:09:05,910

So with two other
friends of mine,

112

00:09:05,910 --> 00:09:10,530

we walked to the
railroad station

113

00:09:10,530 --> 00:09:14,580

about 15 kilometers
away from my hometown.

114

00:09:14,580 --> 00:09:15,840

We boarded a train.

115

00:09:15,840 --> 00:09:21,540

And then by train, we traveled
to Nowy Targ, near Zakopane.

116

00:09:21,540 --> 00:09:25,660

We left, we get out of
that train at that time.

117

00:09:25,660 --> 00:09:31,800

And then we walked toward
Zakopane, Bukowina, which

118

00:09:31,800 --> 00:09:34,770

is the village near Zakopane.

119

00:09:34,770 --> 00:09:39,600

And then we crossed
the Tatra Mountains.

120

00:09:39,600 --> 00:09:45,125

It was in the
beginning of March.

121

00:09:45,125 --> 00:09:48,100

122

00:09:48,100 --> 00:09:50,710

So it took us two
or three days--

123

00:09:50,710 --> 00:09:58,810

I think it was three days around
the higher ridges of mountains.

124

00:09:58,810 --> 00:10:05,050

And, of course, we had
to walk in the deep snow.

125

00:10:05,050 --> 00:10:15,220

This way we came around
the Tatra mountains

126

00:10:15,220 --> 00:10:17,870

to the Slovakian side of it.

127

00:10:17,870 --> 00:10:21,400

And then we walked right
through to Slovakia.

128

00:10:21,400 --> 00:10:26,230

And almost, almost, we
reach the Hungarian border.

129
00:10:26,230 --> 00:10:29,350
It was necessary to
go to Hungary, because

130
00:10:29,350 --> 00:10:37,510
in Hungary at that time
were the Polish camps, where

131
00:10:37,510 --> 00:10:46,120
we could stay for a while
and then work toward--

132
00:10:46,120 --> 00:10:51,490
then find possibilities
to go further

133
00:10:51,490 --> 00:10:55,780
through other countries,
especially through Yugoslavia

134
00:10:55,780 --> 00:10:59,350
and Spain to France.

135
00:10:59,350 --> 00:11:07,110
So before we could
cross the border,

136
00:11:07,110 --> 00:11:11,970
we were spotted by
a Slovakian man.

137
00:11:11,970 --> 00:11:18,690
And I think it was he who was
responsible for our arrest

138
00:11:18,690 --> 00:11:27,206
because he reported us to the--

139
00:11:27,206 --> 00:11:30,560
[BEEP]

140

00:11:30,560 --> 00:11:35,870

Mr. Komski, can you describe for me your arrival in Auschwitz?

141

00:11:35,870 --> 00:11:42,050

142

00:11:42,050 --> 00:11:49,560

I came to Auschwitz from the prison in Tarnow by train.

143

00:11:49,560 --> 00:11:55,860

We arrived in Auschwitz about afternoon, about 5 o'clock

144

00:11:55,860 --> 00:11:58,500

in the afternoon.

145

00:11:58,500 --> 00:12:06,140

And we really did not know where we arrived, where we came.

146

00:12:06,140 --> 00:12:10,280

When we arrived at the station, Auschwitz,

147

00:12:10,280 --> 00:12:14,830

which is in Polish Oswiecim, we saw

148

00:12:14,830 --> 00:12:22,410

that huge sign, Auschwitz, written on the second floor

149

00:12:22,410 --> 00:12:24,930

of that Auschwitz--

150

00:12:24,930 --> 00:12:28,380

of that station building.

151

00:12:28,380 --> 00:12:31,740

And we didn't know where we
are, where we were where.

152
00:12:31,740 --> 00:12:35,010
We thought we came
to Germany already.

153
00:12:35,010 --> 00:12:40,650
But we saw a railroad worker.

154
00:12:40,650 --> 00:12:48,610
And he told us that
this is really Oswiecim.

155
00:12:48,610 --> 00:12:57,670
And, of course, we
were-- of course,

156
00:12:57,670 --> 00:13:04,780
we did not know anything further
what's going to happen to us.

157
00:13:04,780 --> 00:13:10,500
But the train started
rolling to a side truck.

158
00:13:10,500 --> 00:13:16,480
And eventually, we came in the
front of three large buildings.

159
00:13:16,480 --> 00:13:21,330
This was tobacco
company buildings.

160
00:13:21,330 --> 00:13:26,250
The middle building
was surrounded

161
00:13:26,250 --> 00:13:33,990
with towers and barbed wire.

162
00:13:33,990 --> 00:13:37,590
And in the middle of that

courtyard of that building,

163

00:13:37,590 --> 00:13:45,840

we saw about 20 or

30 of men dressed

164

00:13:45,840 --> 00:13:56,450

in striped uniforms, which to

me look like hospital patients.

165

00:13:56,450 --> 00:14:00,490

But when the train

stop and I look around

166

00:14:00,490 --> 00:14:04,540

and I saw everywhere

guards lying

167

00:14:04,540 --> 00:14:08,680

with machine guns

in the bushes, I

168

00:14:08,680 --> 00:14:14,080

saw those 30 men rushing

toward the train.

169

00:14:14,080 --> 00:14:19,240

And when the door opened, they

started hitting us with pipes

170

00:14:19,240 --> 00:14:24,970

and sticks, and los, los, los,

like the Germans used to do

171

00:14:24,970 --> 00:14:27,700

and in a huge hurry.

172

00:14:27,700 --> 00:14:33,850

And in this fashion, we were

brought to that courtyard.

173

00:14:33,850 --> 00:14:45,520

And immediately, we were

segregated into smaller groups.

174

00:14:45,520 --> 00:14:53,320

And each group went
in front of a writer

175

00:14:53,320 --> 00:14:58,900

with a type machine who would
take the personnel of ours,

176

00:14:58,900 --> 00:15:01,990

and everyone received numbers.

177

00:15:01,990 --> 00:15:09,400

And all the belongings
of ours were taken away.

178

00:15:09,400 --> 00:15:18,400

We were not dressed in any
uniform, prisoners uniform

179

00:15:18,400 --> 00:15:20,650

at that time, because
there were none.

180

00:15:20,650 --> 00:15:27,240

We were still working
in our civilian clothes.

181

00:15:27,240 --> 00:15:30,120

We went inside that building.

182

00:15:30,120 --> 00:15:33,750

And there was a bedroom--

183

00:15:33,750 --> 00:15:38,400

there was a place to
sleep right on the floor.

184

00:15:38,400 --> 00:15:41,630

There was a little straw
on the cement floor.

185

00:15:41,630 --> 00:15:49,950

And we spent that
first night almost

186

00:15:49,950 --> 00:15:54,390

in a sitting position because
no room to stretch out.

187

00:15:54,390 --> 00:15:57,300

The next morning,
from very early,

188

00:15:57,300 --> 00:16:00,720

we woke up before the sunrise.

189

00:16:00,720 --> 00:16:06,200

And exercise began.

190

00:16:06,200 --> 00:16:11,330

And it lasted the whole
day, that exercise, which

191

00:16:11,330 --> 00:16:15,060

consisted of jumping, running.

192

00:16:15,060 --> 00:16:18,026

193

00:16:18,026 --> 00:16:23,390

It was really very exhausting.

194

00:16:23,390 --> 00:16:26,780

I remember when we
arrived there was

195

00:16:26,780 --> 00:16:29,090

tall grass all around building.

196

00:16:29,090 --> 00:16:30,710

The same day in
the evening, there

197

00:16:30,710 --> 00:16:34,730
was no blade of grass standing.

198

00:16:34,730 --> 00:16:43,950
We destroyed by our bodies,
you know, rolling and jumping.

199

00:16:43,950 --> 00:16:48,410
And so that was the
beginning of Auschwitz.

200

00:16:48,410 --> 00:16:50,090
We did not go to work.

201

00:16:50,090 --> 00:16:54,380
There was no work at that time.

202

00:16:54,380 --> 00:16:57,500
There were only 500--

203

00:16:57,500 --> 00:17:07,730
727 people in that transport
I arrived on June 14, 1940.

204

00:17:07,730 --> 00:17:14,839
So our activities
were daily exercises

205

00:17:14,839 --> 00:17:17,160
that lasted about 16 hours.

206

00:17:17,160 --> 00:17:22,940
So you can imagine that after a
while, everybody was half dead.

207

00:17:22,940 --> 00:17:28,790
A week later came another
transport from Krakow,

208

00:17:28,790 --> 00:17:33,410
from Montelupich,
about 300 men strong.

209
00:17:33,410 --> 00:17:41,210
And this one was housed
in original Auschwitz.

210
00:17:41,210 --> 00:17:46,970
There are only two or
three blocks separated

211
00:17:46,970 --> 00:17:53,130
from the rest of the
area with barbed wire

212
00:17:53,130 --> 00:17:58,170
with a small
kitchen added to it.

213
00:17:58,170 --> 00:18:03,500
And that is where they
started the activities.

214
00:18:03,500 --> 00:18:08,510
And they started
working on building

215
00:18:08,510 --> 00:18:13,550
a fence around whole area.

216
00:18:13,550 --> 00:18:17,330
And also the plans
were drawn for building

217
00:18:17,330 --> 00:18:20,090
a prisoner's kitchen.

218
00:18:20,090 --> 00:18:28,280
Until this thing was
done, we were only

219
00:18:28,280 --> 00:18:31,810
living in those three barracks.

220

00:18:31,810 --> 00:18:42,040
And later on, our temporary
fence was removed.

221
00:18:42,040 --> 00:18:49,840
And we became the first
inmates of the real camp.

222
00:18:49,840 --> 00:18:55,240
Over the years that you were
there, how did things change?

223
00:18:55,240 --> 00:18:57,970
In a very general sense.

224
00:18:57,970 --> 00:19:00,130
Well, first of
all, the Germans--

225
00:19:00,130 --> 00:19:08,680
this used to be, Auschwitz
used to be a military barracks,

226
00:19:08,680 --> 00:19:11,050
designed for cavalry.

227
00:19:11,050 --> 00:19:15,460
So they was inside a
depression, inside the camp,

228
00:19:15,460 --> 00:19:19,510
for running the horses.

229
00:19:19,510 --> 00:19:21,760
So the first thing
what the German did,

230
00:19:21,760 --> 00:19:27,460
they leveled this depression
up, raise them up.

231
00:19:27,460 --> 00:19:35,560
And the first commander that

worked on doing that job

232

00:19:35,560 --> 00:19:40,570
was composed of
priests and Jews.

233

00:19:40,570 --> 00:19:50,380
And the commander of this
group was a German criminal

234

00:19:50,380 --> 00:19:53,580
called Krankenmann.

235

00:19:53,580 --> 00:19:57,960
He was responsible for
killing most of those people

236

00:19:57,960 --> 00:20:02,320
within a few weeks.

237

00:20:02,320 --> 00:20:06,150
The reason why they have
to level up that depression

238

00:20:06,150 --> 00:20:11,460
was because they wanted
to build another blocks.

239

00:20:11,460 --> 00:20:16,200
And they built six more
buildings resembling

240

00:20:16,200 --> 00:20:19,800
the old style buildings.

241

00:20:19,800 --> 00:20:23,100
That they needed
desperately a space.

242

00:20:23,100 --> 00:20:25,770

243

00:20:25,770 --> 00:20:32,610

The population of Auschwitz from
the beginning, several hundred,

244

00:20:32,610 --> 00:20:37,410

immediately jumped up
to several thousand

245

00:20:37,410 --> 00:20:40,800

when the first
transport of prisoners

246

00:20:40,800 --> 00:20:45,060

arrived from Warsaw,
about four transports

247

00:20:45,060 --> 00:20:49,140

within about six weeks.

248

00:20:49,140 --> 00:20:53,880

And still the same year,
in 1940, the Germans

249

00:20:53,880 --> 00:20:56,640

discovered that they
don't have enough room.

250

00:20:56,640 --> 00:21:01,440

So they started making
plans for building

251

00:21:01,440 --> 00:21:09,060

another camp between this
camp and the railroad station.

252

00:21:09,060 --> 00:21:12,200

And they called it Neubau.

253

00:21:12,200 --> 00:21:21,990

Later on, they brought about
15,000 Russian prisoners of war

254

00:21:21,990 --> 00:21:25,860

from Germany.

255

00:21:25,860 --> 00:21:27,970

There were a--

256

00:21:27,970 --> 00:21:32,040

I forgot the name right now
where they were stationed.

257

00:21:32,040 --> 00:21:37,170

Anyway, there was
15,000 men who started

258

00:21:37,170 --> 00:21:42,540

to build building Birkenau.

259

00:21:42,540 --> 00:21:48,240

Birkenau in Polish
name is Brzezinka,

260

00:21:48,240 --> 00:21:53,070

this name of the village,
which was leveled up,

261

00:21:53,070 --> 00:22:02,830

and all the surrounding
villages between the River

262

00:22:02,830 --> 00:22:17,280

Vistula and Sola, starting
from the coal mine Brzeszcse.

263

00:22:17,280 --> 00:22:24,930

So it was a 40 square
kilometers area,

264

00:22:24,930 --> 00:22:33,685

which became the terrain
called Interessengebiet.

265

00:22:33,685 --> 00:22:41,130

That means the
terrain of the camp.

266
00:22:41,130 --> 00:22:49,950
With two camps in operation,
the old Auschwitz,

267
00:22:49,950 --> 00:22:51,780
which they named--

268
00:22:51,780 --> 00:22:54,110
[BEEP]

269
00:22:54,110 --> 00:22:58,350
I want you to explain to me
about the different types

270
00:22:58,350 --> 00:23:01,710
of people who became
inmates at Auschwitz

271
00:23:01,710 --> 00:23:03,960
and whether they were
treated differently.

272
00:23:03,960 --> 00:23:08,670
Were Jews treated differently
from other people?

273
00:23:08,670 --> 00:23:12,150
Well, basically, everybody
was treated very bad.

274
00:23:12,150 --> 00:23:15,640
And there was no
really difference

275
00:23:15,640 --> 00:23:19,960
regardless of what type of--

276
00:23:19,960 --> 00:23:26,720
the Germans segregated
them by attaching them

277

00:23:26,720 --> 00:23:34,950
a crime, which was
visible by the triangle

278
00:23:34,950 --> 00:23:36,810
that everybody has to wear.

279
00:23:36,810 --> 00:23:40,830
I wore a red
triangle, which meant

280
00:23:40,830 --> 00:23:44,370
that I am a political prisoner.

281
00:23:44,370 --> 00:23:47,550
Outside of that
were greens, which

282
00:23:47,550 --> 00:23:51,760
was a professional criminal.

283
00:23:51,760 --> 00:23:55,340
These were mostly German.

284
00:23:55,340 --> 00:24:00,980
There were people wearing
black triangles, which

285
00:24:00,980 --> 00:24:06,590
was people who committed--

286
00:24:06,590 --> 00:24:15,130

287
00:24:15,130 --> 00:24:23,380
who refused to work
for a German industry,

288
00:24:23,380 --> 00:24:28,780
for German war industry
wore a black triangle.

289

00:24:28,780 --> 00:24:37,300
But if that inmate was a woman
and she wore a black triangle,

290
00:24:37,300 --> 00:24:41,650
she was a prostitute.

291
00:24:41,650 --> 00:24:50,480
For example, when women's
camp opened in our camp,

292
00:24:50,480 --> 00:24:56,110
they did it by
segregating us from women

293
00:24:56,110 --> 00:25:00,860
by a high concrete wall.

294
00:25:00,860 --> 00:25:08,980
The first 1,000 inmates
that came from Ravensbruck

295
00:25:08,980 --> 00:25:11,350
were the prostitutes.

296
00:25:11,350 --> 00:25:13,780
They were all German
and prostitutes.

297
00:25:13,780 --> 00:25:16,390
And they became
the functionaries

298
00:25:16,390 --> 00:25:18,640
of the women's camp.

299
00:25:18,640 --> 00:25:26,740
The women who came from all
other European countries,

300
00:25:26,740 --> 00:25:32,620
first women came from
Czechoslovakia were Jewish.

301
00:25:32,620 --> 00:25:37,150
And they received
a red triangle.

302
00:25:37,150 --> 00:25:43,300
They were considered political
with this distinction

303
00:25:43,300 --> 00:25:44,770
that they are Jewish.

304
00:25:44,770 --> 00:25:50,830
That means they had opposite
triangle, yellow, which

305
00:25:50,830 --> 00:25:55,000
together form a David star.

306
00:25:55,000 --> 00:25:59,950
So this was a sign for
all Jews in Auschwitz

307
00:25:59,950 --> 00:26:03,980
that they wore that star.

308
00:26:03,980 --> 00:26:07,910
So it might be there
were a few Jews that I

309
00:26:07,910 --> 00:26:12,290
saw with the black and yellow.

310
00:26:12,290 --> 00:26:15,260
I even saw one with
the green and yellow.

311
00:26:15,260 --> 00:26:17,900
But always had to
be that yellow,

312
00:26:17,900 --> 00:26:22,370

which all together
looked like a star.

313
00:26:22,370 --> 00:26:31,160
So besides that there were
other crimes registered

314
00:26:31,160 --> 00:26:33,230
by the Germans in the books.

315
00:26:33,230 --> 00:26:40,730
Like, for example, homosexuals,
the camp in Gross-Rosen,

316
00:26:40,730 --> 00:26:43,370
for example, where
I was later on,

317
00:26:43,370 --> 00:26:48,830
had mostly homosexual
prisoners, all German.

318
00:26:48,830 --> 00:26:52,040
And they wore pink triangle.

319
00:26:52,040 --> 00:26:59,390
Those who were committed to the
camp for religious purposes,

320
00:26:59,390 --> 00:27:04,760
like for example, there were
Jehovah's Witnesses, that

321
00:27:04,760 --> 00:27:08,610
were very spread out in
Germany at that time,

322
00:27:08,610 --> 00:27:11,525
there wore a purple triangle.

323
00:27:11,525 --> 00:27:14,570

324

00:27:14,570 --> 00:27:17,840

And so this way--

325

00:27:17,840 --> 00:27:24,560

but as a prisoner, they
were all treated equally.

326

00:27:24,560 --> 00:27:26,870

You know that means
very, very bad.

327

00:27:26,870 --> 00:27:30,800

328

00:27:30,800 --> 00:27:34,670

I would describe
situation in Auschwitz

329

00:27:34,670 --> 00:27:37,610

and then in the
other camps, same

330

00:27:37,610 --> 00:27:42,710

was, that I would
compare a prisoner

331

00:27:42,710 --> 00:27:50,840

to a soldier who fights
the enemy in the trenches.

332

00:27:50,840 --> 00:27:54,920

And we were different from
that soldier in this respect--

333

00:27:54,920 --> 00:27:57,840

the soldier had a gun.

334

00:27:57,840 --> 00:28:02,480

He had a rifle, and he
could shoot his enemy

335

00:28:02,480 --> 00:28:04,520

before he was shot.

336

00:28:04,520 --> 00:28:09,620

We were like soldiers
exposed every minute

337

00:28:09,620 --> 00:28:15,320

to a danger of dying, but
we couldn't help ourselves,

338

00:28:15,320 --> 00:28:19,310

because we have
nothing for our defense

339

00:28:19,310 --> 00:28:22,730

except the will to survive.

340

00:28:22,730 --> 00:28:29,720

But will not always was
enough, because very often,

341

00:28:29,720 --> 00:28:33,080

in most cases,
the prisoner died.

342

00:28:33,080 --> 00:28:34,400

They were gassed.

343

00:28:34,400 --> 00:28:39,500

They were executed by
the order of a Gestapo.

344

00:28:39,500 --> 00:28:42,090

345

00:28:42,090 --> 00:28:47,872

And in this case, nobody
could do anything.

346

00:28:47,872 --> 00:28:48,580

We were helpless.

347

00:28:48,580 --> 00:28:52,660

348

00:28:52,660 --> 00:28:57,130

Tell me the story of
the Auschwitz Museum

349

00:28:57,130 --> 00:28:59,500

and the translation
of the Bible.

350

00:28:59,500 --> 00:29:02,560

351

00:29:02,560 --> 00:29:07,820

Auschwitz Museum and
a symphony orchestra,

352

00:29:07,820 --> 00:29:13,220

those are two things that
were established in Auschwitz.

353

00:29:13,220 --> 00:29:17,171

It was idea of a
Commandant Fritsch.

354

00:29:17,171 --> 00:29:22,370

The museum-- the
orchestra was supposed

355

00:29:22,370 --> 00:29:28,880

to indicate that they are
joyful moments in the prison

356

00:29:28,880 --> 00:29:34,430

also in case if a
commission, a commission,

357

00:29:34,430 --> 00:29:40,400

would arrive and check on the
living conditions in Auschwitz.

358

00:29:40,400 --> 00:29:43,210

So it was with the museum.

359

00:29:43,210 --> 00:29:48,050

The museum was
supposed to reveal

360

00:29:48,050 --> 00:29:55,520

to a would be commission
that creative activities

361

00:29:55,520 --> 00:30:08,060

of prisoners could be exercised
right in the museum, where

362

00:30:08,060 --> 00:30:11,900

there was a sort of like
a studio, art studio.

363

00:30:11,900 --> 00:30:17,060

Besides that there
were all exhibits.

364

00:30:17,060 --> 00:30:22,190

Exhibits consisted
of the items that

365

00:30:22,190 --> 00:30:25,280

were taken away from arrivals.

366

00:30:25,280 --> 00:30:29,810

Like when the Jews came,
a lot of devoted Jews

367

00:30:29,810 --> 00:30:33,480

came with Bibles, especially
from the Warsaw ghettos.

368

00:30:33,480 --> 00:30:39,050

So the Bibles found
its way to the museum.

369

00:30:39,050 --> 00:30:43,820

There was military medals.

370
00:30:43,820 --> 00:30:45,950
There were maps.

371
00:30:45,950 --> 00:30:52,130
There were all kinds of
uniforms of this kind of nature,

372
00:30:52,130 --> 00:30:55,660
you know, the artifacts.

373
00:30:55,660 --> 00:31:01,540
And the Auschwitz Museum
from the very, very beginning

374
00:31:01,540 --> 00:31:04,030
employed two Jews.

375
00:31:04,030 --> 00:31:08,590
They were found, they were
called by Report Fuhrer.

376
00:31:08,590 --> 00:31:11,320

377
00:31:11,320 --> 00:31:18,310
On one of the role
calls in the evening,

378
00:31:18,310 --> 00:31:23,670
the commandant wanted
somebody who is a writer.

379
00:31:23,670 --> 00:31:25,490
So one step out.

380
00:31:25,490 --> 00:31:26,640
Several step out.

381
00:31:26,640 --> 00:31:28,590
He choose one.

382
00:31:28,590 --> 00:31:30,660
And he was a rabbi.

383
00:31:30,660 --> 00:31:35,400
So he says, you know,
you're going to translate

384
00:31:35,400 --> 00:31:37,530
a Bible into German.

385
00:31:37,530 --> 00:31:40,290
But he says, I
don't know German.

386
00:31:40,290 --> 00:31:41,580
I know only Polish.

387
00:31:41,580 --> 00:31:43,890
He was from Warsaw.

388
00:31:43,890 --> 00:31:49,020
So they chose another
fellow who could translate

389
00:31:49,020 --> 00:31:52,260
from Polish to German.

390
00:31:52,260 --> 00:32:00,390
And they receive the place
to work in the museum.

391
00:32:00,390 --> 00:32:04,590
Of course, they did only one
page in the whole two years

392
00:32:04,590 --> 00:32:10,050
when I was there in Auschwitz.

393
00:32:10,050 --> 00:32:15,640
And in the meantime, the
commandant was changed.

394

00:32:15,640 --> 00:32:22,050
Came another one who didn't
know nothing about this project,

395

00:32:22,050 --> 00:32:25,550
because this was a
personal project anyway.

396

00:32:25,550 --> 00:32:29,100
But they survived
because of that,

397

00:32:29,100 --> 00:32:32,160
because they had
a place to stay.

398

00:32:32,160 --> 00:32:34,680
And they were forgotten people.

399

00:32:34,680 --> 00:32:40,140
Other thousands of men
were arriving daily

400

00:32:40,140 --> 00:32:44,050
to Brzezinka, men,
women, and children.

401

00:32:44,050 --> 00:32:46,320
They were gassed.

402

00:32:46,320 --> 00:32:50,280
But those two stayed alive.

403

00:32:50,280 --> 00:32:52,530
And nobody care about them.

404

00:32:52,530 --> 00:32:56,790
You know, that is the ironic
situation of the camp.

405

00:32:56,790 --> 00:33:00,510
If you found yourself

in the situation

406

00:33:00,510 --> 00:33:06,060

that you became nobody,
you could survive.

407

00:33:06,060 --> 00:33:12,640

408

00:33:12,640 --> 00:33:16,360

I'm afraid were
about to run out.

409

00:33:16,360 --> 00:33:17,350

Am I right?

410

00:33:17,350 --> 00:33:18,070

Yes.

411

00:33:18,070 --> 00:33:20,110

We want to put
another roll of film--

412

00:33:20,110 --> 00:33:21,828

Camera roll 4, take 5.

413

00:33:21,828 --> 00:33:23,970

[BEEP]

414

00:33:23,970 --> 00:33:28,960

Now, I want to talk about how
you came to attempt to escape.

415

00:33:28,960 --> 00:33:31,250

And I want to know how--