

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:02,846  
Here with Cecilie--

2  
00:00:02,846 --> 00:00:06,570  
I think she pronounces it  
"Ce-cile--" Klein-Pollack.

3  
00:00:06,570 --> 00:00:21,496

4  
00:00:21,496 --> 00:00:22,978  
[BEEP]

5  
00:00:22,978 --> 00:00:26,460

6  
00:00:26,460 --> 00:00:31,350  
I want to start with your  
describing the deportation

7  
00:00:31,350 --> 00:00:34,170  
from the ghetto, and  
I want you to include

8  
00:00:34,170 --> 00:00:38,160  
the context, the time, the  
place, who was with you,

9  
00:00:38,160 --> 00:00:39,060  
and what happened.

10  
00:00:39,060 --> 00:00:42,560

11  
00:00:42,560 --> 00:00:45,980  
I was in Hust.

12  
00:00:45,980 --> 00:00:48,650  
The name of the ghetto was Hust.

13

00:00:48,650 --> 00:00:51,800

This was a town  
in Czechoslovakia

14

00:00:51,800 --> 00:00:55,670

which was occupied at that  
time by the Hungarians

15

00:00:55,670 --> 00:00:59,480

because it was annexed  
by the Hungarians.

16

00:00:59,480 --> 00:01:04,099

And my mother was with me  
in the ghetto, my sister,

17

00:01:04,099 --> 00:01:10,550

her little boy Donny,  
and her husband.

18

00:01:10,550 --> 00:01:14,720

They came, the Hungarian police.

19

00:01:14,720 --> 00:01:17,570

20

00:01:17,570 --> 00:01:21,260

First of all, we were  
always brutalized

21

00:01:21,260 --> 00:01:30,160

because they would just come  
in and take out some girls

22

00:01:30,160 --> 00:01:37,220

and make them do all kinds  
of stupid things, or men.

23

00:01:37,220 --> 00:01:42,080

They would tell the men  
to walk on all fours

24

00:01:42,080 --> 00:01:47,090

and be like horses, and they  
would ride on them in order

25  
00:01:47,090 --> 00:01:50,810  
to brutalize them.

26  
00:01:50,810 --> 00:01:56,820  
But then came the time when  
they just chased everybody out.

27  
00:01:56,820 --> 00:02:01,760  
They told us the day before that  
we can pack one small suitcase

28  
00:02:01,760 --> 00:02:06,920  
and we should be ready  
to leave the ghetto.

29  
00:02:06,920 --> 00:02:10,070  
When we came to the--

30  
00:02:10,070 --> 00:02:18,260  
it was at one time a  
factory for bricks.

31  
00:02:18,260 --> 00:02:23,720  
And there they started  
to search us again.

32  
00:02:23,720 --> 00:02:26,870  
The SS was there also.

33  
00:02:26,870 --> 00:02:35,270  
And every woman and every  
girl had to undress naked

34  
00:02:35,270 --> 00:02:38,870  
and we were searched  
internally for valuables.

35  
00:02:38,870 --> 00:02:42,660

36

00:02:42,660 --> 00:02:47,430

My mother was a very  
religious person,

37

00:02:47,430 --> 00:02:53,250

and all I could think of was how  
terrible this is for my mother

38

00:02:53,250 --> 00:02:55,200

to go through something--

39

00:02:55,200 --> 00:02:59,310

such a terrible ordeal.

40

00:02:59,310 --> 00:03:06,510

When we were finished, my mother  
took the baby from my sister

41

00:03:06,510 --> 00:03:11,280

because she was holding  
the little boy Donny,

42

00:03:11,280 --> 00:03:16,680

and she had a bottle  
of milk for the child.

43

00:03:16,680 --> 00:03:22,080

And the SS grabbed the  
bottle of milk and said,

44

00:03:22,080 --> 00:03:25,150

let's see, you cow,  
what you have there.

45

00:03:25,150 --> 00:03:29,430

And my mother pleaded, please,  
the child needs the milk.

46

00:03:29,430 --> 00:03:33,690

Please don't take the  
milk from my grandson.

47

00:03:33,690 --> 00:03:37,740

He started to beat  
her with a horsewhip.

48

00:03:37,740 --> 00:03:41,670

And when I saw that  
she was being beaten

49

00:03:41,670 --> 00:03:45,810

so I screamed so at least  
I got away the attention

50

00:03:45,810 --> 00:03:47,820

from my mother.

51

00:03:47,820 --> 00:03:51,660

So my mother ran into  
the-- because the trains

52

00:03:51,660 --> 00:03:53,430

were right there.

53

00:03:53,430 --> 00:03:58,170

We were just, you know, going  
into those cattle trains.

54

00:03:58,170 --> 00:04:00,240

So I took away the  
attention from my mother

55

00:04:00,240 --> 00:04:04,230

and he started to beat  
me with that whip.

56

00:04:04,230 --> 00:04:10,170

And finally I was  
able to run away also

57

00:04:10,170 --> 00:04:15,000

and we were finally  
in the cattle train.

58

00:04:15,000 --> 00:04:18,630

We were pushed in like herrings.

59

00:04:18,630 --> 00:04:26,850

At least 75 to 80 people,  
which would only hold maybe 30.

60

00:04:26,850 --> 00:04:29,460

There was no room even--

61

00:04:29,460 --> 00:04:32,820

not to lie down but to sit.

62

00:04:32,820 --> 00:04:35,100

Most of the people  
were standing.

63

00:04:35,100 --> 00:04:40,200

And then when we got very  
tired, we would be sitting down.

64

00:04:40,200 --> 00:04:42,900

And they locked us in.

65

00:04:42,900 --> 00:04:46,050

And finally the trains--

66

00:04:46,050 --> 00:04:54,120

before the trains took off,  
an SS came in and told--

67

00:04:54,120 --> 00:05:00,380

and picked out my brother-in-law  
that he is going to be the one

68

00:05:00,380 --> 00:05:04,280

responsible for--

69

00:05:04,280 --> 00:05:10,310

they gave us two pails  
for bodily functions

70

00:05:10,310 --> 00:05:15,710

and we were traveling  
24 hours before they

71  
00:05:15,710 --> 00:05:18,710  
opened those cattle trains.

72  
00:05:18,710 --> 00:05:24,740  
And then my brother-in-law  
had to take out those pails

73  
00:05:24,740 --> 00:05:28,280  
and they told him  
to bring in water.

74  
00:05:28,280 --> 00:05:33,050  
In the same pails we  
received the water.

75  
00:05:33,050 --> 00:05:38,450  
And he told my brother-in-law  
that if anybody would escape,

76  
00:05:38,450 --> 00:05:40,430  
then he would be killed.

77  
00:05:40,430 --> 00:05:43,610  
There was no way to escape  
because there was nowhere

78  
00:05:43,610 --> 00:05:45,710  
to escape.

79  
00:05:45,710 --> 00:05:50,120  
We traveled three  
days and three nights.

80  
00:05:50,120 --> 00:05:54,680  
Each time they stopped they  
would take out those pails

81  
00:05:54,680 --> 00:05:56,630  
and bring in water.

82

00:05:56,630 --> 00:06:05,030

But the journey was one  
of the greatest horrors.

83

00:06:05,030 --> 00:06:10,970

First of all, we had no idea  
where we are being taken.

84

00:06:10,970 --> 00:06:16,550

And most of the people  
were either praying

85

00:06:16,550 --> 00:06:21,800

or they were talking about  
the past and about the future

86

00:06:21,800 --> 00:06:23,390

and where we should meet.

87

00:06:23,390 --> 00:06:27,035

And my mother wanted  
to cheer us up

88

00:06:27,035 --> 00:06:33,470

so she would tell us that she is  
sure that wherever we are going

89

00:06:33,470 --> 00:06:34,550

we are going to meet--

90

00:06:34,550 --> 00:06:37,490

my other sister was  
not with us because she

91

00:06:37,490 --> 00:06:43,250

was taken before we were  
separated because we ran away

92

00:06:43,250 --> 00:06:48,560

a few years prior, and  
my sister was therefore

93

00:06:48,560 --> 00:06:53,880  
taken away with her children  
to a different ghetto.

94  
00:06:53,880 --> 00:06:59,030  
And we missed her terribly  
and my mother always

95  
00:06:59,030 --> 00:07:03,680  
hoped that we shall  
meet my sister.

96  
00:07:03,680 --> 00:07:08,310  
Then when we  
arrived to Auschwitz

97  
00:07:08,310 --> 00:07:13,080  
it was like we had just come  
in to a different world.

98  
00:07:13,080 --> 00:07:18,450  
They opened up  
those cattle trains.

99  
00:07:18,450 --> 00:07:23,430  
People in striped  
uniforms came on the train

100  
00:07:23,430 --> 00:07:28,680  
and they started to shout  
we should get out and leave

101  
00:07:28,680 --> 00:07:33,210  
everything behind  
and whatever we have

102  
00:07:33,210 --> 00:07:37,110  
is going to be delivered to us.

103  
00:07:37,110 --> 00:07:40,980  
My brother-in-law  
still had a watch

104

00:07:40,980 --> 00:07:47,340  
so he asked one of these men  
in those striped uniforms,

105  
00:07:47,340 --> 00:07:49,750  
please tell me  
what's going on here.

106  
00:07:49,750 --> 00:07:53,190  
So they were not  
allowed to say anything

107  
00:07:53,190 --> 00:07:56,400  
because they were prisoners.

108  
00:07:56,400 --> 00:08:00,060  
They're already here for years.

109  
00:08:00,060 --> 00:08:03,510  
But then my brother-in-law  
gave him the watch

110  
00:08:03,510 --> 00:08:08,310  
so he told him in Jewish and  
my mother was standing next

111  
00:08:08,310 --> 00:08:10,530  
to my brother-in-law and  
I was also standing next

112  
00:08:10,530 --> 00:08:11,860  
to my brother-in-law.

113  
00:08:11,860 --> 00:08:13,920  
But my sister, as  
soon as the train

114  
00:08:13,920 --> 00:08:17,460  
opened and the child was  
crying, so she ran down quickly

115  
00:08:17,460 --> 00:08:20,880  
from the train to get some air.

116  
00:08:20,880 --> 00:08:25,320  
So this man told  
my brother-in-law,

117  
00:08:25,320 --> 00:08:30,420  
if you have children, then  
give away the children

118  
00:08:30,420 --> 00:08:36,360  
either to elderly people or  
people with-- because people

119  
00:08:36,360 --> 00:08:41,159  
with children are going  
to be killed the same day.

120  
00:08:41,159 --> 00:08:43,799  
And as soon as my  
mother heard that,

121  
00:08:43,799 --> 00:08:47,910  
she had presence of  
mind to run down.

122  
00:08:47,910 --> 00:08:51,270  
And I was next to my mother,  
and I couldn't really

123  
00:08:51,270 --> 00:08:54,240  
believe that this  
could possibly be true.

124  
00:08:54,240 --> 00:08:58,620  
But she ran over to my sister,  
removed the child from her arms

125  
00:08:58,620 --> 00:09:01,650  
and told her, darling,  
I just found out

126  
00:09:01,650 --> 00:09:05,260  
that women with children

will have it very easy.

127

00:09:05,260 --> 00:09:06,460

All they will do--

128

00:09:06,460 --> 00:09:08,490

they will take care  
of the children,

129

00:09:08,490 --> 00:09:11,430

but young people will  
be sent on hard labor

130

00:09:11,430 --> 00:09:13,860

and, you know, I'm not  
so young, I'll never

131

00:09:13,860 --> 00:09:16,570

be able to survive hard labor.

132

00:09:16,570 --> 00:09:20,910

So she was trying to  
make my sister believe

133

00:09:20,910 --> 00:09:25,020

that by giving her the child  
she's going to help her.

134

00:09:25,020 --> 00:09:28,200

Before my sister  
had even a chance

135

00:09:28,200 --> 00:09:32,790

to resist or to say no, I don't  
want to give the child up,

136

00:09:32,790 --> 00:09:35,220

my mother had the  
child in her arm.

137

00:09:35,220 --> 00:09:38,340

And as soon as my mother  
had the child in her arm,

138  
00:09:38,340 --> 00:09:44,910  
there was standing  
an SS, and his name--

139  
00:09:44,910 --> 00:09:48,690  
eventually we learned  
that his name was Mengele.

140  
00:09:48,690 --> 00:09:53,130  
So whoever had children,  
young people and old people,

141  
00:09:53,130 --> 00:09:54,300  
he separated.

142  
00:09:54,300 --> 00:09:58,590  
So to the left and to the right.

143  
00:09:58,590 --> 00:10:03,480  
So this is how I remained  
with my sister standing

144  
00:10:03,480 --> 00:10:06,090  
with the other  
women, young women.

145  
00:10:06,090 --> 00:10:12,540  
And then you want to ask  
me other questions or shall

146  
00:10:12,540 --> 00:10:13,220  
I continue?

147  
00:10:13,220 --> 00:10:15,390  
Yeah.

148  
00:10:15,390 --> 00:10:19,140  
So this is the last-- my  
mother had only a chance

149  
00:10:19,140 --> 00:10:23,160

to yell out to me, take  
care of your sister,

150  
00:10:23,160 --> 00:10:28,050  
because she knew where she  
was taking her grandson.

151  
00:10:28,050 --> 00:10:30,570  
And although I was  
the younger, she

152  
00:10:30,570 --> 00:10:36,480  
knew how my sister will suffer  
when she'll find out what

153  
00:10:36,480 --> 00:10:39,810  
happened to her little son.

154  
00:10:39,810 --> 00:10:42,810  
And we really didn't  
have too much time

155  
00:10:42,810 --> 00:10:48,060  
to reflect on anything because  
everything was done brutally,

156  
00:10:48,060 --> 00:10:49,840  
the shouting.

157  
00:10:49,840 --> 00:10:54,660  
And we were terrified  
because all we

158  
00:10:54,660 --> 00:10:58,440  
saw there were SS  
with large dogs

159  
00:10:58,440 --> 00:11:04,710  
and screaming to stand  
in line, to get into line

160  
00:11:04,710 --> 00:11:12,030  
and the separation of us

being conducted with beating.

161  
00:11:12,030 --> 00:11:14,580  
So if somebody  
didn't move quickly

162  
00:11:14,580 --> 00:11:17,820  
or didn't stay straight or--

163  
00:11:17,820 --> 00:11:24,900  
so it was-- everything done with  
brutality and with force so you

164  
00:11:24,900 --> 00:11:27,430  
just did whatever--

165  
00:11:27,430 --> 00:11:33,480  
Yeah, and where you  
should begin is--

166  
00:11:33,480 --> 00:11:35,160  
why don't you begin  
with the cattle

167  
00:11:35,160 --> 00:11:39,940  
cars arriving and the  
doors being flung open.

168  
00:11:39,940 --> 00:11:43,900

169  
00:11:43,900 --> 00:11:44,400  
OK.

170  
00:11:44,400 --> 00:11:47,430

171  
00:11:47,430 --> 00:11:52,020  
The cattle cars  
arrived to Auschwitz.

172  
00:11:52,020 --> 00:11:54,510

At that time we didn't  
know this was Auschwitz.

173  
00:11:54,510 --> 00:11:58,590

174  
00:11:58,590 --> 00:12:05,850  
Some people in striped  
uniforms came on the train

175  
00:12:05,850 --> 00:12:09,150  
and they started  
to yell at us we

176  
00:12:09,150 --> 00:12:12,705  
should get out and  
leave everything behind.

177  
00:12:12,705 --> 00:12:15,320

178  
00:12:15,320 --> 00:12:18,590  
Everybody was  
terribly frightened

179  
00:12:18,590 --> 00:12:21,950  
because we didn't know  
what's going to happen to us.

180  
00:12:21,950 --> 00:12:25,250  
My brother-in-law  
asked this man,

181  
00:12:25,250 --> 00:12:30,230  
please tell me what's going  
on here because downstairs--

182  
00:12:30,230 --> 00:12:34,700  
outside we heard a lot  
of barking and shouting

183  
00:12:34,700 --> 00:12:37,760  
and a lot of commotion.

184  
00:12:37,760 --> 00:12:40,220  
He didn't want to say anything.

185  
00:12:40,220 --> 00:12:43,040  
He was just quiet.

186  
00:12:43,040 --> 00:12:46,640  
But then when my brother-in-law  
still had a watch

187  
00:12:46,640 --> 00:12:54,320  
and he slipped him the watch, he  
told him, if you have children,

188  
00:12:54,320 --> 00:12:56,810  
give the children away.

189  
00:12:56,810 --> 00:12:59,150  
And if you have a wife  
and she has a child,

190  
00:12:59,150 --> 00:13:02,630  
then she is not going to--

191  
00:13:02,630 --> 00:13:05,990  
she will be killed unless you  
give the child to somebody

192  
00:13:05,990 --> 00:13:09,260  
else, to older  
people, because they

193  
00:13:09,260 --> 00:13:12,170  
are going to be killed anyway.

194  
00:13:12,170 --> 00:13:17,660  
My mother was standing next  
to my brother along with me

195  
00:13:17,660 --> 00:13:19,910  
and my sister was

already downstairs

196  
00:13:19,910 --> 00:13:23,930  
because she was glad to be able  
to get out of the cattle train

197  
00:13:23,930 --> 00:13:25,920  
so that the child  
should get some air

198  
00:13:25,920 --> 00:13:29,570  
after this terrible journey.

199  
00:13:29,570 --> 00:13:31,580  
As soon as my mother  
heard that, she

200  
00:13:31,580 --> 00:13:36,530  
had the presence of mind  
to run over to my sister,

201  
00:13:36,530 --> 00:13:39,920  
quickly remove the child  
from her arm and told her,

202  
00:13:39,920 --> 00:13:43,400  
darling, I just found out  
that women with children

203  
00:13:43,400 --> 00:13:44,820  
will have it easy.

204  
00:13:44,820 --> 00:13:47,570  
All they will do is take  
care of the children.

205  
00:13:47,570 --> 00:13:50,600  
But young people will  
go on hard labor.

206  
00:13:50,600 --> 00:13:53,510  
And I'm not so young  
and I'm not so well.

207

00:13:53,510 --> 00:13:57,890

I will never survive so I'll  
take good care of your child

208

00:13:57,890 --> 00:14:01,460

and you take care  
of your sister.

209

00:14:01,460 --> 00:14:04,220

But as soon as she had  
the child in her arms

210

00:14:04,220 --> 00:14:06,770

and before my sister  
had even a chance

211

00:14:06,770 --> 00:14:10,460

to object because no  
mother likes to give up

212

00:14:10,460 --> 00:14:16,970

her child for whatever  
reason, she was pushed away

213

00:14:16,970 --> 00:14:23,240

between the single people, and  
my mother was pushed by Mengele

214

00:14:23,240 --> 00:14:24,980

whom we found out  
that was his name

215

00:14:24,980 --> 00:14:29,480

only later because he  
did the selections,

216

00:14:29,480 --> 00:14:33,260

she was pushed to the side where  
all the women with children

217

00:14:33,260 --> 00:14:36,680

and older people were standing.

218  
00:14:36,680 --> 00:14:38,300  
She had only a chance--

219  
00:14:38,300 --> 00:14:42,480  
my mother had only a  
chance to yell out to me,

220  
00:14:42,480 --> 00:14:45,020  
please take care of your sister.

221  
00:14:45,020 --> 00:14:48,920  
My name was [? Cecilie. ?]  
This is how she called me.

222  
00:14:48,920 --> 00:14:51,200  
And she called  
out, [? Cilica, ?]

223  
00:14:51,200 --> 00:14:54,260  
take care of your  
sister because she

224  
00:14:54,260 --> 00:15:03,380  
knew the pain my sister will  
suffer when she'll find out

225  
00:15:03,380 --> 00:15:05,810  
where she took her grandson.

226  
00:15:05,810 --> 00:15:08,510

227  
00:15:08,510 --> 00:15:13,220  
But we really had  
no time or a chance

228  
00:15:13,220 --> 00:15:17,810  
to reflect yet on the  
separation because everything

229  
00:15:17,810 --> 00:15:21,080

was done with such  
brutality, with such

230  
00:15:21,080 --> 00:15:23,390  
screaming and yelling.

231  
00:15:23,390 --> 00:15:27,215  
And right away there  
were the Kapos and block

232  
00:15:27,215 --> 00:15:33,500  
elders who started to beat  
us into line and the SS

233  
00:15:33,500 --> 00:15:38,360  
with their dogs who  
were barking and they

234  
00:15:38,360 --> 00:15:43,010  
were trained to tear  
anybody to pieces

235  
00:15:43,010 --> 00:15:46,920  
if one did not obey the orders.

236  
00:15:46,920 --> 00:15:53,870  
And so we were finally  
lined up and they marched us

237  
00:15:53,870 --> 00:16:01,830  
to a huge building  
which had shower caps,

238  
00:16:01,830 --> 00:16:06,360  
and we were told to undress.

239  
00:16:06,360 --> 00:16:09,030  
And I was always--

240  
00:16:09,030 --> 00:16:15,030  
I was young and  
vain and I dressed

241

00:16:15,030 --> 00:16:20,610

in my best clothes, my  
nice coat, my best dress,

242

00:16:20,610 --> 00:16:24,990

so I put it nicely  
together when I undressed.

243

00:16:24,990 --> 00:16:33,260

And there comes over this Kapo  
and she flings it to the side.

244

00:16:33,260 --> 00:16:35,970

And I say, this is my clothes.

245

00:16:35,970 --> 00:16:38,527

She said, yes, but you  
won't need it anymore.

246

00:16:38,527 --> 00:16:41,610

247

00:16:41,610 --> 00:16:45,210

And I was terribly  
scared because I

248

00:16:45,210 --> 00:16:47,850

didn't know what that meant.

249

00:16:47,850 --> 00:16:51,450

Then when we were  
undressed we were ordered--

250

00:16:51,450 --> 00:16:56,820

everybody was ordered  
to stand up on a stool

251

00:16:56,820 --> 00:16:58,770

and they shaved us.

252

00:16:58,770 --> 00:17:03,270

They shaved our hair

and the private parts.

253

00:17:03,270 --> 00:17:09,750

And we looked-- we couldn't  
even recognize each other.

254

00:17:09,750 --> 00:17:16,050

Once we were stripped not only  
of our clothes but of our hair

255

00:17:16,050 --> 00:17:22,530

then we were shoved  
into those showers.

256

00:17:22,530 --> 00:17:27,900

And they first opened the  
hot water so we were scalded.

257

00:17:27,900 --> 00:17:31,380

And as we ran out from  
under the hot water,

258

00:17:31,380 --> 00:17:36,630

we were beaten back by  
the SS and by the Kapos

259

00:17:36,630 --> 00:17:38,850

to go under the showers again.

260

00:17:38,850 --> 00:17:42,310

So they opened the  
ice cold water,

261

00:17:42,310 --> 00:17:46,260

which had the same effect.

262

00:17:46,260 --> 00:17:51,570

And finally we were  
out of this shower.

263

00:17:51,570 --> 00:17:57,250

Each of us was  
given one garment,

264  
00:17:57,250 --> 00:17:58,530  
which, of course, didn't fit.

265  
00:17:58,530 --> 00:18:01,200  
Some got smaller--  
that was too small,

266  
00:18:01,200 --> 00:18:04,200  
some got that was too large.

267  
00:18:04,200 --> 00:18:08,310  
We didn't receive  
not even underwear

268  
00:18:08,310 --> 00:18:10,290  
or brassieres or panties.

269  
00:18:10,290 --> 00:18:12,990  
Just that one dress.

270  
00:18:12,990 --> 00:18:14,910  
It was not a striped dress.

271  
00:18:14,910 --> 00:18:20,950  
It was just a dress that  
probably the ones before us

272  
00:18:20,950 --> 00:18:25,720  
were killed and they had  
taken away the clothes.

273  
00:18:25,720 --> 00:18:31,270  
And finally we were  
ordered to line up.

274  
00:18:31,270 --> 00:18:32,920  
My sister was  
calling my name and I

275  
00:18:32,920 --> 00:18:35,467  
was calling her name even

though we were standing next

276  
00:18:35,467 --> 00:18:36,050  
to each other.

277  
00:18:36,050 --> 00:18:38,680  
We didn't recognize each other.

278  
00:18:38,680 --> 00:18:41,230  
This is how we looked  
after we were--

279  
00:18:41,230 --> 00:18:43,840  
after they finished with us.

280  
00:18:43,840 --> 00:18:47,446  
And then they marched us.

281  
00:18:47,446 --> 00:18:50,960  
We were five in a row.

282  
00:18:50,960 --> 00:18:54,610  
And as we were  
marching, you could see

283  
00:18:54,610 --> 00:18:57,460  
flames and you could smell--

284  
00:18:57,460 --> 00:19:03,760  
there was a smell of smoke as  
you would barbecue something.

285  
00:19:03,760 --> 00:19:07,720  
And then we asked the ones--

286  
00:19:07,720 --> 00:19:12,130  
those block elders-- the  
Kapos who were escorting us,

287  
00:19:12,130 --> 00:19:14,280  
what is this smell?

288

00:19:14,280 --> 00:19:18,090

So she said, these  
are your fathers,

289

00:19:18,090 --> 00:19:21,600

your brothers, your  
sisters, your children.

290

00:19:21,600 --> 00:19:24,540

And when my sister heard  
that, I said, you know,

291

00:19:24,540 --> 00:19:26,130

don't listen to her.

292

00:19:26,130 --> 00:19:29,310

She's only trying to scare us.

293

00:19:29,310 --> 00:19:32,280

And nobody-- even  
if when I heard it

294

00:19:32,280 --> 00:19:37,440

and even what I heard that this  
man told my brother-in-law,

295

00:19:37,440 --> 00:19:41,040

I really truly didn't  
believe at that time

296

00:19:41,040 --> 00:19:43,920

that this could  
possibly be true,

297

00:19:43,920 --> 00:19:51,660

that anybody could just take and  
kill completely innocent people

298

00:19:51,660 --> 00:19:55,690

that didn't commit any crimes.

299

00:19:55,690 --> 00:19:59,020

I thought there must  
be some mistake.

300  
00:19:59,020 --> 00:20:03,220  
Then we were led into--

301  
00:20:03,220 --> 00:20:09,880  
it looked like a big stable  
and it had three layer bunks.

302  
00:20:09,880 --> 00:20:14,650  
And we were ordered to  
go into that stable.

303  
00:20:14,650 --> 00:20:17,020  
The number of that stable--

304  
00:20:17,020 --> 00:20:23,380  
there were 30 stables  
like those and they

305  
00:20:23,380 --> 00:20:29,920  
pushed in 1,000 girls  
in one such stable.

306  
00:20:29,920 --> 00:20:37,870  
We were-- to each  
bunk we were 10.

307  
00:20:37,870 --> 00:20:44,470  
And we received-- everybody  
received a blanket.

308  
00:20:44,470 --> 00:20:46,360  
And you could not--

309  
00:20:46,360 --> 00:20:49,420  
you had to-- when  
you went to sleep,

310  
00:20:49,420 --> 00:20:54,770  
you could only sleep on your  
side because if one turned,

311  
00:20:54,770 --> 00:20:58,120  
all of us had to turn  
because there was no way

312  
00:20:58,120 --> 00:21:01,930  
that one could turn and  
the other one because there

313  
00:21:01,930 --> 00:21:03,430  
was no room otherwise.

314  
00:21:03,430 --> 00:21:06,540

315  
00:21:06,540 --> 00:21:11,370  
In the morning they woke us up.

316  
00:21:11,370 --> 00:21:13,740  
Tell me when you  
want me to stop.

317  
00:21:13,740 --> 00:21:19,380  
In the morning they  
woke us up at 5 o'clock

318  
00:21:19,380 --> 00:21:25,630  
and we had to line  
up for roll call.

319  
00:21:25,630 --> 00:21:34,820  
And we received some  
that looked like coffee,

320  
00:21:34,820 --> 00:21:38,480  
but it was just some  
colored black water.

321  
00:21:38,480 --> 00:21:42,170  
This was our breakfast.

322  
00:21:42,170 --> 00:21:57,690

At lunchtime, we got a cup and  
we all had to keep this cup.

323  
00:21:57,690 --> 00:22:02,460  
This was our most  
important possession

324  
00:22:02,460 --> 00:22:04,320  
because if you  
wouldn't have this cup,

325  
00:22:04,320 --> 00:22:10,140  
then you could not receive  
your portion of the soup that

326  
00:22:10,140 --> 00:22:13,830  
was distributed at lunchtime.

327  
00:22:13,830 --> 00:22:18,390  
But it was so terrible  
that we still were not

328  
00:22:18,390 --> 00:22:27,420  
used to eat this kind of  
food so we did not eat it,

329  
00:22:27,420 --> 00:22:32,190  
and then we realized the  
big mistake that we were

330  
00:22:32,190 --> 00:22:35,510  
making because this meant--

331  
00:22:35,510 --> 00:22:39,100  
if you didn't--  
we got such poor--

332  
00:22:39,100 --> 00:22:39,600  
[BEEP]

333  
00:22:39,600 --> 00:22:44,730

334

00:22:44,730 --> 00:22:49,140

Why don't you start with  
being given the cup.

335

00:22:49,140 --> 00:22:52,020

OK.

336

00:22:52,020 --> 00:22:58,410

The cup that we received became  
our most prized possession

337

00:22:58,410 --> 00:23:02,460

for without it we would starve.

338

00:23:02,460 --> 00:23:07,600

Our rations were anyway  
starvation rations,

339

00:23:07,600 --> 00:23:15,970

therefore it was so important  
to be able to have every meal.

340

00:23:15,970 --> 00:23:23,650

And we received lunchtime a  
cup of soup which was watery

341

00:23:23,650 --> 00:23:27,580

and was just swimming  
a little potato.

342

00:23:27,580 --> 00:23:33,160

And in the evening we would  
receive a piece of bread

343

00:23:33,160 --> 00:23:37,390

and some would receive  
a piece of margarine

344

00:23:37,390 --> 00:23:42,010

and some would receive, let's  
say, a piece of head cheese.

345

00:23:42,010 --> 00:23:47,980  
I always tried to change the  
head cheese for margarine

346  
00:23:47,980 --> 00:23:54,730  
because my sister became  
completely despondent

347  
00:23:54,730 --> 00:23:58,870  
and depressed over  
the loss of her child

348  
00:23:58,870 --> 00:24:01,600  
and she refused to eat.

349  
00:24:01,600 --> 00:24:08,680  
So I would force open her  
mouth because the margarine

350  
00:24:08,680 --> 00:24:14,470  
will dissolve but the head  
cheese she wouldn't swallow.

351  
00:24:14,470 --> 00:24:20,470  
And my sister only  
after a few days

352  
00:24:20,470 --> 00:24:26,770  
even, didn't even last long, she  
started to talk about suicide.

353  
00:24:26,770 --> 00:24:33,070  
Our camp was surrounded by  
electrically charged wires,

354  
00:24:33,070 --> 00:24:39,910  
and all she wanted was to go to  
those wires and kill herself.

355  
00:24:39,910 --> 00:24:44,530  
I wanted very much  
to live, and I

356

00:24:44,530 --> 00:24:52,070  
tried to tell my sister  
that she promised

357  
00:24:52,070 --> 00:24:57,980  
that she's going to take care  
of me and she's the older one

358  
00:24:57,980 --> 00:25:00,200  
and I tried to  
talk her out of it.

359  
00:25:00,200 --> 00:25:04,190  
And then I saw that  
she does not really

360  
00:25:04,190 --> 00:25:09,200  
understand me very well so  
I used a different tactic.

361  
00:25:09,200 --> 00:25:10,070  
I promised her.

362  
00:25:10,070 --> 00:25:11,780  
I said, I'll go with you.

363  
00:25:11,780 --> 00:25:14,780  
But you tell me  
when you want to go

364  
00:25:14,780 --> 00:25:18,170  
because this way I  
could keep track of her

365  
00:25:18,170 --> 00:25:22,160  
and I could always  
persuade her not to do it.

366  
00:25:22,160 --> 00:25:25,010  
I would always tell  
her, don't do it today.

367  
00:25:25,010 --> 00:25:28,280

Look, it's still  
warm and we'll do it

368  
00:25:28,280 --> 00:25:31,540  
when we can't take it anymore  
and it's going to get cold.

369  
00:25:31,540 --> 00:25:40,730  
Or I would tell her, don't do  
it today because today is--

370  
00:25:40,730 --> 00:25:45,140  
let's say today is going to be--

371  
00:25:45,140 --> 00:25:47,600  
we are going to get  
a piece of salami

372  
00:25:47,600 --> 00:25:51,500  
or I would always  
promise her something

373  
00:25:51,500 --> 00:25:55,400  
good will come out of that day.

374  
00:25:55,400 --> 00:26:00,830  
And so she sort of waited for  
me that I'm going to go with her

375  
00:26:00,830 --> 00:26:03,170  
and this is how  
I was able always

376  
00:26:03,170 --> 00:26:08,810  
to keep her from doing this  
deed and hoping that she

377  
00:26:08,810 --> 00:26:11,270  
will get used to the situation.

378  
00:26:11,270 --> 00:26:14,570

379

00:26:14,570 --> 00:26:21,610

But as time went on, the lack  
of food that we were getting

380

00:26:21,610 --> 00:26:28,060

started to take its toll and we  
were starting to deteriorate.

381

00:26:28,060 --> 00:26:33,070

Ours was-- it was not a camp.

382

00:26:33,070 --> 00:26:37,570

Birkenau was not a camp that  
they were sending you to work.

383

00:26:37,570 --> 00:26:40,300

It was an extermination camp.

384

00:26:40,300 --> 00:26:44,410

They only kept you  
there long enough

385

00:26:44,410 --> 00:26:50,170

until they needed the place  
for other people to bring in.

386

00:26:50,170 --> 00:26:52,480

And as soon as you  
were deteriorated,

387

00:26:52,480 --> 00:26:59,080

they would make selections and  
take you to the gas chambers.

388

00:26:59,080 --> 00:27:05,740

And realizing this,  
I started to try--

389

00:27:05,740 --> 00:27:09,370

to eat everything  
that I were given

390

00:27:09,370 --> 00:27:12,130  
and I would force my  
sister to do the same.

391  
00:27:12,130 --> 00:27:14,910

392  
00:27:14,910 --> 00:27:20,400  
But then I met a friend of mine.

393  
00:27:20,400 --> 00:27:22,080  
I recognized her.

394  
00:27:22,080 --> 00:27:26,300  
And she was in a  
different block.

395  
00:27:26,300 --> 00:27:28,880  
And she was very happy  
to see me because we

396  
00:27:28,880 --> 00:27:31,380  
were friends from the ghetto.

397  
00:27:31,380 --> 00:27:34,880  
So she told me that I  
should come to her block,

398  
00:27:34,880 --> 00:27:40,160  
but hers was a children block,  
only children out there from--

399  
00:27:40,160 --> 00:27:44,540  
it was from 14 and up.

400  
00:27:44,540 --> 00:27:48,440  
Mostly 14, 15, 13-year-olds.

401  
00:27:48,440 --> 00:27:56,180  
But my sister was already 22  
and I was already 19 then,

402

00:27:56,180 --> 00:27:59,900  
but I looked very  
thin and skinny,

403  
00:27:59,900 --> 00:28:05,660  
and I didn't look my age because  
I had been already starving

404  
00:28:05,660 --> 00:28:11,830  
for years before because  
I was mostly in hiding.

405  
00:28:11,830 --> 00:28:18,230  
We didn't have papers and I  
didn't have the proper food

406  
00:28:18,230 --> 00:28:20,430  
for a few years.

407  
00:28:20,430 --> 00:28:27,440  
So she knew that I write poetry  
and she told me that her block

408  
00:28:27,440 --> 00:28:30,270  
elders likes talented children.

409  
00:28:30,270 --> 00:28:32,360  
She will tell her about me.

410  
00:28:32,360 --> 00:28:33,800  
So I told her, all right.

411  
00:28:33,800 --> 00:28:38,930  
So she asked me whether  
I have any poems,

412  
00:28:38,930 --> 00:28:43,850  
and I knew all my  
poems by heart.

413  
00:28:43,850 --> 00:28:47,300  
I didn't-- because we had  
no pencil and paper there.

414  
00:28:47,300 --> 00:28:51,800  
So I told her, yes, in fact  
I had some composed already

415  
00:28:51,800 --> 00:28:54,770  
since I'm here in German.

416  
00:28:54,770 --> 00:28:58,970  
And so she told the block eldest  
about me, so she called me

417  
00:28:58,970 --> 00:29:00,980  
and she wanted me  
to recite the poem.

418  
00:29:00,980 --> 00:29:04,190  
And I recited a poem  
and she said, all right.

419  
00:29:04,190 --> 00:29:08,630  
She said, if you want, you  
can come and stay in my block.

420  
00:29:08,630 --> 00:29:10,490  
I said, well, I have a sister.

421  
00:29:10,490 --> 00:29:12,560  
And she asked me how  
old is my sister.

422  
00:29:12,560 --> 00:29:14,018  
And when I told  
her she said, well,

423  
00:29:14,018 --> 00:29:15,890  
she certainly cannot  
pass as a child.

424  
00:29:15,890 --> 00:29:17,690  
I said, well, then  
I wouldn't come.

425

00:29:17,690 --> 00:29:19,880

I would never come  
without my sister.

426

00:29:19,880 --> 00:29:23,510

So she said, all right, come  
with your sister and I will

427

00:29:23,510 --> 00:29:26,810

pass her off as a  
[? studentist. ?] But she

428

00:29:26,810 --> 00:29:29,960

wasn't a [? studentist ?]  
because a [? studentist ?] was

429

00:29:29,960 --> 00:29:33,890

very wonderful to be because the  
[? studentists ?] were the ones

430

00:29:33,890 --> 00:29:38,810

that were cleaning the blocks  
and that were also distributing

431

00:29:38,810 --> 00:29:39,732

the food.

432

00:29:39,732 --> 00:29:41,690

And if you were the one  
to distribute the food,

433

00:29:41,690 --> 00:29:45,350

then you always had a little bit  
more and you always were trying

434

00:29:45,350 --> 00:29:50,480

to get from the bottom of the  
barrel the potatoes that was

435

00:29:50,480 --> 00:29:52,490

[? small ?]  
[? grown, ?] you know,

436

00:29:52,490 --> 00:29:57,680

that wasn't so just watery,  
that had more potatoes.

437

00:29:57,680 --> 00:30:02,645

So this is how we got to  
be, and this was block 8.

438

00:30:02,645 --> 00:30:04,250

It was the children's block.

439

00:30:04,250 --> 00:30:10,640

But this, on the other hand, was  
a very foolish part on our side

440

00:30:10,640 --> 00:30:13,580

because the children  
were the first ones

441

00:30:13,580 --> 00:30:15,830

to deteriorate very  
quickly and they

442

00:30:15,830 --> 00:30:22,700

were the ones to be selected  
much more often and much

443

00:30:22,700 --> 00:30:24,740

sooner.

444

00:30:24,740 --> 00:30:33,260

However-- so we went to one  
selection, which we passed.

445

00:30:33,260 --> 00:30:39,860

And every few weeks  
we would be taken

446

00:30:39,860 --> 00:30:47,120

to disinfect our dresses because  
we had only this one dress.

447

00:30:47,120 --> 00:30:51,590  
And we would get another of  
those wonderful showers, which

448  
00:30:51,590 --> 00:30:54,410  
was always repeated  
in the same fashion

449  
00:30:54,410 --> 00:30:56,270  
that we really  
didn't couldn't get

450  
00:30:56,270 --> 00:31:03,650  
clean under terrible conditions  
that this was conducted.

451  
00:31:03,650 --> 00:31:06,170  
However, the  
dresses, eventually,

452  
00:31:06,170 --> 00:31:12,420  
since we slept in those dresses  
and wore them constantly,

453  
00:31:12,420 --> 00:31:15,020  
became full of lice.

454  
00:31:15,020 --> 00:31:22,130  
So they would try to disinfect,  
not that it helped any.

455  
00:31:22,130 --> 00:31:26,630  
So we would stand around  
naked while those dresses were

456  
00:31:26,630 --> 00:31:28,640  
disinfected.

457  
00:31:28,640 --> 00:31:31,940  
The SS with their  
dogs would guard us,

458  
00:31:31,940 --> 00:31:36,680

and we would be standing naked  
while the SS were guarding us

459  
00:31:36,680 --> 00:31:38,720  
with those dogs.

460  
00:31:38,720 --> 00:31:40,940  
Sometimes an hour,  
sometimes two hours

461  
00:31:40,940 --> 00:31:45,800  
until we would receive  
our dresses back.

462  
00:31:45,800 --> 00:31:53,180  
One day after having--

463  
00:31:53,180 --> 00:32:02,240  
after such a spectacle when  
the SS was guarding us,

464  
00:32:02,240 --> 00:32:07,130  
they became very restless  
and the block eldest

465  
00:32:07,130 --> 00:32:09,570  
apparently wanted to--

466  
00:32:09,570 --> 00:32:12,200  
because she happened to  
be a very nice woman,

467  
00:32:12,200 --> 00:32:18,650  
wanted maybe to save  
us from some disaster,

468  
00:32:18,650 --> 00:32:22,640  
told the SS that she  
has among her children

469  
00:32:22,640 --> 00:32:27,070  
a very talented girl.

470

00:32:27,070 --> 00:32:30,540

She's a ballet dancer.

471

00:32:30,540 --> 00:32:34,060

And she asked them, would you like to see this girl dance?

472

00:32:34,060 --> 00:32:35,710

They said, yes.

473

00:32:35,710 --> 00:32:40,010

So this girl-- she told this girl to dance.

474

00:32:40,010 --> 00:32:43,030

She was one of the most beautiful children

475

00:32:43,030 --> 00:32:44,320

that I have ever seen.

476

00:32:44,320 --> 00:32:50,890

She was about 14 years old and she was dancing.

477

00:32:50,890 --> 00:32:56,730

And as she was dancing tears were running down her cheeks

478

00:32:56,730 --> 00:33:01,860

because I'm sure that she was remembering when she was

479

00:33:01,860 --> 00:33:07,960

dancing to the applause of an audience, when her parents were

480

00:33:07,960 --> 00:33:15,280

watching her and had so much pleasure seeing their daughter

481

00:33:15,280 --> 00:33:18,040

dance with such talent.

482  
00:33:18,040 --> 00:33:24,160  
And then when this was over,  
we received our dresses

483  
00:33:24,160 --> 00:33:27,610  
but they took this  
child with them

484  
00:33:27,610 --> 00:33:31,960  
and we never expected  
to see her again.

485  
00:33:31,960 --> 00:33:37,660  
But a few days later,  
they brought her back

486  
00:33:37,660 --> 00:33:40,240  
and we didn't recognize her.

487  
00:33:40,240 --> 00:33:42,100  
She had been tortured.

488  
00:33:42,100 --> 00:33:44,020  
She had been raped.

489  
00:33:44,020 --> 00:33:46,330  
She was in a daze.

490  
00:33:46,330 --> 00:33:49,960  
She didn't even know that she  
has to get up in the morning

491  
00:33:49,960 --> 00:33:53,920  
to get out to stand roll call.

492  
00:33:53,920 --> 00:33:56,620  
And if you would not  
get out from the bunk

493  
00:33:56,620 --> 00:34:00,370

to stand roll call, then  
you were beaten to death

494

00:34:00,370 --> 00:34:03,120

because roll call--