

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:00,930
Take seven.

2
00:00:00,930 --> 00:00:04,000
I'm continuing interview
with the Ruth Webber.

3
00:00:04,000 --> 00:00:16,400

4
00:00:16,400 --> 00:00:18,384
[BEEP]

5
00:00:18,384 --> 00:00:19,900

6
00:00:19,900 --> 00:00:23,350
Before we go to where to hide
in Auschwitz, let's go back

7
00:00:23,350 --> 00:00:26,440
and tell me about
what you thought

8
00:00:26,440 --> 00:00:28,900
was going on with
the transports,

9
00:00:28,900 --> 00:00:31,360
how you didn't realize
what was going on,

10
00:00:31,360 --> 00:00:36,290
and how you gradually
came to figure it out.

11
00:00:36,290 --> 00:00:43,360
Well, one of the ways really
is from hearing people

12
00:00:43,360 --> 00:00:47,440

talk about it very openly.

13
00:00:47,440 --> 00:00:51,590
And I don't know.

14
00:00:51,590 --> 00:00:53,630
As a child I kind
of accepted things

15
00:00:53,630 --> 00:00:55,820
as they were happening
because there

16
00:00:55,820 --> 00:00:58,640
was nothing I could
do about it but try

17
00:00:58,640 --> 00:01:01,010
to stay ahead to survive.

18
00:01:01,010 --> 00:01:03,590
For some reason or other, that
was the most important thing,

19
00:01:03,590 --> 00:01:05,360
is to survive.

20
00:01:05,360 --> 00:01:08,150
That's all you heard
everybody say, oh, we've

21
00:01:08,150 --> 00:01:11,390
got to survive and tell
the world what is going on.

22
00:01:11,390 --> 00:01:12,530
I mean, this is--

23
00:01:12,530 --> 00:01:14,270
that was it.

24
00:01:14,270 --> 00:01:17,570

I mean, if only for
that reason, just

25
00:01:17,570 --> 00:01:20,370
because it was
just unbelievable.

26
00:01:20,370 --> 00:01:24,950
And this idea that
you go up in smoke

27
00:01:24,950 --> 00:01:30,440
became a reality because
people would come--

28
00:01:30,440 --> 00:01:40,280
a transport would come
in with a lot of people,

29
00:01:40,280 --> 00:01:42,870
and they would move into
a certain direction,

30
00:01:42,870 --> 00:01:45,580
and then they would disappear.

31
00:01:45,580 --> 00:01:48,890
They would never come out.

32
00:01:48,890 --> 00:01:51,770
So you realize that something
is happening to them.

33
00:01:51,770 --> 00:02:00,100
And seeing the chimneys smoking
continuously, especially

34
00:02:00,100 --> 00:02:04,280
after a transport,
even at my age

35
00:02:04,280 --> 00:02:06,050
you kind of put two

and two together

36

00:02:06,050 --> 00:02:10,039

and realized that, yes,
this is where you go,

37

00:02:10,039 --> 00:02:15,260

behind that fence that
has the blankets on it

38

00:02:15,260 --> 00:02:19,340

and the trees covering--

39

00:02:19,340 --> 00:02:22,580

something that goes on
behind there, that you go in

40

00:02:22,580 --> 00:02:25,110

and you don't come out anymore.

41

00:02:25,110 --> 00:02:27,180

Exactly what was
happening, I don't know.

42

00:02:27,180 --> 00:02:31,550

All I knew is that you
come out the chimney.

43

00:02:31,550 --> 00:02:39,460

And as the crematoriums
were working,

44

00:02:39,460 --> 00:02:46,280

it left such a sweet
taste in your mouth

45

00:02:46,280 --> 00:02:53,850

that you didn't even
feel like eating.

46

00:02:53,850 --> 00:02:57,120

During these times I can
honestly say, at times,

47
00:02:57,120 --> 00:03:00,060
I wasn't even hungry
because it was so sickening.

48
00:03:00,060 --> 00:03:05,798

49
00:03:05,798 --> 00:03:11,180
I guess from people
talking and kind

50
00:03:11,180 --> 00:03:14,420
of putting two and two
together, realizing that once

51
00:03:14,420 --> 00:03:19,530
you go behind that
fence, that's it.

52
00:03:19,530 --> 00:03:22,640

53
00:03:22,640 --> 00:03:25,150
In fact, one of the
times, I thought

54
00:03:25,150 --> 00:03:27,010
it was going to happen to me.

55
00:03:27,010 --> 00:03:29,080
When we left the
[? kretzablock ?]

56
00:03:29,080 --> 00:03:33,400
with my mother, we weren't just
taken straight to the barrack

57
00:03:33,400 --> 00:03:35,530
because that would be unclean.

58
00:03:35,530 --> 00:03:39,100

So we were taken for showers.

59

00:03:39,100 --> 00:03:46,510

And when the group was being
moved towards that fence,

60

00:03:46,510 --> 00:03:50,810

I also thought that
it was the end.

61

00:03:50,810 --> 00:03:55,790

I don't-- I don't know really
what happened then because we

62

00:03:55,790 --> 00:03:59,720

were taken behind that
fence, and we were showered,

63

00:03:59,720 --> 00:04:03,760

and we had seen the people
that worked with the ovens

64

00:04:03,760 --> 00:04:08,450

in the crematoriums,
and they were just--

65

00:04:08,450 --> 00:04:10,580

they were so awed--

66

00:04:10,580 --> 00:04:12,170

awed about me.

67

00:04:12,170 --> 00:04:16,829

I mean, there were so surprised
that a child is still alive.

68

00:04:16,829 --> 00:04:18,329

They didn't know
what to do with me.

69

00:04:18,329 --> 00:04:20,180

In fact, I had
some chicken soup.

70
00:04:20,180 --> 00:04:22,970
I guess they were fed very
well because the Germans there

71
00:04:22,970 --> 00:04:24,350
ate very well.

72
00:04:24,350 --> 00:04:26,960
They gave me some
chicken soup and bread.

73
00:04:26,960 --> 00:04:29,240
And there was one German
woman that took me

74
00:04:29,240 --> 00:04:36,530
into one barrack that had
clothes all sorted out,

75
00:04:36,530 --> 00:04:44,360
and hundreds and hundreds of
shirts and pants and dresses

76
00:04:44,360 --> 00:04:47,660
and shoes, but not
children sizes.

77
00:04:47,660 --> 00:04:51,900
They were all women sizes.

78
00:04:51,900 --> 00:04:54,240
So she dressed me,
and she gave me

79
00:04:54,240 --> 00:04:58,170
a pair of shoes because mine
were pretty worn out by then

80
00:04:58,170 --> 00:05:00,540
on a heel.

81

00:05:00,540 --> 00:05:03,240

They were actually
like a nurse's shoe,

82

00:05:03,240 --> 00:05:09,792

as they used to wear at the
time, with laces in the front.

83

00:05:09,792 --> 00:05:11,250

She gave me those
shoes because she

84

00:05:11,250 --> 00:05:15,930

didn't have any without a heel.

85

00:05:15,930 --> 00:05:18,360

So I really don't know
what happened at that time.

86

00:05:18,360 --> 00:05:21,480

I don't know why we did
not go through the route

87

00:05:21,480 --> 00:05:25,200

and went into the gas chambers.

88

00:05:25,200 --> 00:05:26,710

I really don't know.

89

00:05:26,710 --> 00:05:32,590

But we came out, and we were
taken back into the block.

90

00:05:32,590 --> 00:05:36,280

And now tell me about trying
to find a hiding place.

91

00:05:36,280 --> 00:05:41,530

Well, the hiding place where, I
thought was pretty smart of me,

92

00:05:41,530 --> 00:05:44,710

was next door to our

block, was a block

93

00:05:44,710 --> 00:05:49,360
where they used to throw the
skeletons or the dead people.

94

00:05:49,360 --> 00:05:53,050
There were skeletons
at the time already.

95

00:05:53,050 --> 00:05:57,340
And when the block
got full, then they

96

00:05:57,340 --> 00:06:00,800
would come with a truck and
take it over to the crematorium

97

00:06:00,800 --> 00:06:01,300
as well.

98

00:06:01,300 --> 00:06:04,180

99

00:06:04,180 --> 00:06:06,670
This person and I
were trying to find

100

00:06:06,670 --> 00:06:11,140
a way of making a little hole
in between those skeletons

101

00:06:11,140 --> 00:06:13,720
and see if we can
get in there and hide

102

00:06:13,720 --> 00:06:21,370
until the selection takes
place or maybe somebody

103

00:06:21,370 --> 00:06:24,060
will come and rescue us.

104

00:06:24,060 --> 00:06:26,390

So this is the kind
of place that we

105

00:06:26,390 --> 00:06:31,130

were playing and
trying to find a hiding

106

00:06:31,130 --> 00:06:34,330

place among the corpses.

107

00:06:34,330 --> 00:06:36,610

There wasn't a stitch of
clothes or anything on them,

108

00:06:36,610 --> 00:06:39,480

so they were gone through.

109

00:06:39,480 --> 00:06:41,790

It was just bones.

110

00:06:41,790 --> 00:06:44,040

And we tried to arrange
them in such a way

111

00:06:44,040 --> 00:06:48,660

that we would have a hiding
place in case we needed.

112

00:06:48,660 --> 00:06:53,120

113

00:06:53,120 --> 00:06:58,550

How did the other inmates feel
about you being a child there?

114

00:06:58,550 --> 00:07:01,980

115

00:07:01,980 --> 00:07:07,800

We were a small
group from our town

116
00:07:07,800 --> 00:07:13,230
that kind of stayed together,
and they were protective of me.

117
00:07:13,230 --> 00:07:17,190
They wouldn't risk
their lives for me,

118
00:07:17,190 --> 00:07:19,560
but they were trying
to be protective.

119
00:07:19,560 --> 00:07:25,080
For instance, there was a
certain amount of people that

120
00:07:25,080 --> 00:07:31,320
slept in one ,uh, perch.

121
00:07:31,320 --> 00:07:35,160
You had to lie, I think
it was six in a row.

122
00:07:35,160 --> 00:07:37,980
And it was pretty close
together because if one turned,

123
00:07:37,980 --> 00:07:40,920
everybody had to turn
at the same time.

124
00:07:40,920 --> 00:07:43,510
These six people
allowed-- or five people

125
00:07:43,510 --> 00:07:47,530
including my mother-- allowed
me to squeeze in the middle.

126
00:07:47,530 --> 00:07:53,460
I wasn't a person,
so wherever I was,

127
00:07:53,460 --> 00:07:56,910
it had to be tolerated
by the people around me,

128
00:07:56,910 --> 00:07:58,890
and these were
people from our town

129
00:07:58,890 --> 00:08:02,010
that were quite
protective of me.

130
00:08:02,010 --> 00:08:10,290
And we keep in touch with some
of them that have survived,

131
00:08:10,290 --> 00:08:14,580
and I'm very thankful for
what they have done for me.

132
00:08:14,580 --> 00:08:18,960
Were there incidents
where inmates resented you

133
00:08:18,960 --> 00:08:21,870
because you've put them
in danger, or people

134
00:08:21,870 --> 00:08:24,360
who aren't from your
town who protected you

135
00:08:24,360 --> 00:08:26,720
because you were--

136
00:08:26,720 --> 00:08:30,710
represented their child to them?

137
00:08:30,710 --> 00:08:36,530
I don't know of any
particular incident.

138

00:08:36,530 --> 00:08:40,530

I think I was resented only for
the fact that I was still alive

139

00:08:40,530 --> 00:08:42,200

and they had lost
their children.

140

00:08:42,200 --> 00:08:44,510

I think that was
very painful to them

141

00:08:44,510 --> 00:08:46,010

that they didn't
have their children

142

00:08:46,010 --> 00:08:48,410

and my mother still had me.

143

00:08:48,410 --> 00:08:51,200

144

00:08:51,200 --> 00:08:55,760

And I felt that
many times, but not

145

00:08:55,760 --> 00:09:00,610

that I was endangering their
lives because they were not

146

00:09:00,610 --> 00:09:03,640

protecting me in such a way.

147

00:09:03,640 --> 00:09:09,000

But the unfortunate thing is
that, under the circumstances,

148

00:09:09,000 --> 00:09:16,520

that even mothers many times did
not acknowledge their children.

149

00:09:16,520 --> 00:09:20,180

For instance during
one selection,

150
00:09:20,180 --> 00:09:23,870
the men, and the women, and the
elderly women, and the children

151
00:09:23,870 --> 00:09:28,310
were all separated at
that particular time.

152
00:09:28,310 --> 00:09:32,240
And you never know
what they wanted to do

153
00:09:32,240 --> 00:09:36,380
or what they had in mind they
were going to do with us.

154
00:09:36,380 --> 00:09:43,060
And the order was that the
mothers of the children

155
00:09:43,060 --> 00:09:47,740
to go over to the children's
group and take their child out.

156
00:09:47,740 --> 00:09:51,320

157
00:09:51,320 --> 00:09:59,970
Well, my mother walked
over and with gentle

158
00:09:59,970 --> 00:10:03,960
firmness took my hand
and acknowledged me

159
00:10:03,960 --> 00:10:05,640
and took me over to the group.

160
00:10:05,640 --> 00:10:09,900
And she knew that, at

least everybody else

161
00:10:09,900 --> 00:10:12,150
knew, that this was
like signing your death

162
00:10:12,150 --> 00:10:17,310
certificate because a child
wasn't supposed to be there.

163
00:10:17,310 --> 00:10:20,360

164
00:10:20,360 --> 00:10:24,380
Another child, that was
standing next to me,

165
00:10:24,380 --> 00:10:28,700
noticed that her mother wasn't
making any move towards her,

166
00:10:28,700 --> 00:10:31,370
just walked behind me and
stood next to my mother.

167
00:10:31,370 --> 00:10:35,190

168
00:10:35,190 --> 00:10:41,008
And my mother felt that,
well, what's the difference

169
00:10:41,008 --> 00:10:41,800
if it's one or two?

170
00:10:41,800 --> 00:10:43,400
It doesn't make any difference.

171
00:10:43,400 --> 00:10:47,260
So she didn't reject
her in any way.

172

00:10:47,260 --> 00:10:50,800

The children that were left
without the parents accepting

173

00:10:50,800 --> 00:10:53,370

them disappeared.

174

00:10:53,370 --> 00:10:57,590

I don't know what
happened to them,

175

00:10:57,590 --> 00:11:00,730

but I can't really
blame that mother either

176

00:11:00,730 --> 00:11:04,060

that didn't
acknowledge her child.

177

00:11:04,060 --> 00:11:05,710

I mean, it was--

178

00:11:05,710 --> 00:11:08,950

the desire to live is so great.

179

00:11:08,950 --> 00:11:18,120

It just-- that all you really
thought about is to survive.

180

00:11:18,120 --> 00:11:23,840

And you were willing to
do almost anything just

181

00:11:23,840 --> 00:11:24,360

to survive.

182

00:11:24,360 --> 00:11:30,574

183

00:11:30,574 --> 00:11:32,542

[BEEP]

184

00:11:32,542 --> 00:11:34,020

185

00:11:34,020 --> 00:11:37,950

I want you to try to
paint a picture for me

186

00:11:37,950 --> 00:11:41,040

of what the children's
block in Auschwitz was.

187

00:11:41,040 --> 00:11:43,020

Define it.

188

00:11:43,020 --> 00:11:45,022

It's an incongruous
idea that there

189

00:11:45,022 --> 00:11:46,230

should be a children's block.

190

00:11:46,230 --> 00:11:47,880

And what was it for?

191

00:11:47,880 --> 00:11:49,110

And what was it like?

192

00:11:49,110 --> 00:11:52,660

193

00:11:52,660 --> 00:11:58,230

I really, at the time, did
not know what it was for.

194

00:11:58,230 --> 00:12:05,060

And I didn't find it to be any
different than any other block

195

00:12:05,060 --> 00:12:08,290

that I have been in.

196

00:12:08,290 --> 00:12:12,480

I just was at the
time of my life

197
00:12:12,480 --> 00:12:19,460
were I just didn't care
because my mother had left.

198
00:12:19,460 --> 00:12:22,490
My mother left right
after, a few days after,

199
00:12:22,490 --> 00:12:24,890
I was separated from
her in Auschwitz.

200
00:12:24,890 --> 00:12:27,180
She was sent out of Auschwitz.

201
00:12:27,180 --> 00:12:31,250
She came to tell me that
she was being put on a--

202
00:12:31,250 --> 00:12:35,870
she was put on a list, that
she's being transported out

203
00:12:35,870 --> 00:12:39,110
to another camp.

204
00:12:39,110 --> 00:12:47,660
And my life came to
an end at the time.

205
00:12:47,660 --> 00:12:52,020
I mean, it just wasn't
important anymore.

206
00:12:52,020 --> 00:12:57,690
I realized what it
meant to have her

207
00:12:57,690 --> 00:13:04,130
around me, her

encouragement, her telling me

208

00:13:04,130 --> 00:13:08,510

good stories instead of
dwelling on what was around me.

209

00:13:08,510 --> 00:13:14,300

So after the point that
she came and told me

210

00:13:14,300 --> 00:13:20,120

that she was leaving and I was
being left alone in Auschwitz,

211

00:13:20,120 --> 00:13:22,070

I didn't care what was going on.

212

00:13:22,070 --> 00:13:23,420

I really didn't.

213

00:13:23,420 --> 00:13:24,770

Didn't mean to me anything.

214

00:13:24,770 --> 00:13:27,700

I didn't-- food
wasn't important.

215

00:13:27,700 --> 00:13:29,140

I was hungry.

216

00:13:29,140 --> 00:13:32,140

All at once I
became very hungry,

217

00:13:32,140 --> 00:13:35,910

but I didn't even
care about that.

218

00:13:35,910 --> 00:13:40,440

It was just an
existence at that point,

219

00:13:40,440 --> 00:13:44,640
and I wouldn't have done
anything to save myself.

220
00:13:44,640 --> 00:13:47,070
It was just a matter
of circumstances

221
00:13:47,070 --> 00:13:49,950
that I survived after that.

222
00:13:49,950 --> 00:13:55,070
There was a very
unexpected thing

223
00:13:55,070 --> 00:14:00,245
that had happened while I
was in the children's block.

224
00:14:00,245 --> 00:14:03,730

225
00:14:03,730 --> 00:14:06,820
For some reason,
things come back to me

226
00:14:06,820 --> 00:14:09,520
that I remember,
that at that point

227
00:14:09,520 --> 00:14:13,150
we were not told to
do certain things

228
00:14:13,150 --> 00:14:16,250
or made to do certain things.

229
00:14:16,250 --> 00:14:22,910
They had a way of coming in
and asking for volunteers.

230
00:14:22,910 --> 00:14:25,400
We are going on an

outing right now.

231

00:14:25,400 --> 00:14:28,040

Would you like to come?

232

00:14:28,040 --> 00:14:30,530

They were sending
a group of children

233

00:14:30,530 --> 00:14:33,350

to a country where there's
no war, that everything

234

00:14:33,350 --> 00:14:34,460

is going to be wonderful.

235

00:14:34,460 --> 00:14:38,480

Food is plentiful and
everything is great.

236

00:14:38,480 --> 00:14:41,260

Who would like to go?

237

00:14:41,260 --> 00:14:45,030

Well, I didn't care.

238

00:14:45,030 --> 00:14:47,023

I didn't offer to go.

239

00:14:47,023 --> 00:14:49,190

Maybe that's what saved me
because I don't know what

240

00:14:49,190 --> 00:14:51,080

happened to the other children.

241

00:14:51,080 --> 00:14:54,410

I know some from our town
that had gone on an outing

242

00:14:54,410 --> 00:14:56,180

like this never came back.

243
00:14:56,180 --> 00:14:59,140

244
00:14:59,140 --> 00:15:02,400
So that's the recollections
I have of the children's

245
00:15:02,400 --> 00:15:06,870
block, just not caring.

246
00:15:06,870 --> 00:15:09,570
Oh yeah, at one point
they also gave us

247
00:15:09,570 --> 00:15:15,150
some sheets and pillows
and pillowcases,

248
00:15:15,150 --> 00:15:17,490
and we had to make
our beds nicely.

249
00:15:17,490 --> 00:15:20,930
The Red Cross came
and looked at us,

250
00:15:20,930 --> 00:15:26,150
and I think we were given
a special dinner also

251
00:15:26,150 --> 00:15:26,690
at the time.

252
00:15:26,690 --> 00:15:30,770

253
00:15:30,770 --> 00:15:35,350
But something very unexpected
and unusual happened then too.

254
00:15:35,350 --> 00:15:38,200

I mentioned in the
beginning that my--

255
00:15:38,200 --> 00:15:41,710
I had seen my
father in Auschwitz.

256
00:15:41,710 --> 00:15:45,610
Well, word came to me that my
father was in the next camp

257
00:15:45,610 --> 00:15:54,080
over, in the men's
camp and arranged

258
00:15:54,080 --> 00:15:57,860
I should be at a certain
time behind a certain block

259
00:15:57,860 --> 00:16:01,400
that he'll be on the
other side in his camp.

260
00:16:01,400 --> 00:16:04,430
Through the electric
wires we had a meeting.

261
00:16:04,430 --> 00:16:07,660

262
00:16:07,660 --> 00:16:10,990
That's difficult to say.

263
00:16:10,990 --> 00:16:14,860
And I looked at him,
and I wasn't very nice.

264
00:16:14,860 --> 00:16:18,820

265
00:16:18,820 --> 00:16:24,070
I had lost my mother that
I was very close with.

266
00:16:24,070 --> 00:16:28,780
And I guess I must have felt
that he had abandoned us

267
00:16:28,780 --> 00:16:31,960
because he just wasn't
there when we needed him,

268
00:16:31,960 --> 00:16:33,160
when I needed him.

269
00:16:33,160 --> 00:16:38,630

270
00:16:38,630 --> 00:16:41,000
And I must have been
very indifferent to him.

271
00:16:41,000 --> 00:16:43,430
He tried to ask me what
I need, what I want.

272
00:16:43,430 --> 00:16:46,420

273
00:16:46,420 --> 00:16:48,220
I told him I don't
need anything.

274
00:16:48,220 --> 00:16:49,175
I don't want anything.

275
00:16:49,175 --> 00:16:52,800

276
00:16:52,800 --> 00:16:56,310
But then, yes, I did
tell them I needed--

277
00:16:56,310 --> 00:16:58,590
stupid thing-- I

needed underpants.

278

00:16:58,590 --> 00:17:01,660

279

00:17:01,660 --> 00:17:07,060

It's hard to admit that a child
that age can't hold her urine,

280

00:17:07,060 --> 00:17:14,050

but when you get very scared
and you start shaking,

281

00:17:14,050 --> 00:17:16,270

you lose control.

282

00:17:16,270 --> 00:17:19,430

And it isn't that it's
a lot that comes out,

283

00:17:19,430 --> 00:17:23,940

but just a little bits, so
my panties were always wet.

284

00:17:23,940 --> 00:17:25,470

So I had asked him.

285

00:17:25,470 --> 00:17:28,900

I said, oh, that's what I need.

286

00:17:28,900 --> 00:17:32,080

So he had given me some
thrown over the wires,

287

00:17:32,080 --> 00:17:32,950

some cigarettes.

288

00:17:32,950 --> 00:17:35,320

I should go into that
first block, where the--

289

00:17:35,320 --> 00:17:39,640

290
00:17:39,640 --> 00:17:44,410
have Germans and Poles
live, and they have money

291
00:17:44,410 --> 00:17:45,400
and they have food--

292
00:17:45,400 --> 00:17:48,220
actually food not money--

293
00:17:48,220 --> 00:17:53,000
and I should exchange
it for whatever I need.

294
00:17:53,000 --> 00:17:55,220
I took the cigarettes,
I went there,

295
00:17:55,220 --> 00:17:57,440
and I didn't do a thing with it.

296
00:17:57,440 --> 00:17:59,210
And the next time
when I met him,

297
00:17:59,210 --> 00:18:01,070
I gave him back the cigarettes.

298
00:18:01,070 --> 00:18:05,130
I just didn't want
anything from him.

299
00:18:05,130 --> 00:18:06,510
I must have hurt him terribly.

300
00:18:06,510 --> 00:18:16,550

301
00:18:16,550 --> 00:18:20,740
He kept telling me to

make sure that I leave

302

00:18:20,740 --> 00:18:24,610

with the last transport
because they were

303

00:18:24,610 --> 00:18:28,740

starting to evacuate Auschwitz.

304

00:18:28,740 --> 00:18:33,120

And he told me how important
it is, that I will not

305

00:18:33,120 --> 00:18:35,820

survive if I stay
there, that when

306

00:18:35,820 --> 00:18:38,610

the last transport goes
that I should do everything

307

00:18:38,610 --> 00:18:42,090

possible to get on it.

308

00:18:42,090 --> 00:18:43,950

Well, I listened.

309

00:18:43,950 --> 00:18:47,700

I don't know if I deliberately
didn't do anything about it,

310

00:18:47,700 --> 00:18:49,180

or if I tried--

311

00:18:49,180 --> 00:18:50,910

I really don't-- don't know.

312

00:18:50,910 --> 00:18:57,000

I've tried to think about
it, but I wasn't accepted.

313

00:18:57,000 --> 00:18:59,070

He did leave.

314
00:18:59,070 --> 00:19:01,740
He didn't survive.

315
00:19:01,740 --> 00:19:02,970
I stayed, and I did.

316
00:19:02,970 --> 00:19:07,250

317
00:19:07,250 --> 00:19:07,810
I don't know.

318
00:19:07,810 --> 00:19:13,130

319
00:19:13,130 --> 00:19:19,670
But I'm not proud of myself
for how I hurt him at the time.

320
00:19:19,670 --> 00:19:24,300
It weighs very heavily on me,
since it was the last time

321
00:19:24,300 --> 00:19:25,545
that I'd seen him.

322
00:19:25,545 --> 00:19:37,670

323
00:19:37,670 --> 00:19:42,410
Talk to me about how
your mother constantly

324
00:19:42,410 --> 00:19:44,780
conditioned you for survival.

325
00:19:44,780 --> 00:19:51,240

326

00:19:51,240 --> 00:20:00,180
Well, when I was with her, she
was always pointing out the way

327
00:20:00,180 --> 00:20:09,040
that I could hide or
do certain things,

328
00:20:09,040 --> 00:20:13,000
like go behind her when
there might be shooting,

329
00:20:13,000 --> 00:20:14,245
so I would not be shot.

330
00:20:14,245 --> 00:20:18,410

331
00:20:18,410 --> 00:20:25,580
I think the stories and
the pleasant memories

332
00:20:25,580 --> 00:20:30,070
that she kept telling
me to keep me sane,

333
00:20:30,070 --> 00:20:35,380
because life was
so cruel around me.

334
00:20:35,380 --> 00:20:42,040
There was so much constant
death and pain and suffering

335
00:20:42,040 --> 00:20:49,870
that she was trying to put
little bits of good in my mind.

336
00:20:49,870 --> 00:20:52,650

337
00:20:52,650 --> 00:20:58,890
I should not dwell on what

is going around around me.

338
00:20:58,890 --> 00:21:05,660

339
00:21:05,660 --> 00:21:11,290
By giving up of her
food constantly, making

340
00:21:11,290 --> 00:21:13,850
me believe that she's never
hungry, and never needs

341
00:21:13,850 --> 00:21:14,350
anything.

342
00:21:14,350 --> 00:21:17,200
By the way, my mother was
fasting two days a week

343
00:21:17,200 --> 00:21:19,870
in camp, not that
she needed to do it,

344
00:21:19,870 --> 00:21:24,640
but she actually did not
have any water or food.

345
00:21:24,640 --> 00:21:30,280
It was something that
she promised herself

346
00:21:30,280 --> 00:21:33,670
to do so we should survive.

347
00:21:33,670 --> 00:21:37,450
My mother was a religious--
is and was a religious woman,

348
00:21:37,450 --> 00:21:41,890
and she felt if she gives
up food twice a week

349

00:21:41,890 --> 00:21:45,955
that her children will survive.

350

00:21:45,955 --> 00:21:46,770
And we did.

351

00:21:46,770 --> 00:21:51,470

352

00:21:51,470 --> 00:21:56,840
So my mother was a
very, very strong woman

353

00:21:56,840 --> 00:21:58,400
to have been able
to do the things

354

00:21:58,400 --> 00:22:04,880
that she had done to protect
me and to always be next to me.

355

00:22:04,880 --> 00:22:13,560
And just give me this
extra little bit of desire

356

00:22:13,560 --> 00:22:17,060
to survive, that
there is a better day.

357

00:22:17,060 --> 00:22:24,650
That things will be OK tomorrow,
to just get through today.

358

00:22:24,650 --> 00:22:28,210

359

00:22:28,210 --> 00:22:31,720
How did she comfort
you for the fear?

360

00:22:31,720 --> 00:22:34,486
Can you talk a little about

the fear that you had?

361

00:22:34,486 --> 00:22:35,935

Oh, we're out.

362

00:22:35,935 --> 00:22:37,098

We're out already.

363

00:22:37,098 --> 00:22:40,584

364

00:22:40,584 --> 00:22:42,576

[BEEP]

365

00:22:42,576 --> 00:22:46,710

366

00:22:46,710 --> 00:22:47,370

OK.

367

00:22:47,370 --> 00:22:50,670

Talk about how she
comforted you for the fear.

368

00:22:50,670 --> 00:22:54,660

And talk about fear first,
so we have a context.

369

00:22:54,660 --> 00:23:00,300

Well, when you stand
in front of a gun

370

00:23:00,300 --> 00:23:03,810

and you know that this might
be your last moment, when

371

00:23:03,810 --> 00:23:09,910

you see people being shot around
you and you might be next,

372

00:23:09,910 --> 00:23:12,120

then you start shaking.

373
00:23:12,120 --> 00:23:13,200
At least I do.

374
00:23:13,200 --> 00:23:20,980
My knees kind of quiver, and
I can't control my urine.

375
00:23:20,980 --> 00:23:24,760
It was just one of those things.

376
00:23:24,760 --> 00:23:29,010
And she would try
to get my mind off

377
00:23:29,010 --> 00:23:33,450
of what is going on around
me at that particular time.

378
00:23:33,450 --> 00:23:39,230
She would come up with a very
pleasant and wonderful picture

379
00:23:39,230 --> 00:23:44,810
of what life was like at
home, of the grandparents.

380
00:23:44,810 --> 00:23:48,440
I wasn't always a good child
and do whatever she told me to

381
00:23:48,440 --> 00:23:51,290
in order to save my own life.

382
00:23:51,290 --> 00:23:53,270
We had to go to a
forest at one time,

383
00:23:53,270 --> 00:23:55,880
and I just refused
to go back out.

384

00:23:55,880 --> 00:23:56,870
I did.

385
00:23:56,870 --> 00:24:00,540
I mean, I felt that was
enough, and I didn't want to.

386
00:24:00,540 --> 00:24:03,320
She never reprimanded me for it.

387
00:24:03,320 --> 00:24:05,270
So she said, well, if
you don't want to go,

388
00:24:05,270 --> 00:24:06,890
so I won't go either.

389
00:24:06,890 --> 00:24:08,000
So we both stayed.

390
00:24:08,000 --> 00:24:10,880
And as it happened,
the way circumstances

391
00:24:10,880 --> 00:24:13,880
are, the people that had gone
into the forest at that time

392
00:24:13,880 --> 00:24:15,830
were apprehended and shot.

393
00:24:15,830 --> 00:24:17,940
We didn't go.

394
00:24:17,940 --> 00:24:19,770
You can say a child's foresight.

395
00:24:19,770 --> 00:24:20,640
I don't know.

396
00:24:20,640 --> 00:24:23,790
But she never reprimanded

me for not doing

397

00:24:23,790 --> 00:24:27,890

what she wanted me to
do, and I didn't do it.

398

00:24:27,890 --> 00:24:33,270

She never-- she
knew, for instance,

399

00:24:33,270 --> 00:24:36,380

that I have difficulty--

400

00:24:36,380 --> 00:24:45,550

that I'm not able
to control myself,

401

00:24:45,550 --> 00:24:47,795

and she would never
reprimand me for it.

402

00:24:47,795 --> 00:24:48,295

Ever.

403

00:24:48,295 --> 00:24:52,150

404

00:24:52,150 --> 00:24:55,710

In fact, there is something that
we have going between us that

405

00:24:55,710 --> 00:24:58,500

is maybe difficult for
other people to understand,

406

00:24:58,500 --> 00:25:04,530

and I think especially my sister
because we had such closeness

407

00:25:04,530 --> 00:25:11,220

between my mother and I, that
although my accomplishments are

408

00:25:11,220 --> 00:25:14,280

not as great as my
sister's-- really,

409

00:25:14,280 --> 00:25:22,200

because she is more observant,
more religious than what

410

00:25:22,200 --> 00:25:27,420

my mother would like that I
am, and her children are very

411

00:25:27,420 --> 00:25:30,150

successful, and she
has [INAUDIBLE] or 10

412

00:25:30,150 --> 00:25:32,610

grandchildren--

413

00:25:32,610 --> 00:25:38,190

yet when I accomplish
something, it

414

00:25:38,190 --> 00:25:41,520

is so much more
meaningful to my mother

415

00:25:41,520 --> 00:25:44,430

because of what we
have gone through.

416

00:25:44,430 --> 00:25:47,490

And it's as if--

417

00:25:47,490 --> 00:25:50,280

we don't talk about
it, but it's as if--

418

00:25:50,280 --> 00:25:53,370

my god, the way you were
in Auschwitz, from you,

419

00:25:53,370 --> 00:25:55,355
you had three normal children.

420
00:25:55,355 --> 00:25:58,020

421
00:25:58,020 --> 00:26:01,230
I drove my obstetrician crazy.

422
00:26:01,230 --> 00:26:03,810
Will my children be normal?

423
00:26:03,810 --> 00:26:07,590
When they were born, I was
counting the toes and fingers

424
00:26:07,590 --> 00:26:10,950
to make sure that I didn't
want anybody around me

425
00:26:10,950 --> 00:26:12,480
to know how stupid I am.

426
00:26:12,480 --> 00:26:16,390

427
00:26:16,390 --> 00:26:18,130
I really want to live--

428
00:26:18,130 --> 00:26:24,280
wanted to live a normal life.

429
00:26:24,280 --> 00:26:29,340
And I think my mother
helped me do that.

430
00:26:29,340 --> 00:26:32,880
We reminisce about
the past, but we

431
00:26:32,880 --> 00:26:35,520
don't talk about the horrors.

432

00:26:35,520 --> 00:26:42,400

I had a very comfortable
relationship with my mother

433

00:26:42,400 --> 00:26:49,150

after the war, where she allowed
me to let out this frustration

434

00:26:49,150 --> 00:26:54,490

and to be normal, to feel
that my accomplishment will

435

00:26:54,490 --> 00:27:02,170

be that my normalcy
was not destroyed,

436

00:27:02,170 --> 00:27:06,730

that I am the same as
everyone else, that I did not

437

00:27:06,730 --> 00:27:10,150

survive as a shell but as a
human being that can feel.

438

00:27:10,150 --> 00:27:12,670

439

00:27:12,670 --> 00:27:16,730

I really am afraid
to lose my feelings.

440

00:27:16,730 --> 00:27:19,680

441

00:27:19,680 --> 00:27:23,700

I even now have nightmares,
but I'm afraid really

442

00:27:23,700 --> 00:27:26,070

to shut those
things out because I

443

00:27:26,070 --> 00:27:30,030

want to continue to feel the
pleasure of my children's

444

00:27:30,030 --> 00:27:32,280

accomplishments,
my grandchildren.

445

00:27:32,280 --> 00:27:35,430

446

00:27:35,430 --> 00:27:39,780

I want to-- this is what
I want to accomplish,

447

00:27:39,780 --> 00:27:45,240

is to have a normal life
and enjoy what I have.

448

00:27:45,240 --> 00:27:48,201

My mother helped me do that.

449

00:27:48,201 --> 00:27:50,790

She really did.

450

00:27:50,790 --> 00:27:52,510

Your mother is a hero.

451

00:27:52,510 --> 00:27:53,460

She certainly is.

452

00:27:53,460 --> 00:27:59,990

453

00:27:59,990 --> 00:28:02,642

Does your mother feel
that it's an achievement?

454

00:28:02,642 --> 00:28:05,240

455

00:28:05,240 --> 00:28:07,670

When I accomplish
something, then it's

456

00:28:07,670 --> 00:28:09,140

an achievement for her.

457

00:28:09,140 --> 00:28:10,710

She takes pride in it.

458

00:28:10,710 --> 00:28:12,380

I can feel it.

459

00:28:12,380 --> 00:28:15,620

And it's not such
great achievements.

460

00:28:15,620 --> 00:28:18,810

My achievements, as I said, are
not as great as my sister's.

461

00:28:18,810 --> 00:28:24,170

And I think my sister
maybe senses that my mother

462

00:28:24,170 --> 00:28:27,620

feels that mine is greater.

463

00:28:27,620 --> 00:28:30,800

But the only way I
can associate it with

464

00:28:30,800 --> 00:28:33,230

is if you have a
child that is disabled

465

00:28:33,230 --> 00:28:37,210

and that finally
takes that first step.

466

00:28:37,210 --> 00:28:44,910

It's a much greater thing than
when your normal child takes

467
00:28:44,910 --> 00:28:47,630
a step at nine months.

468
00:28:47,630 --> 00:28:54,240
And I guess it must be
difficult for my sister

469
00:28:54,240 --> 00:28:58,260
to have to live with this,
although she's the one that

470
00:28:58,260 --> 00:28:59,940
has the responsibility
of my mother

471
00:28:59,940 --> 00:29:03,150
now because she
lives in Toronto,

472
00:29:03,150 --> 00:29:05,280
my mother lives in
Toronto, and I live here.

473
00:29:05,280 --> 00:29:09,360
And I'm the good daughter
that calls and goes to visit.

474
00:29:09,360 --> 00:29:13,900
And whatever I do is
my big accomplishment.

475
00:29:13,900 --> 00:29:18,150
And it must be very
difficult for my sister.

476
00:29:18,150 --> 00:29:22,450
Does your mother feel
that she saved you?

477
00:29:22,450 --> 00:29:24,970
She had never said it.

478

00:29:24,970 --> 00:29:27,350

Never said it.

479

00:29:27,350 --> 00:29:29,080

No.

480

00:29:29,080 --> 00:29:32,080

And if I bring up
an incident where

481

00:29:32,080 --> 00:29:37,240

I feel that she had
saved me by going with me

482

00:29:37,240 --> 00:29:41,350

or insisting on me going
somewhere with her, she just--

483

00:29:41,350 --> 00:29:44,640

what else do you
expect me to do?

484

00:29:44,640 --> 00:29:47,400

You're my child.

485

00:29:47,400 --> 00:29:48,810

That's what is expected of me.

486

00:29:48,810 --> 00:29:51,500

487

00:29:51,500 --> 00:29:55,780

And that's why I say she was
and is a very strong woman.

488

00:29:55,780 --> 00:29:58,870

489

00:29:58,870 --> 00:30:04,200

How do you feel about
humankind in general,

490

00:30:04,200 --> 00:30:07,310

in light of your
life experiences?

491

00:30:07,310 --> 00:30:08,840

About human life?

492

00:30:08,840 --> 00:30:10,370

Humankind.

493

00:30:10,370 --> 00:30:13,220

Humanity.

494

00:30:13,220 --> 00:30:22,560

Well, I am concerned
that humanity's not

495

00:30:22,560 --> 00:30:27,670

learning from the past.

496

00:30:27,670 --> 00:30:30,060

That's what worries me.

497

00:30:30,060 --> 00:30:36,590

I know that you can't always
understand the horrors of what

498

00:30:36,590 --> 00:30:39,080

had happened.

499

00:30:39,080 --> 00:30:46,450

But maybe with what I'm
saying and others like me,

500

00:30:46,450 --> 00:30:48,940

it can be understood
a little better,

501

00:30:48,940 --> 00:30:53,530

and that humanity
can avoid something

502

00:30:53,530 --> 00:30:56,950
like this happening again.

503

00:30:56,950 --> 00:31:02,140
I was very bitter after
the war, towards everybody.

504

00:31:02,140 --> 00:31:07,510
How they allowed me to
go through such misery

505

00:31:07,510 --> 00:31:08,950
for so long.

506

00:31:08,950 --> 00:31:13,570
And then on top of it, I didn't
even know for a few months that

507

00:31:13,570 --> 00:31:19,790
my mother survived or my
father, which he didn't.

508

00:31:19,790 --> 00:31:25,440
And I was terribly angry
at everything and everybody

509

00:31:25,440 --> 00:31:32,610
because nobody even cared after
I survived that I survived.

510

00:31:32,610 --> 00:31:36,170
I had to be protected
even after that.

511

00:31:36,170 --> 00:31:38,480
When we were in the
orphanage in Krakow,

512

00:31:38,480 --> 00:31:40,870
we were not allowed to go
out because some people felt

513

00:31:40,870 --> 00:31:42,245
that we should
not have survived.

514
00:31:42,245 --> 00:31:45,510

515
00:31:45,510 --> 00:31:48,540
And it was not safe to
go out from the house

516
00:31:48,540 --> 00:31:50,820
that we were kept
in in the garden.

517
00:31:50,820 --> 00:31:53,370
That was the only place
we were allowed to go.

518
00:31:53,370 --> 00:31:57,080
And the war wasn't
even over then.

519
00:31:57,080 --> 00:32:00,880
It was the spring of '45.

520
00:32:00,880 --> 00:32:03,250
So after surviving
all this and--

521
00:32:03,250 --> 00:32:06,220
my god, the thoughts,
the hate that I had,

522
00:32:06,220 --> 00:32:08,560
the things that I was
going to do to the Germans

523
00:32:08,560 --> 00:32:11,620
for doing these things to us.

524
00:32:11,620 --> 00:32:14,935
It's awesome for a child to even

think about these-- you know,

525

00:32:14,935 --> 00:32:17,260

I'm even afraid to think
about them now myself.

526

00:32:17,260 --> 00:32:20,410

527

00:32:20,410 --> 00:32:22,830

I was going to be a butcher.

528

00:32:22,830 --> 00:32:25,200

The things that I was
going to do to revenge.

529

00:32:25,200 --> 00:32:28,940

530

00:32:28,940 --> 00:32:33,260

And then, actually with
the help of Mother,

531

00:32:33,260 --> 00:32:38,150

to try to forget
the past, I realized

532

00:32:38,150 --> 00:32:45,100

that living a normal
life and continue

533

00:32:45,100 --> 00:32:53,030

being to be able
to feel and enjoy,

534

00:32:53,030 --> 00:32:55,430

that I was not destroyed.

535

00:32:55,430 --> 00:33:02,350

536

00:33:02,350 --> 00:33:05,850

So I hope that
with this interview

537
00:33:05,850 --> 00:33:12,820
that maybe others will
understand and not

538
00:33:12,820 --> 00:33:14,780
allow a thing like
this to happen again.

539
00:33:14,780 --> 00:33:18,150

540
00:33:18,150 --> 00:33:18,974
Thank you.

541
00:33:18,974 --> 00:33:21,820

542
00:33:21,820 --> 00:33:23,080
Let's stop now.

543
00:33:23,080 --> 00:33:26,740
And we have to do
one more thing.

544
00:33:26,740 --> 00:33:28,030
We all have to be--

545
00:33:28,030 --> 00:33:30,430
The following is 30 seconds
from [INAUDIBLE] interview

546
00:33:30,430 --> 00:33:33,000
with Ruth Webber.

547
00:33:33,000 --> 00:33:43,000