

Just hit her back. I just felt like she was a very heavy-set woman. She had two very big-- and I stopped her like this.

And when I did that, she called, this Mr. Cebula on me. And he came. Before he asked me anything, he hit me too.

And I got up for my rights, and I stood up for my rights, and I said, Mr. Cebula-- I talked to him in Polish. I says, why would she want to hit me? First of all, I came here as a volunteer. I'm working like a dog.

It was very nice of her. I says, you ask her. She gives me the keys from everything. She gives me the stamps, if I ever stoled anything. And I says, I'm very conscientious, I says, and she wanted to take away the day, and I couldn't wash my clothes, and she hits me?

He says, she could hit you, but you must not hit them back. I says, why not? I says, why shouldn't I? Why should she hit me for nothing?

Well, anyway, what he did is he threw me in jail. He threw me in jail. And I-- I remember, I wore my uniform, and it was the first time I saw a jail. And I lay down on the floor, and I went to sleep, because I was so tired that I couldn't care less. And I went to sleep. And I stayed in jail. I don't remember-- maybe three days. And I said--

He came. The same Cebula came to visit. And he said, are you ready to go to work? I says, no, I'm not going to go to work to her no more. I want another job.

Now you couldn't change your job, as a Polish person even. You had to go through the unemployment office. I says, if you're going to give me another job, I'm going to go to work.

Well, anyway, he locked me back in, in jail. And then, believe it or not, I remember there was a little trial. There was a trial. They took me to a trial. Why I did this, why I hit her, OK?

And so I went. I remember there was a little court. And the Germans were sitting there. And they asked me questions. I was frightened, stiff frightened for everybody at this point.

But I kept on saying all my things. I says, I came here as a volunteer, and I want to work, and I'm working very hard. And this lady was nice. I says, I-- she wanted to send me.

And I don't know why it took me longer to work, and she wanted to take away my day off. And I just didn't-- had to do my clothes and stuff. And she hit me, and I hit her back.

They gave me 42 days. It's called an Arbeitserziehungslager. It's like a delinquent camp, not for Jews. It was for delinquent, any kind who was a delinquent. I was a delinquent because what I did, and they send me.

And it was in Rudersberg, in a little city, where, when I got there, there were woman SS, OK? And like it had nothing to do with Jewish. All Poles, and French, and Russian, whoever didn't behave went to a Arbeitserziehungslager, to a delinquent camp.

What we did there, we unloaded wood. It was a factory from something, and we unloaded. But what was so bad about it is that the woman Nazis was screaming at us and yelling at us at work, after work. After work, we had to stay like a punishing, like this, with your hands up, and you-- you couldn't stay near a wall. You had to stay-- and that's pretty tiresome.

And we couldn't have no pencils, nothing. And there was a lot of gentiles that I was afraid for, believe it or not. But at this time, they were busy with their own lives, and they-- you know what I mean.

And every day I used to go to the bathroom, and I would fold, to know how many days, because we had no calendars. We had nothing. To fold the 42 days that I had to be there.

When was this?

This was around-- I remember it was Christmastime, because we had a Christmas dinner. And the gentiles gave us-- you had to have special meal, this thin that you share. It's called an oplatek. I don't know how to say it in English. And I know it was Christmastime because the--

In 1942, probably.

This was not-- this was closer to '43. No, this was '43. This was, yeah, '43.

This was when the Americans-- when did the Americans started to bomb?

I'm not sure.

'43, I think. '44. Anyway, my friend, this one that I told you lived there, who was also Jewish, but nobody knew, came to visit me to that camp, and she brought me some stuff. And I stayed there. And when the time was up to go, they put me again in the same jail. I stayed there a day. The same guy came.

And he told me, are you ready to go back to the same place? No, I says. You could throw me again there. I am not going to the same people, because I was nice, and she hit me, and I'm not going to go there no more.

Well, he changed my job to another place. I went to these other people. Needless to say, he was a Nazi too, wore the swastika, and went to meetings, and has kids. And I worked. And to tell you the truth, I was really very afraid. I mean, I didn't want things like this happen anymore.

And I worked there very hard. And she had there a Russian girl working, and she had one from France working. And I worked. That was a bigger place. She had three people working. And we worked.

And one day-- and we were cleaning vegetables. I had already-- I had nothing from my home, but I had a little apron. We used to have uniforms to go to school in Europe, special. It was a black with a white collar. I don't know what happened that I had this uniform.

And one day, while we're sitting and cleaning vegetables, the boss and his wife was there too, I came down there. And I wore this. And he said to me, you look so Jewish with this. And he was laughing, like this uniform. But the gentiles wore this uniform too.

So I thought then that I'm going to die. I ran into the bathroom. After a few minutes sitting there I ran into the bathroom, and I was shaking. And my face was so white, like this color. And I looked in the mirror, and I knew I had to go back out fast. So I just went, like to get the color back.

And I came back, and I worked. And I never wore this uniform again. And he never mentioned it anymore.

However, he used to drink a lot. He would, after work, he would talk politics with me-- not so much politics, as he would say, hey, he says, look at these American Jews. He says, now the American Jews are coming, he says. We already got rid of all the Jews from Europe, thank god.

Now, he says, the American Jews are coming. These are verfluchte, you know, like the dirty American Jews. They're coming now. But we'll take care of them too. Don't worry. He says, look, we, he said, had to work so hard, and the Jewish people had everything here.

So I listened to him. And I say, look, we had the same thing, I said. We had the same thing in Poland. I mean, he was discussing with me, because all he did was drinking wine all day long, and he was pretty well-to-do. He had all the people working for him. And I worked there and worked there.

Did you think it would ever end?

Well, I knew that I-- no.

Did you live day to day?

I lived day to day. I didn't think that it's going to end to our favor, that we're going to survive. I did not think I'm going to survive.

You thought you were going to die.

That's right. I was waiting every day, like somebody to come and say, hey, you Jewish, and let's go. I mean, that's how I got up in the morning, and this is how I really went through. OK. Wait.

So this this guy, this Cebula, I don't know what kind of conscience he had. I don't think anybody had any conscience there. In the meantime, I'm working. In the meantime-- at this point it must have been already-- because I remember the-- the big aeroplanes from the United States. The United States went into war. It must have been already later at this time. Must have been '44.

And I worked, you know. And after work, I didn't go. There was lots of-- I didn't wear the P. Only one time a policeman saw me, and he knew where I worked, and I told him, oh, I forgot to put it on. He didn't even take any money.

But I didn't go out for fun so much, but I went around. If I wanted to go in the street to walk around, and this I wasn't afraid, because if I didn't wear the P, nobody knew who I was, OK? As far as the Polish, they didn't know. So I looked German. The Germans looked like French. There were so many of them, different nationalities from different countries. [SIGHS]

And then, when this started, when the Americans came and they started to bomb, that was another experience. This Cebula came every day. When I used to wash the dishes, he would come there for a drink. He would come in. And still want to do that, see? And I never told him that I don't want to, because I was afraid for that.

So there was so many bombs thrown, and every time that the Americans came with these aeroplanes, they had a bunker. What do you call this? Where you run down in a basement?

Bomb shelter?

Bomb shelter. We all went down together as kids. The Hitlerjugend and all him. And I was sitting there over all these bombs throwing. I was only hoping that the bomb would fall in, that all of us will die in the same time. That was my biggest hope whenever I went down to that shelter.

But unfortunately, we [INAUDIBLE]. And this was in Stuttgart, Fellbach. And in Stuttgart they were throwing a lot of bombs there, the airport and at the-- Stuttgart was a big city. And they kept on coming. Like at least once a week this happened.

And then in between, another-- every time the bombs were falling, and in different cities, sometimes-- and Stuttgart wasn't so bad yet, but in different cities, in Berlin and other. And then, in the meantime, I'm still working there. Everything is still normal.

This Cebula comes again, but I mean really, I mean, he means business now. I have to give him my mother's address. And he definitely wants me to become a Volksdeutsche, a German, to have better privileges, and to make more money, and how can you tell one that you don't want better privileges, you don't want to make more money? It would be suspicious, right?

So I figured at this point, what can I do? I'll give him-- I gave him that fake whatever I had on this birth certificate and on the identification card. I gave it to him, and I went to my friend that same night.

And that was the first time I stole a bottle of wine from the place where I worked. And we both got drunk. And I said to her, I came to say goodbye, because she knew him, and she knew what kind of people these are, if they take-- all they have to do is check it. Of course, they didn't have computers, and this helped a lot. [LAUGHS] They had computers to burn the people, but they didn't have computers to find out.

And I says, I came to say goodbye, because look what happened. He took my address. He's going to find out I'm Jewish, and that's it.

She said, oh, there is going to be another miracle. Don't worry. Don't worry. Until you're dead, you're not dead. Until you die, you're not dead, right? And that's the hope she gave me.

And the miracle was that there was really a big Angriff, that a lot of American aeroplanes came. And they were bombing Stuttgart, the airport. And it took-- we were in the shelters a long time, like day and night. It was terrible.

And when we got out from the shelters, it was like a disaster. I mean, it didn't hurt us any, but not far. Not far from our neighbors. There were some roofs, some pieces came off and stuff from the impact, whatever.

The Germans don't know anything. We built, and we go to work. See, we work, everything in order.

About in the middle of the day, like lunchtime, my boss comes over to me, and he says, sit down. So I thought, oh, here we go. I says, what is it? He says, I want to tell you something. You remember that Cebula who was so nice to you, who wanted you to become a-- he got killed.

So help me god, he got killed in this Angriff that there was this. He got killed.

So I was sitting down and crying so bitterly, not for sadness from him, but for happiness that he got killed. I was really crying. And he thought that I'm really-- and those are the things that they come to you that I don't know how, but you just-- I guess if you have to survive.

And then, OK, I didn't know already about this, which I was relaxed. I didn't worry so much. I'm still working. But then it went on again and again that they were out of work, that a lot of them had to close. So they took us to farmers, OK? They took us to farmers because I guess the farmers needed the work.

And I mean I'm telling you the fast. This was already, like, close, the Americans to come in, hopefully.

And I went to a farm. I never worked in a farm all my life. It was a big farm. You had to feed the chickens. There was other people working also. You had to feed the chickens, and the cows, and everything to prepare. And then, in between, you went, and you went to the field to clean the leaves.

OK, I did this for a while. And one evening, a bunch of soldiers, Germans, came into the farm, and we had to feed them, make food for them. And at this point, I knew German pretty good. I mean, you know.

So while we have to help and give them food, they came, and they were talking among themselves, and they were talking also to their boss, that they lost all this-- in the army, when you lose the-- groups, that it's very bad. That there was a big-- they bombed out this and that and the other, and it's very, very bad OK.

So I was happy. I figured maybe they're going to lose the war. I knew one thing is going to help me. If they're going to lose the war, I'll survive. If they're going to win the war, I won't survive.

And they left, and that went on again. We had to feed them. They came back. And then we went up, again, about our business.

And one morning they took us there to the-- to clean the leaves. In what year did Roosevelt die?

It was '44, I think.

'44. It had to be '44. Because I'm going there with these rakes on my shoulder to work with the two more women. And there was the woman who watched over us were Germans, but they didn't clean the leaves. They just watched us.

And while we go there, while I'm raking the leaves, I hear them talk that Roosevelt died, and we're going to win the war. That's what one said to the other. Roosevelt died. Did you hear the news? Roosevelt died.

And you know, we're going to be in London. We're going to be in New York, and they going to speak from here. Our Führer, Hitler, is going to talk from here.

By the way, while I was working during all this time, I listened to the radio. I mean, there was-- they didn't hide the radio from me. I forgot to mention that, that Hitler had a lot of speeches all the time to give to his people and the support. And he kept on saying.

At one point I heard it myself-- I don't know what year this was; it was way before these bombs came-- that he was in Moscow. But Hitler never-- the Germans never were in Moscow. He said he was speaking from Moscow, and he intends to speak from New York, and he intends to speak from London. They were never in London either.

And I remember other things, that they had, like Hitler used to have speeches in a car in certain places where the people dropped all the work, and they went to listen to him outside. And of course, I could have go too. It was right in the front there of every city. And he gave them big support speeches.

Could you tell us how-- you're on the farm now. Tell us how it ended? When did--

OK, from the farm, that when they said that Roosevelt died, that they're going to win the war, I was very happy at this point. And then again, some German soldiers came. They were already lost, really. And they said that that's very, very [GERMAN]. That's very bad.

And we still worked there for maybe-- I know that in May is when the Russians came in. And then they left, and the English came in. So when I was still on the farm, when there was, again, the bombs bombing, we went to the shelters and everything, like I told you, I was very-- I only prayed that we're all going to die together. But it never happened, I guess.

And then one day they started to bomb. We were there for a long time. When we came out, there was a lot of white flags on roofs. And they said that the war is finished.

However, in some places, these Hitlerjugend, the youth, the German youth, you know, they had blocked off, for the-- first, the Russians came. For whoever came to invade the cities, they had blocked, made-- they blocked it up that they shouldn't be able to pass with the tanks and stuff, OK?

So I remember that I went there too with a lot of German people, with children on their arms and everything, to tell these youngsters, take away this. Enough is enough. And you have to take this away. Some of them were fighting and some of them not. And they took it away.

And then I couldn't wait to go and take a white sheet, and put it, like the war is finished, as far as we were told.

And then, while we were there, there were leaflets flying down from aeroplanes for all these people from all over Europe, who they knew that we work there, that we should be patient, we shouldn't run no place. We should stay put. That they're going to take care of us and everything.

Well, at this point. I didn't want to stay no more on the farm. So I want to tell you, me and another two people from there, from this where the farm was-- I don't even know how many miles it was. But we put everything in a little wagon, and we went back to this-- where I worked in this restaurant, OK? We went back there.

And we walked. It was a long, long walk. I don't know how long it took us, but we walked back there. And when we came there, this boss where I worked, he let me in there. He let me in. But at this point, I did not go in to work. I just went in to wait and see what's going to happen.

So yeah, while I was working during the war, I always said that when the war is going to finish, I have to kill at least two people. I mean, at least two. I made up my mind to kill two people. I don't care who they are. I says, I have to kill two Germans.

And then, when I got back to this place in Fellbach, to this-- his name was Zaltzman, I went back there. And he let me in with a few possessions. I went out just to watch the soldiers come. At this point I think they were English. They were not Russian. They were English.

And they were very nice. And they gave us cigarettes. At that time, I put my P, that I'm Polish. And they gave us cigarettes, and chocolate, and all kinds of stuff.

And instead to-- instead to go and kill two people, wouldn't you think that I took the cigarettes, and the chocolate, and I went back to that bus, these kids, the Hitlerjugend, and I gave it to them. I gave them cigarettes and chocolate.

And they didn't know that I-- still, I mean, it was just a big mixed up. It was in the beginning.

Then, naturally-- I don't remember how long the English stayed. They went out and the Americans came.

And when the Americans came, I mean, they came in-- you could see they came in to stay. They came in, and they invaded a lot of stuff, and they helped all these Auslanders from different countries. And I'm with my friend. We both don't want to work no more, see. She stays still where she used to work, and we knew.

And we both walk in the street one day. And we talked Polish to each other. And while we talked Polish, an American soldier went by. And he heard us talk Polish, and he understood, and he answered us.

And he says, oh, where are you from? He says, I was born in Poland, and I went to the United States when I was 12 or 13 years old. And he says to us, is there any Jewish people here?

The minute he said that, I want to tell you, I really was afraid still to say I'm Jewish. I wasn't going to say anything. But when he said that, I says, I'm Jewish. I'm Jewish. He says, you're Jewish? You wear a cross? You're Jewish.

I says, you don't have to believe me. I says, I'm Jewish, and this girl is Jewish too. And we just survived this and this.

And he says, can you write me something in Jewish? He didn't believe us. And we said, yes, and we wrote our names in Yiddish, in Jewish.

And then he took our address and everything, and he told us that this was in Fellbach. He says, in Stuttgart, there was-- that before the war, there was a big congregation, but then they confiscated the congregation, and they made a club out of it.

But in this club, he says, there's people who came back from concentration camps with striped-- there's a few there. If you want to go, he says, you go and see it.

But we were still afraid. So we don't do nothing. And we still stay there. And he took our address where we stay, and he brought us food. And he was very, very nice.

He was looking for relatives because his mother probably told him, hey, you go there, I have relatives. He was looking. That's why he asked us about Jewish people.

And then we stayed-- in another few days-- we didn't make an attempt to go to this club where the people from the concentration camp came. And we walked in there with two crosses. She wore a cross, and I wore a cross.

And there were this American chaplain, a Jewish, and a few broken, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, laying there like vegetables with the striped deals. And they Jewish, and they survived. And they told us some horror things.

And we tell this chaplain our little story fast, why we Jewish, and what we did. He blessed us, and took off the crosses, and he gave us mezuzahs. And he blessed us. And what this mezuzah is-- and we made sure. We asked him, are the Americans going to stay here? Do the Germans have a chance?

And this, he says, don't worry. He even spoke Jewish, but the Jewish and the German were so mixed up that we couldn't speak Jewish. We understood.

And with this mezuzah, we went back to-- she went with me to my boss to tell him, and when we came in, and we said, Mr. Zaltzman, sit down for a minute. I want to tell you something, well, all this time I worked for you, right? I'm Jewish, but I had false papers.

And he sat down, and he says, I'm so happy. I'm so happy.

He was not happy. He would have cut me up in pieces had he know I'm Jewish, OK? But he couldn't get over how we fooled him.

I says, you think for nothing, I says, I behaved like that, and I was so nice? And this other place, I says, that they wanted to send me home for a furlough, I had no place where to go. Would I come to you to work, I says, if I wouldn't be Jewish, you think? No way. And he was a big Nazi.

And he couldn't get over what-- and we didn't live there anymore. There was a DP camp in Stuttgart on Reichsbürger Strasse. It was a DP camp, we found out. I couldn't stay there anymore. I mean, he didn't throw me out, but I-- we went there to the DP camp.

And then I went with her to her boss to give her moral support, that she said the same thing. And I mean, they said they were happy. They were not happy, believe me. And that was already in 1945. I know it was in May when they came in.

What was the first thing you wanted to do when you got your freedom?

When I got my freedom, what I wanted to do, I did not want to peel potatoes and wash dishes. I just wanted to go, and see, and search if-- I knew my family is dead. But all I was interested is to find somebody from my family alive. This was my first thing, in which I was going to do that, OK?

So this is-- if you want to listen to some more, or I could quit now.

Tell us-- tell us--

I was going to tell, you my second chapter is that we were in the DP camp. And when we went to see these people in this club from the concentration camp, my friend, my girlfriend, there was another man who, he wasn't so emotionally broken up. He came also to see, to find somebody. And he took a liking to her. And he liked her. | he was also in the DP camp.

And he knew he had a brother someplace, OK, and he was looking for him. He knew a brother survived. I knew nothing. And at this time, at this point, people came from everywhere. They were from the concentration camp, from other places. They just looking for each other, terribly, you know.

And so me, I didn't know where to go to look. But I-- since I had this Polish certificate and everything, I was going to go back to Poland to see-- to my hometown. Is it really true? Is everything gone? I was going-- on my way there. How did I want to go there?

My girlfriend did not want to travel. She was near Russia there, and she knew her family is not alive anymore. So she didn't want to-- she was not a good traveler.

Her friend that we both met knew that he has a brother, and he didn't know where he was in Poland, in Germany. They were missing each other. So he was looking for a brother.

So he suggested to me, if you look for somebody, let's go. I'll go with you, and we're going to both go. I says, fine.

So it was right-- maybe it was two months or six weeks right after this liberation. We were in Stuttgart. And I was going to go to Poland, OK, with my friend, because he thought his brother was there.

Now we go as far as Munich, and we sit down at Munich to wait for a train to go to Berlin, for Berlin to Warsaw. And we're sitting in Munich, where there was also a DP camp. Feldafing was the name of the DP camp. We went through this camp first before we took the train.

And he didn't find any of his brother. And I asked various people from my hometown. There was not many survived from my hometown, but a few. And they said that my family, they all dead.

The minute they saw me, they said, they all dead. They knew. They knew what year and everything. But I still wanted to go back to Poland. So we go down to that station, and we wait for a train.

And while I'm sitting near my friend, across the street is another man. But this, I have to-- I was on a train-- on a bus in Munich before I took that train. And I'm sitting in the bus. And there is this lady gets up.

She says, oh, you're my daughter. She ripped her blouse, and she saw that she had a birthmark. See, five years later, you get, like, mature. When you're 12, 13, 14, then--

So she recognized. This is how people recognize each other. And some of them found each other. It was a terrible experience for me to see.

And then I'm sitting there, waiting for this train to come from Munich. And across the street, a man is sitting. And my friend looks at him. He says, oh, I know this man. I know this man.

And he leaves me sitting. And he goes over to this man. And two minutes later he comes back with this man.

This man came from Poland. And he was from his hometown. They went together to school.

And he says, I advise you not to go to Poland, because the Polish people, any Jew who comes for possessions, they kill them, OK? And this man, later, I married him, was my husband.

He came, and he told us not to go. And we went to Feldafing to look through the camp again. And we didn't find anybody else.

And he, while he was in Munich, my friend, he heard that this brother is looking for him in Stuttgart. He's looking for him. So naturally, we went back to Stuttgart. And my friend-- his friend who he met-- went with us there too, because he told him that there is this displaced person camp. There's a lot of people from his hometown.

So that's how I met my husband. And he was in the DP camp. And my friend-- we went back to my friend. And my friend liked him. We knew each other maybe-- this was in-- we met in May, in June, and July, August, September,



October, and November.

And in October, we made an engagement party, the four of us. We got engaged. And we made a wedding for November. In November we got married.

And we took this-- the places where we were not allowed to go in as Polish girl, we wanted our wedding to be there and everything.

Now the Burgermeister, you know, the mayor from the city, at this time was not a Nazi anymore. The Nazi was gone. But they took a man who was not in the party for a mayor. And we went to this, and in Stuttgart, to this mayor, and we told him where we worked and everything, and he gave us a little better privileges there.

So he gave us stuff to arrange for the wedding in the hall, where the Nazis used to meet, where nobody else but the Nazi were allowed to go into those beautiful halls. And that's where we wanted.

And then my boss where I worked, I used to see him. He says, if I could be of any help to you, I'll be of help. I says, thank you very much. We going to get married.

And everything went so fast that we got married, and we made a wedding. And we had this boss, my boss, and the other. I did not ask who. I worked first. But we had a table from Germans, and a table from Polish people, and then the DPs.

You see, anybody who came to Stuttgart we met, because we were there during the war. So we used to help them. And we all stayed together with the bunches of people who were, like, a year younger, but they were like babies. And we got married.

After you were married, how long did you live there?

OK, after I was married, I want to tell you that while this soldier, this American soldier who saw us, before he went back to the United States, he came to say goodbye to us, and he brought us cigarettes and stuff. And he says, what can I do for you when I'll get to the United States?

And I made a joke. And I says, what you could do for me is, I know I have relatives. I don't know where they live-- nothing. All I know is their names, because my father used to show me letters, and pictures, and this and that.

So I gave him-- I didn't even know in which cities, all the correct names. I gave him my name, where I was born, and my grandfather's name, and my father's name. And I says anybody who is going to be interested on me is going to get in touch.

And when he went back to the United States, I want you to know, he was living in Brooklyn. There used to be a Jewish Forverts. I don't know whether you're familiar. It was a Jewish-- a very strong, big, Jewish paper. And of course The New York Times.

He put me in this Jewish Forverts. And then he put me in The New York Time. And he also put me in the Canadian, because I told him I have relatives in Canada.

And at this time, in 1947, Canada could not-- the DPs could not go to Canada. So we had to come to the United States.

So what happened is an uncle of mine from Toronto found me in the Jewish paper. And he had a son who was my cousin and lived in New York. And he called him up to tell him that some from the relatives survived, and we have to do something about it.

So they all got together. And before I knew it, I got papers. But that time, when this soldier left, I wasn't married, see. I was single, and you know.

So they send me papers on my maiden name, just for me. I mean, I didn't have any letters, nothing. But I had to go, be prepared to go with the first boat to the United States. And then, when I got these-- in the meantime, when I got these papers, in the meantime, I already was married. In the meantime, I already was pregnant. [LAUGHS] It was fast.

And so this-- we went to the united-- the united service for DPs, for the-- Joint Distribution. And I showed them the papers, and that I'm married, in the meantime. So they said fine. They add my husband's name and everything, and they said he could go with me too. But they asked my relatives to pay for the fare.

And then they send them again that I'm pregnant. But the pregnancy was nothing, because I was going to go while I was pregnant, and the baby should be born the United States.

So the first transport left-- I think it was supposed to leave in January '47 or '46. I don't remember when the first transport-- but I went to Bremerhaven with my husband. I was in my sixth month at this point. And they did not let me go, because there was a war ship. And they had no nurses, no doctors, no nothing. If anything would happen to me, it would be my responsibility. And they wanted my husband to sign, and he didn't want to sign.

So we went back from Bremerhaven to Stuttgart, and we stayed there, and we had a place where to stay from-- the mayor gave us a place. And we waited. The baby should be born. And when the baby is three months old, we could go. So in the meantime, the Joint sent more papers to my relatives to say I already have a baby.

Well, all this went by fine. I had a healthy baby. And I finally went to the United States. And when I got to the United States, the soldier was there waiting with my relatives. He got in touch. He put his name, and he put his telephone number, and my relatives got in touch with him. And he came. And he told them that he saw me. He met me in the street and everything. He was a very nice guy, this man.

I fixed him up later, and he got married. I fixed him up. [LAUGHS]

And I was with my cousins in New York. I came to New York. And they were very nice, very nice people. And I came with a husband and a child. And I couldn't stay there. I mean, they didn't tell me to go, but how long can you stay? They were living in two bedrooms themselves, and they had two children, and she was pregnant. In that time, it was very hard to find apartments, because in the war time they didn't build any.

So we found, in the Lower East Side, an apartment, that it was all condemned to be thrown down. But they opened it up for those refugees.

Helen, how much have you shared of this with your children, and what kind of impact do you think?

Oh, some with my children. My children had terrible experience. [CRYING] My children know, but they have terrible experience because my husband was a very angry man. [CRYING] He's a very smart man, and very intellectual, but very angry. I mean, angry. And my kids suffered a lot, and one still suffers.

One escaped the suffering because he was not-- he was stronger, so he didn't-- it didn't affect him that much. But my oldest son it affected terrible.

And my youngest is on drugs. A very smart little kid who my husband told him he could do anything he wants to do. He went to private school, to yeshiva. And he traveled. He had his bar mitzvah in Israel. He was kosher, and he's a bum. He's 28.

And my husband is a weak man. He couldn't take all that. Very successful. He made a lot of money. And the money didn't go into his head, but he's very weak, and he just didn't feel good about himself. He was very angry, and he knew he failed with his kids, and he knew it was his fault.

And I never told him that, but he knew, and he never would communicate. He would never talk about anything. He just--

- either you do what you're told or forget it. A very domineering, and very--

Do you think that was because of the concentration camp experience?

You can't blame everything on the concentration camp. I mean, if a person is very nice, and he's communicative, he could only come out nicer. I think he was the eighth child from his parents, and his father was a very domineering person, and this was his nature. And of course, the war made him a little angry, because he was studying to be an engineer.

And he is lucky. He's the luckiest man because all his brothers and sisters were in Israel except for two in Poland, because they were communists. He has an interesting family.

And he wanted to go to Israel. And he wrote one brother. And one brother never answered him. So he got to the concentration camp.

It made him some angry, but he had a lot of anger in him before. And he didn't physically abuse my kids, but mentally he abused them, because he didn't feel good about himself. So they never did anything good no matter how good they try. When you don't do never good, you give up. I mean, how much can you do?

How do you think-- let's focus back on you for just a second here. In looking back at your whole childhood, and the whole experience during the Holocaust years, how has that affected you in the way that you approach life now, say, in Dallas?

I mean, at times I was nervous. I think I got to be a better person because, like I told you, it doesn't come to me what I have, and not that I don't deserve it. I do. But I don't feel guilty, because I did the best to my knowledge, and I didn't kill anybody. I didn't kill my parents. And I don't have any guilt feelings.

However, I mean, when you come with that experience in a young age, and you cannot-- I mean, I did not have my experience to be educated. I just educated myself from reading by myself, from life. Some people go through books, and I went through life.

Are you angry or bitter now about all this?

No, no. I was never a bitter person. Like I told you. No. When you're bitter, you're just going to suffer yourself. Nobody owes me anything. I don't expect anything from-- when I do something, it's because I want to do. I choose to do. But nobody owes me back. That's what I want to do and I choose to do.

I mean, you can't expect, because you don't expect from my husband-- look, I lived with my husband for 26 years. He didn't have to do what he did. And so am I going to be angry at him? It was his loss, not mine. And it's still his loss, because he's still running.

Do you think, as you look back on the whole-- your whole upbringing in those years, was there any meaning to it for you? How do you explain it to yourself?

How I explained? Like I told you before, there had to be a meaning, because for me to survive, to be able to talk about my parents, and about my family, and to give some charity for them, or say, like, a prayer for them, is the meaning. And maybe it was meant for me to live.

Like I told you, I still have-- I enjoy life. I'm healthy. And thank god I feel young enough to have a bar mitzvah son, grandson. My other grandson is going to be bar mitzvah. I have one son who is doing very, very well, and hopefully my younger one is going to straighten out, which he would have if my husband would have take charge.

But my husband is a weak man. He just gave up a beautiful business and everything, and he just lives in Israel, and he has enough to live good, and so he doesn't want to have a part.

You see, money and stuff was not his bag. He had other values. He had good values.

But of course, when a person doesn't feel about himself good, and when he gets older, he feels worse. But when you don't express your feelings, and you don't talk about it, it gets worse.

OK. Do you have any last comments about all of this? Or do you have any questions?

It's very hard to condense five years of this horror in an hour or-- what time is it? An hour and a half. An hour.

An hour and a half.

What time is it?

It's almost 3:00.

It's almost 3 o'clock.

Yeah, I have to pick up some-- and it's hard, but I did the best.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

What would you-- what would you want someone who was watching, listening to you now, to remember most of what you shared, in just a minute or two. What was most important for this for you?

They should remember that their heritage is important. They should stand up for what they believe in. And they shouldn't let themselves do what we did. They should fight for their rights. And that history shouldn't repeat itself. That it was a terrible thing.

You could only help by not escaping. If I'm going to say, I'm not Jewish, and I'm going to bury my head so I don't see, that's not going to help. You could be Jewish. You could be a better American when you believe in your heritage, and you help your fellow Jew, and you help everybody.

OK.

Want to thank you.

OK, well, that ought to do it.