

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:05,650

2

00:00:05,650 --> 00:00:08,320

This is the United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3

00:00:08,320 --> 00:00:12,100

Volunteer Collection interview  
with Tilda Finzi Cohen,

4

00:00:12,100 --> 00:00:15,740

conducted by Gail  
Schwartz on April 14,

5

00:00:15,740 --> 00:00:19,930

1998 in Bethesda, Maryland.

6

00:00:19,930 --> 00:00:26,610

This is tape number 1, side  
A. What is your full name?

7

00:00:26,610 --> 00:00:29,890

Tilda Finzi Cohen.

8

00:00:29,890 --> 00:00:32,830

And is that the name  
you were born with?

9

00:00:32,830 --> 00:00:34,075

Well, no.

10

00:00:34,075 --> 00:00:38,350

The name I was born with  
was Mazel Tov Finzi.

11

00:00:38,350 --> 00:00:40,860

12

00:00:40,860 --> 00:00:43,110

How is it that you

were given that name.

13

00:00:43,110 --> 00:00:46,710

It was my grandmother's name who  
died many, many years before,

14

00:00:46,710 --> 00:00:49,410

which my father was  
only 11 years old.

15

00:00:49,410 --> 00:00:52,470

So he wanted to  
name his daughter

16

00:00:52,470 --> 00:00:54,990

after his deceased mother.

17

00:00:54,990 --> 00:00:58,020

And when you were a small  
child you were called that?

18

00:00:58,020 --> 00:01:01,800

No, I was never  
called that at home.

19

00:01:01,800 --> 00:01:05,280

I was always called  
Tilda, but I was always

20

00:01:05,280 --> 00:01:06,300

called Tilda at home.

21

00:01:06,300 --> 00:01:08,730

The only place I  
was called Mazel Tov

22

00:01:08,730 --> 00:01:11,910

was when I went to first  
grade, because that

23

00:01:11,910 --> 00:01:14,610

was on my birth certificate.

24

00:01:14,610 --> 00:01:19,250

So that was my legal name in  
Yugoslavia, was Mazel Tov,

25

00:01:19,250 --> 00:01:20,280

and that was a burden.

26

00:01:20,280 --> 00:01:23,880

27

00:01:23,880 --> 00:01:26,560

Where were you born  
and when were you born?

28

00:01:26,560 --> 00:01:32,160

I was born in Split, in  
what was then Yugoslavia,

29

00:01:32,160 --> 00:01:35,970

July 11th, 1933.

30

00:01:35,970 --> 00:01:39,240

Let's talk a little bit about  
the background of your family.

31

00:01:39,240 --> 00:01:40,870

Where did your  
parents come from?

32

00:01:40,870 --> 00:01:41,960

What were their names?

33

00:01:41,960 --> 00:01:42,460

OK.

34

00:01:42,460 --> 00:01:44,890

My mother's name  
was Hannah Montilio,

35

00:01:44,890 --> 00:01:48,120

and she was born in Sarajevo.

36

00:01:48,120 --> 00:01:51,600

And my father's  
name was Maurice.

37

00:01:51,600 --> 00:01:57,360

So he went later on by the  
name of Mauricio Finzi.

38

00:01:57,360 --> 00:01:59,100

And he was also  
born in Sarajevo,

39

00:01:59,100 --> 00:02:02,820

but he moved to  
the island of Vis

40

00:02:02,820 --> 00:02:09,990

when he was extremely young,  
and then moved to Split.

41

00:02:09,990 --> 00:02:12,600

So basically, he  
had left Sarajevo

42

00:02:12,600 --> 00:02:15,780

at a very young age, maybe  
the age of five or six,

43

00:02:15,780 --> 00:02:20,250

and moved to the  
Dalmatian Coast,

44

00:02:20,250 --> 00:02:22,870

first in the island of Vis  
and then moved to Split.

45

00:02:22,870 --> 00:02:28,460

46

00:02:28,460 --> 00:02:32,345

How far back can you  
trace your generations,

47

00:02:32,345 --> 00:02:33,470  
and where were they living?

48

00:02:33,470 --> 00:02:36,190

49

00:02:36,190 --> 00:02:36,980  
I really can't.

50

00:02:36,980 --> 00:02:39,040  
I don't know much about that.

51

00:02:39,040 --> 00:02:46,150  
I think my parents'  
parents were from Sarajevo,

52

00:02:46,150 --> 00:02:47,650  
and they lived there.

53

00:02:47,650 --> 00:02:50,860  
One of my  
grandfathers, Montilio,

54

00:02:50,860 --> 00:02:56,920  
was from Travnik, which  
is still near in Bosnia.

55

00:02:56,920 --> 00:03:04,750  
But basically, that's all  
I know, not beyond that.

56

00:03:04,750 --> 00:03:07,990  
Just my parents'  
parents I knew of.

57

00:03:07,990 --> 00:03:09,690  
Do you have any  
brothers or sisters?

58

00:03:09,690 --> 00:03:12,950  
No, I am an only child.

59

00:03:12,950 --> 00:03:15,440

What kind of work  
did your father do?

60

00:03:15,440 --> 00:03:20,590

My father owned a dry  
goods store in Split.

61

00:03:20,590 --> 00:03:23,845

Now, Split is a city  
on the Adriatic Coast?

62

00:03:23,845 --> 00:03:24,512

It is.

63

00:03:24,512 --> 00:03:25,220

It's in Dalmatia.

64

00:03:25,220 --> 00:03:27,310

It's on the Adriatic.

65

00:03:27,310 --> 00:03:33,580

And it was a very  
pretty, little city.

66

00:03:33,580 --> 00:03:35,530

The sea was beautiful.

67

00:03:35,530 --> 00:03:38,395

Swimming was wonderful.

68

00:03:38,395 --> 00:03:42,190

It was a very small  
Jewish community,

69

00:03:42,190 --> 00:03:48,305

I think about 100 families,  
if I'm not mistaken.

70

00:03:48,305 --> 00:03:50,340

But a very active  
Jewish community.

71  
00:03:50,340 --> 00:03:51,875  
It had a club.

72  
00:03:51,875 --> 00:03:56,610  
It had a very nice,  
little old synagogue.

73  
00:03:56,610 --> 00:04:00,030  
We also took our chickens to  
be killed there on Shabbat.

74  
00:04:00,030 --> 00:04:03,210  
Friday night, not on Shabbat,  
and before the holidays.

75  
00:04:03,210 --> 00:04:04,800  
We did not have kosher food.

76  
00:04:04,800 --> 00:04:08,550  
So I remember  
vividly going down.

77  
00:04:08,550 --> 00:04:11,340  
I was the maid, with  
the live chickens,

78  
00:04:11,340 --> 00:04:16,829  
taking the live chickens and  
having them killed for Friday.

79  
00:04:16,829 --> 00:04:18,390  
Actually for Saturday, I think.

80  
00:04:18,390 --> 00:04:19,980  
Friday night we  
didn't have meat.

81  
00:04:19,980 --> 00:04:24,930

82  
00:04:24,930 --> 00:04:27,360

And then before the  
holidays, taking the chicken.

83  
00:04:27,360 --> 00:04:29,880  
We never had meat,  
beef, or something.

84  
00:04:29,880 --> 00:04:32,910  
It's interesting, small.

85  
00:04:32,910 --> 00:04:35,500  
How religious was your family?

86  
00:04:35,500 --> 00:04:38,250  
My father was very active.

87  
00:04:38,250 --> 00:04:42,420  
He went to Friday night  
services most of the time.

88  
00:04:42,420 --> 00:04:44,630  
I don't think he went to  
Saturday morning services.

89  
00:04:44,630 --> 00:04:48,120  
He had a dry goods store,  
so it had to be open.

90  
00:04:48,120 --> 00:04:53,650  
But very observant in the  
sense of very serious.

91  
00:04:53,650 --> 00:04:59,220  
We observed the holidays  
very, very much.

92  
00:04:59,220 --> 00:05:02,380  
Kosher, it was a  
kind of hit and miss.

93  
00:05:02,380 --> 00:05:05,310  
I mean, kosher meat,  
kosher chicken,

94  
00:05:05,310 --> 00:05:07,560  
because there was  
no kosher butcher.

95  
00:05:07,560 --> 00:05:14,940  
Observant in the sense of  
observing all the holidays.

96  
00:05:14,940 --> 00:05:17,560  
And my father was  
very knowledgeable.

97  
00:05:17,560 --> 00:05:20,340  
He could always conduct  
services any place,

98  
00:05:20,340 --> 00:05:24,570  
conducted them for  
years, even in New York.

99  
00:05:24,570 --> 00:05:28,067  
He was president of the Yugoslav  
Jews of the United States

100  
00:05:28,067 --> 00:05:29,275  
and conducted their services.

101  
00:05:29,275 --> 00:05:32,380

102  
00:05:32,380 --> 00:05:33,610  
What street did you live on?

103  
00:05:33,610 --> 00:05:36,280  
Do you remember your  
address in Split?

104  
00:05:36,280 --> 00:05:37,330  
[NON-ENGLISH]

105  
00:05:37,330 --> 00:05:41,350

106  
00:05:41,350 --> 00:05:42,260  
Number 11.

107  
00:05:42,260 --> 00:05:44,860

108  
00:05:44,860 --> 00:05:50,870  
All right, now what kind  
of neighborhood was it?

109  
00:05:50,870 --> 00:05:53,660  
Was it a mixed neighborhood,  
mixed Jews and non-Jews?

110  
00:05:53,660 --> 00:05:58,070  
Basically, there was  
no Jewish neighborhood

111  
00:05:58,070 --> 00:06:03,500  
by the time I was born, by the  
time my parents came to Split.

112  
00:06:03,500 --> 00:06:05,810  
It was basically we  
lived in a building.

113  
00:06:05,810 --> 00:06:08,990  
It was six.

114  
00:06:08,990 --> 00:06:12,020  
On each floor there were  
two apartments, large.

115  
00:06:12,020 --> 00:06:14,120  
And there were three floors.

116  
00:06:14,120 --> 00:06:17,360

117  
00:06:17,360 --> 00:06:19,640

And there were no other  
Jews live in the building,

118  
00:06:19,640 --> 00:06:22,760  
but there were some Jews  
living in the next building.

119  
00:06:22,760 --> 00:06:25,760  
And there were some Jews  
living a block down,

120  
00:06:25,760 --> 00:06:27,810  
and across the street  
there were a couple.

121  
00:06:27,810 --> 00:06:28,940  
So it was a very--

122  
00:06:28,940 --> 00:06:30,530  
I think it was  
probably what was--

123  
00:06:30,530 --> 00:06:33,890  
would've been considered  
a middle to up--

124  
00:06:33,890 --> 00:06:37,450  
middle class-- definitely,  
middle class neighborhood.

125  
00:06:37,450 --> 00:06:39,980  
Was a lot of non Jews.

126  
00:06:39,980 --> 00:06:42,050  
Jews were maybe  
in each building--

127  
00:06:42,050 --> 00:06:44,600  
not in each building, maybe  
every other third building

128  
00:06:44,600 --> 00:06:47,420  
there was a family.

129  
00:06:47,420 --> 00:06:52,400  
Did you have an extended  
family of other relatives?

130  
00:06:52,400 --> 00:06:56,450  
In Split, I had a  
step-grandmother and an aunt,

131  
00:06:56,450 --> 00:06:57,310  
which was--

132  
00:06:57,310 --> 00:07:00,230  
if my father were alive,  
he would be very upset

133  
00:07:00,230 --> 00:07:03,110  
because I would say his half  
sister because to him it

134  
00:07:03,110 --> 00:07:05,140  
was his sister.

135  
00:07:05,140 --> 00:07:07,550  
And her name was Tilda.

136  
00:07:07,550 --> 00:07:10,600  
He was-- she was named  
after the deceased mother.

137  
00:07:10,600 --> 00:07:12,440  
This was a long story.

138  
00:07:12,440 --> 00:07:18,500  
But anyway-- and an uncle,  
my father's brother.

139  
00:07:18,500 --> 00:07:21,740  
So they all came to my mother's  
house for Shabbat dinner

140  
00:07:21,740 --> 00:07:24,080

and for the holidays.

141

00:07:24,080 --> 00:07:25,670

Did you have cousins, also?

142

00:07:25,670 --> 00:07:31,370

I had cousins in Sarajevo and  
in Zagreb and in Belgrade.

143

00:07:31,370 --> 00:07:36,410

I did not-- before the war, I  
did not have cousins in Split.

144

00:07:36,410 --> 00:07:42,830

My mother's brothers lived  
in Zagreb, some in Zagreb,

145

00:07:42,830 --> 00:07:44,360

some in Sarajevo.

146

00:07:44,360 --> 00:07:45,230

So there was--

147

00:07:45,230 --> 00:07:48,020

I had cousins but not in  
Split at the time when

148

00:07:48,020 --> 00:07:49,700

the war started.

149

00:07:49,700 --> 00:07:53,810

Later on, they had  
escaped to Split.

150

00:07:53,810 --> 00:07:56,330

What language did  
you speak at home?

151

00:07:56,330 --> 00:08:00,320

At home, I spoke  
mostly Serbo-Croatian,

152

00:08:00,320 --> 00:08:03,650  
and my parents spoke Ladino--

153  
00:08:03,650 --> 00:08:05,600  
where we-- it's  
called Ladino here.

154  
00:08:05,600 --> 00:08:09,890  
I don't know what I call  
it Spanish at home for me

155  
00:08:09,890 --> 00:08:12,620  
not to understand, of course.

156  
00:08:12,620 --> 00:08:16,400  
Picked it up so I could know  
all the secrets of the family.

157  
00:08:16,400 --> 00:08:20,660  
So I-- both languages  
were spoken at home.

158  
00:08:20,660 --> 00:08:23,660  
But I spoke only Serbo-Croatian.

159  
00:08:23,660 --> 00:08:26,120  
So your family is part  
of Sephardic Jewry.

160  
00:08:26,120 --> 00:08:27,140  
Yes.

161  
00:08:27,140 --> 00:08:29,150  
I'm a Sephardic Jew.

162  
00:08:29,150 --> 00:08:31,820  
My mother and father  
was Sephardic.

163  
00:08:31,820 --> 00:08:33,320  
Did you have any  
favorite holidays?

164

00:08:33,320 --> 00:08:36,190

165

00:08:36,190 --> 00:08:37,164

Favorite holidays?

166

00:08:37,164 --> 00:08:40,330

167

00:08:40,330 --> 00:08:43,730

It's interesting where now it's  
Pesach, so it's interesting.

168

00:08:43,730 --> 00:08:44,730

I don't know that--

169

00:08:44,730 --> 00:08:50,150

my favorite holiday was probably  
what we called [NON-ENGLISH]..

170

00:08:50,150 --> 00:08:54,130

I don't even know what it is.

171

00:08:54,130 --> 00:08:55,570

When you get all  
the dried fruit,

172

00:08:55,570 --> 00:08:58,180

then you walk around  
with the little--

173

00:08:58,180 --> 00:09:01,420

you put the dried fruit in a  
paper bag and you put a flag

174

00:09:01,420 --> 00:09:04,740

and you walk around the  
whole synagogue and all this.

175

00:09:04,740 --> 00:09:06,720

Simchat Torah?

176

00:09:06,720 --> 00:09:08,140

There was this Sim--

177

00:09:08,140 --> 00:09:09,160

it's interesting.

178

00:09:09,160 --> 00:09:11,065

It must be Simchat Torah.

179

00:09:11,065 --> 00:09:14,200

Do we dry fruit  
for Simchat Torah?

180

00:09:14,200 --> 00:09:15,910

Children walk around with flags.

181

00:09:15,910 --> 00:09:16,870

I know that.

182

00:09:16,870 --> 00:09:18,400

I know, but it was more--

183

00:09:18,400 --> 00:09:23,080

it was like a fall holiday  
with all the-- that's right.

184

00:09:23,080 --> 00:09:25,690

Now, that you-- I have  
not connected that.

185

00:09:25,690 --> 00:09:30,310

But we always had like a feast  
of dried fruits and nuts,

186

00:09:30,310 --> 00:09:33,160

and we each got our bag.

187

00:09:33,160 --> 00:09:37,180

And it was like a party,  
big party at the synagogue.

188

00:09:37,180 --> 00:09:39,610  
Let's talk a little bit more  
about the Jewish community.

189  
00:09:39,610 --> 00:09:42,550

190  
00:09:42,550 --> 00:09:44,210  
What was the name  
of the synagogue?

191  
00:09:44,210 --> 00:09:47,530  
I don't remem-- I don't know  
that it had a particular name,

192  
00:09:47,530 --> 00:09:50,980  
at least I don't remember it.

193  
00:09:50,980 --> 00:09:52,750  
There was a one  
and only synagogue.

194  
00:09:52,750 --> 00:09:55,570  
It was in a very kind  
of-- you couldn't even

195  
00:09:55,570 --> 00:09:57,580  
notice it was a synagogue  
from the outside.

196  
00:09:57,580 --> 00:10:02,910  
It went through a very  
narrow entrance among stores.

197  
00:10:02,910 --> 00:10:07,240  
But you would then  
walk up some steps,

198  
00:10:07,240 --> 00:10:10,270  
and then there was a synagogue,  
a very lovely synagogue.

199  
00:10:10,270 --> 00:10:12,868

Actually, was  
women sat upstairs.

200  
00:10:12,868 --> 00:10:13,660  
Men sat downstairs.

201  
00:10:13,660 --> 00:10:16,900  
It was a lovely little  
synagogue with a--

202  
00:10:16,900 --> 00:10:19,210  
also, garden I  
talked to you about,

203  
00:10:19,210 --> 00:10:21,910  
this [NON-ENGLISH] where  
you-- we used to have.

204  
00:10:21,910 --> 00:10:29,000  
And what's-- had its own  
garden like for [INAUDIBLE]..

205  
00:10:29,000 --> 00:10:31,310  
They used to have  
soccer there, too.

206  
00:10:31,310 --> 00:10:33,300  
But it was nothing--

207  
00:10:33,300 --> 00:10:36,690  
I mean, from the outside you  
could not see that it was-- it

208  
00:10:36,690 --> 00:10:40,100  
was just like a little  
opening and you walked in

209  
00:10:40,100 --> 00:10:44,172  
and it was a long, narrow street  
and then there were some steps.

210  
00:10:44,172 --> 00:10:46,130  
Do you think that was

because of protection not

211

00:10:46,130 --> 00:10:48,530  
to show the public that  
this was a synagogue?

212

00:10:48,530 --> 00:10:50,850  
I would don't--

213

00:10:50,850 --> 00:10:55,060  
I wasn't-- I get not the  
impression I had at the time.

214

00:10:55,060 --> 00:10:56,790  
So it could have been.

215

00:10:56,790 --> 00:11:02,240  
But I don't-- almost  
everything was in the old town.

216

00:11:02,240 --> 00:11:05,910  
Everything was-- there were--  
streets were extremely narrow.

217

00:11:05,910 --> 00:11:08,660  
And so everything was like--

218

00:11:08,660 --> 00:11:11,210  
unless there was a store.

219

00:11:11,210 --> 00:11:13,610  
But of course, churches  
had big open area.

220

00:11:13,610 --> 00:11:15,920  
So maybe you're right.

221

00:11:15,920 --> 00:11:18,830  
In my own child's mind,  
I'd never conceived it--

222

00:11:18,830 --> 00:11:23,000

never perceived it  
that way, [INAUDIBLE]..

223  
00:11:23,000 --> 00:11:25,160  
Did you have a  
non-Jewish friends?

224  
00:11:25,160 --> 00:11:26,780  
We're talking about  
as a small child.

225  
00:11:26,780 --> 00:11:29,330  
Yes, I did have  
non-Jewish friends.

226  
00:11:29,330 --> 00:11:33,860  
Most of the young people  
that lived in the building.

227  
00:11:33,860 --> 00:11:38,180  
As I said, everybody  
was non-Jewish.

228  
00:11:38,180 --> 00:11:44,330  
I had one Jewish friend,  
though, and was a boy.

229  
00:11:44,330 --> 00:11:48,997  
And then I had mostly non-Jewish  
friends that I played with.

230  
00:11:48,997 --> 00:11:50,580  
What was the name  
of your non-Jewish--

231  
00:11:50,580 --> 00:11:51,372  
your Jewish friend?

232  
00:11:51,372 --> 00:11:54,590  
Maritza was a little girl that  
lived in the building and she

233  
00:11:54,590 --> 00:11:55,280

was my--

234

00:11:55,280 --> 00:11:58,860  
we talking now before the war.

235

00:11:58,860 --> 00:12:03,020  
We're not-- we  
talking before 1941.

236

00:12:03,020 --> 00:12:07,910  
Because after 1941,  
things changed.

237

00:12:07,910 --> 00:12:09,320  
Did you-- yeah.

238

00:12:09,320 --> 00:12:11,232  
We're talking before the war.

239

00:12:11,232 --> 00:12:13,190  
Did you-- and again, you  
were very, very young.

240

00:12:13,190 --> 00:12:16,640  
Did you have any special  
hobbies or enjoyable things

241

00:12:16,640 --> 00:12:20,220  
you liked to do  
as a small child?

242

00:12:20,220 --> 00:12:21,890  
Do I have any special hobbies?

243

00:12:21,890 --> 00:12:23,060  
I'm trying to-- yes.

244

00:12:23,060 --> 00:12:24,500  
When I went to  
Sarajevo, they used

245

00:12:24,500 --> 00:12:29,100

to take me to the amusement  
park with all the--

246  
00:12:29,100 --> 00:12:30,010  
please help me.

247  
00:12:30,010 --> 00:12:30,900  
The rides.

248  
00:12:30,900 --> 00:12:33,150  
The rides, yes.

249  
00:12:33,150 --> 00:12:36,060  
And that's what I remember.

250  
00:12:36,060 --> 00:12:39,990  
And my greatest  
hobby was the beach.

251  
00:12:39,990 --> 00:12:42,970  
I was-- I'm still a  
good swimmer, I think.

252  
00:12:42,970 --> 00:12:45,570  
And I learned to swim  
before I-- definitely

253  
00:12:45,570 --> 00:12:47,280  
before I learned to read.

254  
00:12:47,280 --> 00:12:50,280  
So going to the beach and  
swimming was one of my--

255  
00:12:50,280 --> 00:12:54,085  
and jumping into, and diving  
was one of my biggest hobbies.

256  
00:12:54,085 --> 00:12:57,150

257  
00:12:57,150 --> 00:13:01,050

How would you describe your  
parents and their relationship

258

00:13:01,050 --> 00:13:04,350  
to you when you  
were still young?

259

00:13:04,350 --> 00:13:06,940  
Were they very  
protective of you?

260

00:13:06,940 --> 00:13:09,760  
They were very-- I would  
say very protective.

261

00:13:09,760 --> 00:13:11,425  
And I was being an only child.

262

00:13:11,425 --> 00:13:15,320

263

00:13:15,320 --> 00:13:18,640  
Very much involved what  
I ate and what I didn't.

264

00:13:18,640 --> 00:13:25,790  
And-- I'm sorry--

265

00:13:25,790 --> 00:13:27,270  
they were very caring.

266

00:13:27,270 --> 00:13:30,600

267

00:13:30,600 --> 00:13:33,905  
My father was-- my parents  
were both very nice people,

268

00:13:33,905 --> 00:13:40,570  
but my father was  
extremely close to me

269

00:13:40,570 --> 00:13:41,680  
from the time I was born.

270  
00:13:41,680 --> 00:13:44,960

271  
00:13:44,960 --> 00:13:47,125  
Were there any favorite  
songs that your parents

272  
00:13:47,125 --> 00:13:48,500  
used to sing to  
you when you were

273  
00:13:48,500 --> 00:13:50,200  
a child that you can remember?

274  
00:13:50,200 --> 00:13:51,160  
Yes.

275  
00:13:51,160 --> 00:13:52,930  
I remember song.

276  
00:13:52,930 --> 00:13:55,090  
I can't-- I don't  
have a good voice.

277  
00:13:55,090 --> 00:13:58,790  
My-- both parents both  
had very nice voices.

278  
00:13:58,790 --> 00:14:02,050  
But it's still the  
same songs that I

279  
00:14:02,050 --> 00:14:04,510  
sing to my grandchildren.

280  
00:14:04,510 --> 00:14:06,250  
Not the adult, not  
the-- but now we

281

00:14:06,250 --> 00:14:10,060  
have a young one, very young  
grandchild, a nine-month-old.

282  
00:14:10,060 --> 00:14:11,925  
And he loves that.

283  
00:14:11,925 --> 00:14:14,440  
Can you sing a line or two?

284  
00:14:14,440 --> 00:14:16,330  
[NON-ENGLISH SINGING]

285  
00:14:16,330 --> 00:14:31,300

286  
00:14:31,300 --> 00:14:32,390  
Can you translate that?

287  
00:14:32,390 --> 00:14:37,340

288  
00:14:37,340 --> 00:14:39,380  
A little bird came, flew--

289  
00:14:39,380 --> 00:14:43,190  
flew-- flew to us.

290  
00:14:43,190 --> 00:14:53,330  
And in her beak is  
carrying a letter.

291  
00:14:53,330 --> 00:14:54,550  
And the letter there--

292  
00:14:54,550 --> 00:14:58,260

293  
00:14:58,260 --> 00:14:59,530  
he's brought a letter.

294

00:14:59,530 --> 00:15:06,310  
And in the letter regards from  
the mother-- from my mother.

295  
00:15:06,310 --> 00:15:07,380  
That's lovely.

296  
00:15:07,380 --> 00:15:09,740  
That's lovely.

297  
00:15:09,740 --> 00:15:10,240  
All right.

298  
00:15:10,240 --> 00:15:11,960  
Now, you were born in 1933.

299  
00:15:11,960 --> 00:15:14,560  
So when did you start  
going to school?

300  
00:15:14,560 --> 00:15:19,370  
I started going to  
school when I was--

301  
00:15:19,370 --> 00:15:22,220  
that's a good question.

302  
00:15:22,220 --> 00:15:27,290  
1943, I think.

303  
00:15:27,290 --> 00:15:28,970  
Not before you  
were 10 years old?

304  
00:15:28,970 --> 00:15:29,650  
No.

305  
00:15:29,650 --> 00:15:31,280  
1940.

306  
00:15:31,280 --> 00:15:31,810  
OK.

307  
00:15:31,810 --> 00:15:33,500  
1940, I was seven.

308  
00:15:33,500 --> 00:15:35,960  
You didn't start going  
to school before seven.

309  
00:15:35,960 --> 00:15:40,790  
I started some nursery school,  
like the German nursery school,

310  
00:15:40,790 --> 00:15:46,640  
or something like that that was  
run by-- but public school I

311  
00:15:46,640 --> 00:15:49,010  
started in 1940.

312  
00:15:49,010 --> 00:15:50,135  
What is your first memory?

313  
00:15:50,135 --> 00:15:53,450

314  
00:15:53,450 --> 00:15:54,840  
It's interesting.

315  
00:15:54,840 --> 00:15:59,250

316  
00:15:59,250 --> 00:16:01,800  
I don't know if it's because  
I remember pictures of me

317  
00:16:01,800 --> 00:16:08,220  
at the beach surrounded by-- or  
it was always the first-- one

318  
00:16:08,220 --> 00:16:10,770  
of the first memories, because  
I spend an awful lot of time

319  
00:16:10,770 --> 00:16:12,000  
at the beach.

320  
00:16:12,000 --> 00:16:13,860  
I still love the ocean.

321  
00:16:13,860 --> 00:16:16,170  
I think it was at  
the beach, probably,

322  
00:16:16,170 --> 00:16:19,080  
I think, just with my family.

323  
00:16:19,080 --> 00:16:21,212  
And also where the--

324  
00:16:21,212 --> 00:16:22,290  
we used to have lunch.

325  
00:16:22,290 --> 00:16:26,850  
We used-- because maybe I adored  
it so much because it would be

326  
00:16:26,850 --> 00:16:31,670  
used to have one of these  
little [? cabana ?], a little--

327  
00:16:31,670 --> 00:16:33,570  
just there-- it was  
just at the beach.

328  
00:16:33,570 --> 00:16:36,660  
Many people next door to  
each other where we change.

329  
00:16:36,660 --> 00:16:39,600  
And we were not comfortable.

330  
00:16:39,600 --> 00:16:41,730  
The maids were--  
we never had a car.

331

00:16:41,730 --> 00:16:42,900

We never had a refrigerator.

332

00:16:42,900 --> 00:16:46,260

We had help because it was  
not available at that time.

333

00:16:46,260 --> 00:16:49,710

We had help, so we  
went to the beach.

334

00:16:49,710 --> 00:16:52,350

My mother and I and  
my dad used to meet us

335

00:16:52,350 --> 00:16:55,680

in this little shack.

336

00:16:55,680 --> 00:16:57,202

But everybody had the--

337

00:16:57,202 --> 00:16:59,040

and the maid used  
to bring lunch.

338

00:16:59,040 --> 00:17:02,180

We used to swim and then  
have lunch at the beach

339

00:17:02,180 --> 00:17:04,740

and stay for an hour or  
two, and then go home.

340

00:17:04,740 --> 00:17:06,930

How close was your  
house to the water?

341

00:17:06,930 --> 00:17:09,160

Did you live in the old  
Roman section of the city?

342

00:17:09,160 --> 00:17:09,660  
No, no.

343  
00:17:09,660 --> 00:17:11,819  
We lived in the newer  
section of the city.

344  
00:17:11,819 --> 00:17:14,160  
And it was probably  
about 10 minutes walk

345  
00:17:14,160 --> 00:17:17,339  
from the beach at the most.

346  
00:17:17,339 --> 00:17:20,589  
How politically  
oriented was your father

347  
00:17:20,589 --> 00:17:22,170  
before the war-- before the war?

348  
00:17:22,170 --> 00:17:25,619  
Before the war, my father  
was very political oriented.

349  
00:17:25,619 --> 00:17:29,370  
As a matter of fact, I think  
he was in jail as a communist

350  
00:17:29,370 --> 00:17:31,330  
when he was 18 years old--

351  
00:17:31,330 --> 00:17:35,340  
17, 18.

352  
00:17:35,340 --> 00:17:38,280  
He was very active.

353  
00:17:38,280 --> 00:17:43,230  
This was before-- of course,  
before I was born-- before--

354

00:17:43,230 --> 00:17:44,850  
I was born when he was 30.

355  
00:17:44,850 --> 00:17:51,600  
But he was in prison because  
of having been somehow

356  
00:17:51,600 --> 00:17:53,940  
active in the Communist Party.

357  
00:17:53,940 --> 00:17:55,740  
Was he very Zionistic?

358  
00:17:55,740 --> 00:17:57,240  
Extremely Zionistic.

359  
00:17:57,240 --> 00:17:59,670  
He was-- he went to  
the-- actually, later on,

360  
00:17:59,670 --> 00:18:03,420  
he went to the  
Congress in Vienna.

361  
00:18:03,420 --> 00:18:06,150  
And he was always  
very pro-Israel

362  
00:18:06,150 --> 00:18:10,350  
and he was very--  
yeah, extremely.

363  
00:18:10,350 --> 00:18:10,890  
Go ahead.

364  
00:18:10,890 --> 00:18:14,400  
Did he talk to you about this  
when you were very young?

365  
00:18:14,400 --> 00:18:15,980  
About the Communist Party, no.

366

00:18:15,980 --> 00:18:20,460  
But the Zionism and Israel  
and all that, yes, very much.

367  
00:18:20,460 --> 00:18:23,130  
I think that's why we ended  
up in the United States.

368  
00:18:23,130 --> 00:18:26,520  
My father was worried that  
if we stayed in Israel--

369  
00:18:26,520 --> 00:18:31,590  
in Italy that I possibly could  
marry somebody not Jewish.

370  
00:18:31,590 --> 00:18:33,250  
That was a big worry.

371  
00:18:33,250 --> 00:18:37,020  
And Israel was out because  
family was in Israel

372  
00:18:37,020 --> 00:18:39,360  
who had a very hard life.

373  
00:18:39,360 --> 00:18:43,830  
So they discouraged  
us from going there.

374  
00:18:43,830 --> 00:18:48,780  
Do you-- now, Hitler  
came into power in 1933.

375  
00:18:48,780 --> 00:18:53,580  
Do you recall-- you were only  
six years old when Poland

376  
00:18:53,580 --> 00:18:56,340  
was invaded, and even  
younger with Austria

377  
00:18:56,340 --> 00:18:57,558

and Czechoslovakia.

378

00:18:57,558 --> 00:18:59,850

Do you have any recollections  
of hearing of a man named

379

00:18:59,850 --> 00:19:00,990

Hitler or anything?

380

00:19:00,990 --> 00:19:06,093

I don't have any recollection  
of anything like that, really.

381

00:19:06,093 --> 00:19:07,760

I mean, granted, you  
were a young child.

382

00:19:07,760 --> 00:19:08,055

Yeah.

383

00:19:08,055 --> 00:19:09,013

So it's understandable.

384

00:19:09,013 --> 00:19:12,570

I do not have any  
recollection of that.

385

00:19:12,570 --> 00:19:19,290

I-- my first recollection of  
Germans and Nazis and stuff was

386

00:19:19,290 --> 00:19:22,680

in nineteen--

387

00:19:22,680 --> 00:19:27,070

beginning of 1941.

388

00:19:27,070 --> 00:19:30,250

I don't even remember when  
Yugoslavia entered the war

389

00:19:30,250 --> 00:19:32,420

against Germany.

390

00:19:32,420 --> 00:19:36,250

I believe it was in 1941.

391

00:19:36,250 --> 00:19:38,860

And that's when my father  
went into the army.

392

00:19:38,860 --> 00:19:40,315

He was called into the army.

393

00:19:40,315 --> 00:19:42,700

This is March 25, 1941.

394

00:19:42,700 --> 00:19:45,670

I guess.

395

00:19:45,670 --> 00:19:48,960

So I'm just putting  
things in place that--

396

00:19:48,960 --> 00:19:51,160

and my father was  
called into the army

397

00:19:51,160 --> 00:19:57,970

and left home, and was gone  
for about a month in the army.

398

00:19:57,970 --> 00:20:01,990

And then Yugoslavia  
basically got capitulated,

399

00:20:01,990 --> 00:20:04,540

and my father was  
able to get back.

400

00:20:04,540 --> 00:20:07,120

But before he got back--

401

00:20:07,120 --> 00:20:08,620

I remember this vividly--

402

00:20:08,620 --> 00:20:12,160  
this is-- if you think of  
memories that remember.

403

00:20:12,160 --> 00:20:15,100  
My mother and I in the  
afternoon went to some friends

404

00:20:15,100 --> 00:20:17,140  
who, as I told you,  
Jews lived all over.

405

00:20:17,140 --> 00:20:19,930  
So the Jewish family  
lived the other side.

406

00:20:19,930 --> 00:20:25,150  
Not the other side of town but  
maybe two or three miles away.

407

00:20:25,150 --> 00:20:26,670  
And we walked.

408

00:20:26,670 --> 00:20:28,240  
No public transportation  
was there,

409

00:20:28,240 --> 00:20:31,120  
but we walked there  
and had dinner there,

410

00:20:31,120 --> 00:20:33,130  
because there was  
a close friend.

411

00:20:33,130 --> 00:20:36,460  
And then we started  
walking back home.

412

00:20:36,460 --> 00:20:41,380  
And the children-- and the

children-- what that word--

413  
00:20:41,380 --> 00:20:45,460  
and as we were walking  
back, the whole city

414  
00:20:45,460 --> 00:20:51,180  
was full of Germans  
in trucks, in big--

415  
00:20:51,180 --> 00:20:52,825  
not motorcycle-- motorcycles?

416  
00:20:52,825 --> 00:20:53,325  
Uh-huh.

417  
00:20:53,325 --> 00:20:56,240

418  
00:20:56,240 --> 00:21:00,010  
I mean, entering  
the city en masse.

419  
00:21:00,010 --> 00:21:04,240  
And my mother said, oh, my--  
she was already-- she knew.

420  
00:21:04,240 --> 00:21:06,150  
She said, oh, my God.

421  
00:21:06,150 --> 00:21:07,990  
Oh, I hope we make it home.

422  
00:21:07,990 --> 00:21:09,100  
I hope we make it home.

423  
00:21:09,100 --> 00:21:11,000  
Of course, they didn't  
know we were Jewish.

424  
00:21:11,000 --> 00:21:12,975  
There was nothing to indicate.

425  
00:21:12,975 --> 00:21:14,350  
We were just  
walking the streets.

426  
00:21:14,350 --> 00:21:15,730  
But was also uncomfortable.

427  
00:21:15,730 --> 00:21:17,650  
She knew what was coming.

428  
00:21:17,650 --> 00:21:18,860  
She knew.

429  
00:21:18,860 --> 00:21:22,750  
And that was my  
first realization

430  
00:21:22,750 --> 00:21:26,770  
that this was bad,  
because the fear in her.

431  
00:21:26,770 --> 00:21:29,860  
And my father, of course,  
had not come home yet.

432  
00:21:29,860 --> 00:21:33,310  
We didn't know where he was.

433  
00:21:33,310 --> 00:21:36,640  
But the Germans only  
went through the city,

434  
00:21:36,640 --> 00:21:40,420  
and they went through  
during the night.

435  
00:21:40,420 --> 00:21:44,140  
And then in the morning, there  
were no Germans there anymore.

436  
00:21:44,140 --> 00:21:46,375

Used it as a passage.

437

00:21:46,375 --> 00:21:47,500

Let's back up a little bit.

438

00:21:47,500 --> 00:21:50,020

Before that-- before  
that happened,

439

00:21:50,020 --> 00:21:52,230

you had started school already.

440

00:21:52,230 --> 00:21:54,495

I started first grade.

441

00:21:54,495 --> 00:21:57,340

In September, probably, of 1940.

442

00:21:57,340 --> 00:21:59,140

Yeah.

443

00:21:59,140 --> 00:22:02,900

Did you experience any  
anti-Jewish feelings?

444

00:22:02,900 --> 00:22:05,050

Did the other children  
know you were Jewish?

445

00:22:05,050 --> 00:22:08,830

Did any of the teachers  
express anything?

446

00:22:08,830 --> 00:22:12,280

They all knew that I was Jewish.

447

00:22:12,280 --> 00:22:14,430

How did they know that?

448

00:22:14,430 --> 00:22:17,860

It was obvious, and  
I don't know why.

449

00:22:17,860 --> 00:22:29,660

I think that it was known we  
celebrated different holidays.

450

00:22:29,660 --> 00:22:31,220

We didn't celebrate Christmas.

451

00:22:31,220 --> 00:22:36,170

We didn't-- but it was  
never considered anything.

452

00:22:36,170 --> 00:22:40,400

Like this Maritza that I  
told you lived under us--

453

00:22:40,400 --> 00:22:44,120

actually, they were-- they  
lived in the basement,

454

00:22:44,120 --> 00:22:47,150

and they were kind of  
taking care of the building.

455

00:22:47,150 --> 00:22:53,070

And they were  
very, very helpful.

456

00:22:53,070 --> 00:22:58,440

They actually got our  
winter coat and hid them.

457

00:22:58,440 --> 00:23:02,410

And I think we got them  
from them afterwards.

458

00:23:02,410 --> 00:23:06,420

So I don't think they were  
hiding partisans in there.

459

00:23:06,420 --> 00:23:08,280

So it was not a matter--

460

00:23:08,280 --> 00:23:11,520  
they were always very open.

461

00:23:11,520 --> 00:23:15,240  
So I-- from this particular,  
I think there were comments.

462

00:23:15,240 --> 00:23:20,270  
I remember I had heard that  
a doctor had said some--

463

00:23:20,270 --> 00:23:25,005  
something about Jews,  
a negative comment.

464

00:23:25,005 --> 00:23:27,740  
And when my mother said  
he's the best doctor in town

465

00:23:27,740 --> 00:23:32,090  
and I had to have surgery  
on my tonsils, I said,

466

00:23:32,090 --> 00:23:33,180  
I'm not going to him.

467

00:23:33,180 --> 00:23:34,040  
So I was a very--

468

00:23:34,040 --> 00:23:37,550  
I said, I'll take a second rate  
doctor, but not going to him.

469

00:23:37,550 --> 00:23:38,750  
He made a negative comment.

470

00:23:38,750 --> 00:23:41,450  
He treated some immigrants--

471

00:23:41,450 --> 00:23:43,610  
[NON-ENGLISH] we  
used to call them--

472  
00:23:43,610 --> 00:23:45,690  
from other cities badly.

473  
00:23:45,690 --> 00:23:46,190  
He--

474  
00:23:46,190 --> 00:23:47,720  
When are we talking about now?

475  
00:23:47,720 --> 00:23:50,780  
Well, we talking  
during the occupation,

476  
00:23:50,780 --> 00:23:52,700  
the Italian  
occupation, forgive me.

477  
00:23:52,700 --> 00:23:55,420  
OK.

478  
00:23:55,420 --> 00:23:57,050  
And when you were  
at school, again,

479  
00:23:57,050 --> 00:24:00,590  
before the Germans came in, did  
the teachers treat you equally?

480  
00:24:00,590 --> 00:24:05,630  
I had a-- I did not-- do not  
remember being treated badly.

481  
00:24:05,630 --> 00:24:08,030  
I really do not.

482  
00:24:08,030 --> 00:24:10,700  
Up to the time that  
the Germans came in,

483  
00:24:10,700 --> 00:24:13,660  
had you heard of a

man called Hitler?

484

00:24:13,660 --> 00:24:16,210

And I was seven but it was--

485

00:24:16,210 --> 00:24:17,660

I was seven.

486

00:24:17,660 --> 00:24:19,130

I don't remember.

487

00:24:19,130 --> 00:24:23,280

I be honest, I don't remember  
hearing about Hitler.

488

00:24:23,280 --> 00:24:25,730

Now, when your father  
was first called up,

489

00:24:25,730 --> 00:24:28,520

what did he say to you  
when he had to leave?

490

00:24:28,520 --> 00:24:33,370

Do you remember that it's  
a painful leaving time?

491

00:24:33,370 --> 00:24:34,800

Not really.

492

00:24:34,800 --> 00:24:40,680

I know he had to go, and I don't  
even remember a big goodbye

493

00:24:40,680 --> 00:24:41,510

or anything.

494

00:24:41,510 --> 00:24:42,390

It's interesting.

495

00:24:42,390 --> 00:24:45,150

But I remember

when he came back.

496

00:24:45,150 --> 00:24:48,420

My mother was just so  
thrilled because she didn't

497

00:24:48,420 --> 00:24:50,400

know was he taken prisoner.

498

00:24:50,400 --> 00:24:53,130

Because some people  
were taken prisoner--

499

00:24:53,130 --> 00:24:54,540

prisoner or worse by--

500

00:24:54,540 --> 00:24:56,130

the war by the Germans.

501

00:24:56,130 --> 00:24:57,570

I don't really remember.

502

00:24:57,570 --> 00:24:59,310

But I remember him--

503

00:24:59,310 --> 00:25:00,960

he's coming back.

504

00:25:00,960 --> 00:25:02,730

This was a major thing.

505

00:25:02,730 --> 00:25:05,860

Was about a week  
or two after the--

506

00:25:05,860 --> 00:25:11,010

that those Germans  
walking through the city.

507

00:25:11,010 --> 00:25:13,830

So that I remember very  
joyful time that he

508

00:25:13,830 --> 00:25:17,160

was alive and with us again.

509

00:25:17,160 --> 00:25:19,280

Was he able to  
keep his business?

510

00:25:19,280 --> 00:25:21,550

No.

511

00:25:21,550 --> 00:25:24,790

As soon as the Italians came,  
he had to give up the business.

512

00:25:24,790 --> 00:25:25,480

That was it.

513

00:25:25,480 --> 00:25:27,460

You couldn't own businesses.

514

00:25:27,460 --> 00:25:28,810

Children could not go to school.

515

00:25:28,810 --> 00:25:33,800

516

00:25:33,800 --> 00:25:36,530

It was just a different world.

517

00:25:36,530 --> 00:25:41,930

Now, the Italians occupied  
Split on April 6, 1941.

518

00:25:41,930 --> 00:25:42,770

Is that what it is?

519

00:25:42,770 --> 00:25:44,050

I don't remember the date.

520

00:25:44,050 --> 00:25:44,550

I'm sorry.

521

00:25:44,550 --> 00:25:47,075

So the Germans had  
marched in March through--

522

00:25:47,075 --> 00:25:49,820

Marched through,  
only march through.

523

00:25:49,820 --> 00:25:52,100

And had I not been  
out that night,

524

00:25:52,100 --> 00:25:54,980

I might have and might not  
have been aware of that.

525

00:25:54,980 --> 00:25:57,800

Was that a frightening sight  
for you to see as a child?

526

00:25:57,800 --> 00:26:01,650

It was a very frightening sight,  
not as a Jew maybe, but just as

527

00:26:01,650 --> 00:26:02,150

a--

528

00:26:02,150 --> 00:26:07,430

there's masses of soldiers  
in this big camioni--

529

00:26:07,430 --> 00:26:11,120

what is the-- trucks,  
the military trucks.

530

00:26:11,120 --> 00:26:12,750

And all in this--

531

00:26:12,750 --> 00:26:15,770

well, they were--  
just was big helmets.

532  
00:26:15,770 --> 00:26:20,090  
It was just the frightening  
at night and walking.

533  
00:26:20,090 --> 00:26:22,600  
It was just-- we were  
not walking very far,

534  
00:26:22,600 --> 00:26:23,780  
but it was just-- it was--

535  
00:26:23,780 --> 00:26:27,450  
plus, we were not used  
to these major trucks.

536  
00:26:27,450 --> 00:26:28,910  
There was no traffic.

537  
00:26:28,910 --> 00:26:31,850  
I didn't know anybody  
who owned a car.

538  
00:26:31,850 --> 00:26:34,920  
Did your mother explain  
to you what this meant?

539  
00:26:34,920 --> 00:26:36,940  
I don't think she really  
explained anything

540  
00:26:36,940 --> 00:26:38,010  
and we're walking.

541  
00:26:38,010 --> 00:26:39,590  
She just wanted to get home.

542  
00:26:39,590 --> 00:26:41,450  
Just stay close to me.

543  
00:26:41,450 --> 00:26:43,560  
Let's walk to the side.

544

00:26:43,560 --> 00:26:46,790

Don't look up to  
much, just walk home.

545

00:26:46,790 --> 00:26:48,560

Let's get home.

546

00:26:48,560 --> 00:26:50,900

And would you describe  
yourself as being very obedient

547

00:26:50,900 --> 00:26:53,240

and doing what  
your parents said?

548

00:26:53,240 --> 00:26:56,270

That was part of a  
child of that era.

549

00:26:56,270 --> 00:26:58,820

Plus, it was a part  
of the child of the--

550

00:26:58,820 --> 00:27:00,170

you already knew.

551

00:27:00,170 --> 00:27:03,560

You knew by the fear maybe  
in your parent's voice

552

00:27:03,560 --> 00:27:05,630

that you better do.

553

00:27:05,630 --> 00:27:07,870

It wasn't something that--

554

00:27:07,870 --> 00:27:09,440

there was no room for rebellion.

555

00:27:09,440 --> 00:27:12,590

Not because they didn't

allow you to rebel,

556

00:27:12,590 --> 00:27:14,720

but because there was just--

557

00:27:14,720 --> 00:27:18,590

the fear was implicit

in their voice, I think.

558

00:27:18,590 --> 00:27:20,450

That's what I perceive of it.

559

00:27:20,450 --> 00:27:22,460

Now, did you go to

school right after that?

560

00:27:22,460 --> 00:27:24,470

The Italians came in

about two weeks later.

561

00:27:24,470 --> 00:27:26,590

The Italians came

about two weeks later.

562

00:27:26,590 --> 00:27:30,740

They opened the schools

with Italian teachers.

563

00:27:30,740 --> 00:27:32,930

Now, we were annexed to Italy.

564

00:27:32,930 --> 00:27:35,420

Now, the Serbo-Croatian

language did not

565

00:27:35,420 --> 00:27:38,660

exist anymore in the schools.

566

00:27:38,660 --> 00:27:40,160

Classes were in Italian.

567

00:27:40,160 --> 00:27:42,200

Everything was Italian.

568

00:27:42,200 --> 00:27:45,057

Up to that point, did you  
just know the one language

569

00:27:45,057 --> 00:27:46,390

or did you know other languages?

570

00:27:46,390 --> 00:27:47,750

I knew the Ladino, the Spanish.

571

00:27:47,750 --> 00:27:50,510

I was familiar with that.

572

00:27:50,510 --> 00:27:53,600

I had not known Italian.

573

00:27:53,600 --> 00:27:56,090

My father spoke it.

574

00:27:56,090 --> 00:27:58,670

Because he did  
business-- we went to--

575

00:27:58,670 --> 00:28:00,710

I don't know, but he  
spoke Italian always.

576

00:28:00,710 --> 00:28:04,460

In Split, many people spoke  
Italian, the older generation.

577

00:28:04,460 --> 00:28:06,710

I did not.

578

00:28:06,710 --> 00:28:08,310

And it arrived [INAUDIBLE].

579

00:28:08,310 --> 00:28:12,680

There were Italian teacher,  
the administration is Italian,

580  
00:28:12,680 --> 00:28:15,240  
everything is Italian  
in the school.

581  
00:28:15,240 --> 00:28:17,270  
And I did go to school.

582  
00:28:17,270 --> 00:28:18,890  
Was this the same school?

583  
00:28:18,890 --> 00:28:22,090  
Same school, same  
classroom, different teacher

584  
00:28:22,090 --> 00:28:24,690  
and different language.

585  
00:28:24,690 --> 00:28:27,960  
Was this frightening to you,  
upsetting or challenging?

586  
00:28:27,960 --> 00:28:30,570  
I think was more  
challenging than upsetting.

587  
00:28:30,570 --> 00:28:32,100  
And I had an advantage.

588  
00:28:32,100 --> 00:28:32,970  
I spoke Ladino.

589  
00:28:32,970 --> 00:28:34,410  
I spoke Spanish.

590  
00:28:34,410 --> 00:28:39,540  
Most of the people were  
real Croatians, who--

591  
00:28:39,540 --> 00:28:40,790  
of the city.

592

00:28:40,790 --> 00:28:43,320

I was the only Jewish  
child in the class.

593

00:28:43,320 --> 00:28:46,860

And I was the only one that  
spoke Ladino, which made

594

00:28:46,860 --> 00:28:49,995

Italian very understandable.

595

00:28:49,995 --> 00:28:51,870

You were almost eight  
years old, a few months

596

00:28:51,870 --> 00:28:52,703

before your eighth--

597

00:28:52,703 --> 00:28:55,740

I was almost eight, yeah,  
almost eight years old.

598

00:28:55,740 --> 00:29:01,200

And by this time, I could  
communicate with the teacher.

599

00:29:01,200 --> 00:29:02,970

I understood everything.

600

00:29:02,970 --> 00:29:04,200

I don't know how.

601

00:29:04,200 --> 00:29:07,240

I still don't know how.

602

00:29:07,240 --> 00:29:08,710

And I was the one that was--

603

00:29:08,710 --> 00:29:10,780

I think she spoke  
Serbo-Croatian,

604

00:29:10,780 --> 00:29:13,720

but she was not allowed to.

605

00:29:13,720 --> 00:29:17,830

Now, how normal was your  
life right after this?

606

00:29:17,830 --> 00:29:22,450

607

00:29:22,450 --> 00:29:24,880

It was fairly normal.

608

00:29:24,880 --> 00:29:30,730

The only abnormal thing was that  
all the people from Sarajevo,

609

00:29:30,730 --> 00:29:34,810

from Belgrade, and from  
Zagreb, started coming

610

00:29:34,810 --> 00:29:38,560

in droves with false papers.

611

00:29:38,560 --> 00:29:43,240

By that, I mean, my  
father's brother--

612

00:29:43,240 --> 00:29:47,050

two brothers, my mother's  
sisters, my mother's brothers.

613

00:29:47,050 --> 00:29:54,390

So our home became from having  
these three people and the maid

614

00:29:54,390 --> 00:29:56,250

living in there.

615

00:29:56,250 --> 00:29:59,340

We had to get rid of the maid  
because they were not allowed

616  
00:29:59,340 --> 00:30:01,520  
to have a maid [INAUDIBLE].

617  
00:30:01,520 --> 00:30:03,090  
And--

618  
00:30:03,090 --> 00:30:04,170  
What other restrictions?

619  
00:30:04,170 --> 00:30:05,990  
You said your father  
lost his business.

620  
00:30:05,990 --> 00:30:06,870  
Lost his business.

621  
00:30:06,870 --> 00:30:08,430  
You were not allowed  
to have a maid.

622  
00:30:08,430 --> 00:30:09,600  
Not allowed to have a maid.

623  
00:30:09,600 --> 00:30:13,320  
Not allowed, but--  
well, this took place

624  
00:30:13,320 --> 00:30:15,060  
within six months or a year.

625  
00:30:15,060 --> 00:30:16,275  
Not allowed to go to school.

626  
00:30:16,275 --> 00:30:19,660

627  
00:30:19,660 --> 00:30:24,160  
I'm not allowed to congregate  
any place basic like.

628

00:30:24,160 --> 00:30:26,740

629

00:30:26,740 --> 00:30:28,900

I don't know what else, really.

630

00:30:28,900 --> 00:30:29,400

OK.

631

00:30:29,400 --> 00:30:31,210

Well, let's go through  
this gradually.

632

00:30:31,210 --> 00:30:33,190

So these relatives  
started coming.

633

00:30:33,190 --> 00:30:35,710

What did that mean  
to you as a child?

634

00:30:35,710 --> 00:30:37,730

Did you understand  
why they were coming?

635

00:30:37,730 --> 00:30:38,230

Yeah.

636

00:30:38,230 --> 00:30:41,030

Immediately, I knew they were  
escaping the Germans people.

637

00:30:41,030 --> 00:30:44,390

By that time, I think  
my young cousin,

638

00:30:44,390 --> 00:30:46,810

the one that was  
taken to Jasenovac,

639

00:30:46,810 --> 00:30:49,870

they knew that he  
had been killed.

640  
00:30:49,870 --> 00:30:52,750  
He was-- somehow they  
just shot him there.

641  
00:30:52,750 --> 00:30:54,340  
They didn't send him.

642  
00:30:54,340 --> 00:30:57,390  
And his family came--  
his mother, his father,

643  
00:30:57,390 --> 00:30:58,015  
and his sister.

644  
00:30:58,015 --> 00:31:00,550

645  
00:31:00,550 --> 00:31:03,040  
Did your parents tell  
you that that happened?

646  
00:31:03,040 --> 00:31:04,540  
I think I sensed it.

647  
00:31:04,540 --> 00:31:05,320  
I knew it.

648  
00:31:05,320 --> 00:31:08,780  
It was just-- the  
mother was crying.

649  
00:31:08,780 --> 00:31:09,850  
It was just--

650  
00:31:09,850 --> 00:31:12,640  
I don't think secrets were--  
there were no secrets.

651  
00:31:12,640 --> 00:31:15,550  
And there were secrets--  
this was said in Ladino

652  
00:31:15,550 --> 00:31:18,160  
and my parents didn't  
know that I spoke it.

653  
00:31:18,160 --> 00:31:20,200  
So I was aware of everything.

654  
00:31:20,200 --> 00:31:22,060  
I was aware when my  
mother used to collect

655  
00:31:22,060 --> 00:31:23,740  
clothes for the partisans.

656  
00:31:23,740 --> 00:31:28,030  
I was-- it's interesting how  
much you knew without knowing,

657  
00:31:28,030 --> 00:31:30,910  
without being told.

658  
00:31:30,910 --> 00:31:32,830  
Do you remember  
being very frightened

659  
00:31:32,830 --> 00:31:35,260  
in this beginning time?

660  
00:31:35,260 --> 00:31:37,870  
No, I don't remember  
being frightened.

661  
00:31:37,870 --> 00:31:40,030  
I really don't.

662  
00:31:40,030 --> 00:31:42,130  
Would you ask your parents  
questions-- as I said,

663  
00:31:42,130 --> 00:31:43,600  
you're almost eight years old--

664  
00:31:43,600 --> 00:31:48,810  
why the change, why you had  
to have Italian teachers?

665  
00:31:48,810 --> 00:31:51,220  
It was almost-- and  
it's interesting.

666  
00:31:51,220 --> 00:31:53,230  
I never ask those questions.

667  
00:31:53,230 --> 00:31:59,950  
It's almost like I understood  
without being told.

668  
00:31:59,950 --> 00:32:02,230  
The city was occupied Ital--

669  
00:32:02,230 --> 00:32:02,980  
by the Italian.

670  
00:32:02,980 --> 00:32:04,690  
The fascists were there.

671  
00:32:04,690 --> 00:32:08,080  
Everything legal was in  
Italian, even the signs

672  
00:32:08,080 --> 00:32:11,470  
as I showed you in this  
book were in Italian.

673  
00:32:11,470 --> 00:32:14,110  
So the city was just  
under a different role.

674  
00:32:14,110 --> 00:32:16,700

675  
00:32:16,700 --> 00:32:19,300  
So this was it.

676  
00:32:19,300 --> 00:32:22,170  
And learn Italian,  
and that was it.

677  
00:32:22,170 --> 00:32:26,430  
And now as you said  
gradually changes were made.

678  
00:32:26,430 --> 00:32:29,200  
And how did that  
affect you as a child?

679  
00:32:29,200 --> 00:32:32,740  
The big change that  
affected me mostly was--

680  
00:32:32,740 --> 00:32:35,440  
and I don't recall  
when it happened.

681  
00:32:35,440 --> 00:32:38,110  
The only thing I  
remember is that I

682  
00:32:38,110 --> 00:32:44,500  
wore a fur coat, a white fur  
coat when it happened, that I

683  
00:32:44,500 --> 00:32:47,060  
was thrown out of school.

684  
00:32:47,060 --> 00:32:50,740  
So I don't think  
was in April or--

685  
00:32:50,740 --> 00:32:53,290  
they came, you said, in April?

686  
00:32:53,290 --> 00:32:57,640  
So I must've finished that  
school year and did fine,

687

00:32:57,640 --> 00:32:58,840  
did very well.

688

00:32:58,840 --> 00:33:01,840  
And the teacher loved  
me and-- because I

689

00:33:01,840 --> 00:33:04,840  
spoke the lingo, the language.

690

00:33:04,840 --> 00:33:08,800  
And then school started again.

691

00:33:08,800 --> 00:33:11,440  
Maybe it was second grade.

692

00:33:11,440 --> 00:33:15,760  
And I was-- then your mood  
was the same class and I had,

693

00:33:15,760 --> 00:33:20,050  
I think, the same teacher  
that I had started with.

694

00:33:20,050 --> 00:33:24,190  
You stayed with the same teacher  
for years then, for four years.

695

00:33:24,190 --> 00:33:28,120  
And it was very cold,  
started getting cold.

696

00:33:28,120 --> 00:33:33,400  
And I was in school one day,  
the teacher said to me--

697

00:33:33,400 --> 00:33:35,470  
I realized something  
was going on.

698

00:33:35,470 --> 00:33:37,860  
I was not told what was going--

699

00:33:37,860 --> 00:33:41,740  
they were-- the whole family was  
sitting and having coffee late.

700

00:33:41,740 --> 00:33:43,300  
There was nothing to do.

701

00:33:43,300 --> 00:33:47,520  
I went to school, came home  
for lunch, and went back.

702

00:33:47,520 --> 00:33:52,390  
And there was some kind of  
strange feeling in the house.

703

00:33:52,390 --> 00:33:54,110  
And I don't know what it was.

704

00:33:54,110 --> 00:33:55,390  
I didn't know what it was.

705

00:33:55,390 --> 00:33:57,640  
But I went to school.

706

00:33:57,640 --> 00:34:01,510  
And I have the feeling that  
was in the afternoon session.

707

00:34:01,510 --> 00:34:03,560  
They had two sessions--

708

00:34:03,560 --> 00:34:04,480  
morning and afternoon.

709

00:34:04,480 --> 00:34:05,500  
We didn't go.

710

00:34:05,500 --> 00:34:09,190  
And they call-- the  
teacher said to me,

711

00:34:09,190 --> 00:34:12,610

would you please go  
and get your father?

712

00:34:12,610 --> 00:34:15,500

I said, I didn't  
do anything wrong.

713

00:34:15,500 --> 00:34:18,829

And she says, oh, no, you  
didn't, absolutely not.

714

00:34:18,829 --> 00:34:21,080

She says, but I just  
need to talk to him.

715

00:34:21,080 --> 00:34:23,150

Would you go get him?

716

00:34:23,150 --> 00:34:27,590

And when I got home, father was  
not the least bit surprised.

717

00:34:27,590 --> 00:34:29,090

He says, why don't  
you stay home.

718

00:34:29,090 --> 00:34:30,710

Don't go back.

719

00:34:30,710 --> 00:34:34,760

I insisted-- insisted  
that I wanted to go back.

720

00:34:34,760 --> 00:34:38,480

And I went back with him.

721

00:34:38,480 --> 00:34:41,670

And of course, my  
father spoke Italian.

722

00:34:41,670 --> 00:34:42,739

And she told him--

723

00:34:42,739 --> 00:34:44,510

that's what he  
said, how sorry she

724

00:34:44,510 --> 00:34:46,429

was that she had to do this.

725

00:34:46,429 --> 00:34:48,739

Because I was the only  
one that understood her

726

00:34:48,739 --> 00:34:51,650

after I spoke Ladino, so  
I had picked up Italian.

727

00:34:51,650 --> 00:34:55,429

And I already had made  
such progress in Italian.

728

00:34:55,429 --> 00:34:57,600

And so they won--

729

00:34:57,600 --> 00:35:01,580

she-- he said, well, I  
know you can't keep her.

730

00:35:01,580 --> 00:35:03,160

You want me to take her home?

731

00:35:03,160 --> 00:35:06,740

And she said, let  
her finish the day.

732

00:35:06,740 --> 00:35:08,580

And she says, she'll  
go home with the other.

733

00:35:08,580 --> 00:35:12,190

And then when she  
gets home, tell her.

734

00:35:12,190 --> 00:35:15,430

And so I was not  
aware of anything.

735

00:35:15,430 --> 00:35:20,890

Went home and I was told you're  
not-- can't go back to school.

736

00:35:20,890 --> 00:35:23,150

That was it.

737

00:35:23,150 --> 00:35:25,410

Did they give you a reason  
why you couldn't go back?

738

00:35:25,410 --> 00:35:27,140

Oh, none of the  
Jewish kids could go.

739

00:35:27,140 --> 00:35:28,430

They did give me the reason.

740

00:35:28,430 --> 00:35:31,670

None of the Jewish  
children could go.

741

00:35:31,670 --> 00:35:35,840

And at eight years old,  
school is normality.

742

00:35:35,840 --> 00:35:37,850

So what did that mean to you?

743

00:35:37,850 --> 00:35:39,120

It is normality.

744

00:35:39,120 --> 00:35:42,860

And I was always a  
very good student.

745

00:35:42,860 --> 00:35:44,810

It was very meaningful for me.

746  
00:35:44,810 --> 00:35:47,320  
I was-- there--

747  
00:35:47,320 --> 00:35:48,920  
I've always been--

748  
00:35:48,920 --> 00:35:51,530  
I always was a good  
student, Italy and States.

749  
00:35:51,530 --> 00:35:54,420  
I mean, I was  
always good student.

750  
00:35:54,420 --> 00:35:57,020  
And it was very hard.

751  
00:35:57,020 --> 00:35:59,380  
But immediately, my  
father said, don't worry,

752  
00:35:59,380 --> 00:36:00,470  
we'll form a school.

753  
00:36:00,470 --> 00:36:02,180  
There'll be a school.

754  
00:36:02,180 --> 00:36:04,520  
Your Uncle Solomon  
will teach it.

755  
00:36:04,520 --> 00:36:07,760  
And this is the  
engineer [INAUDIBLE]..

756  
00:36:07,760 --> 00:36:08,810  
We'll get teachers.

757  
00:36:08,810 --> 00:36:11,420  
We'll do it near the synagogue.

758

00:36:11,420 --> 00:36:13,910

We'll get a room.

759

00:36:13,910 --> 00:36:15,920

We'll do it in different  
people's houses.

760

00:36:15,920 --> 00:36:16,520

Don't worry.

761

00:36:16,520 --> 00:36:17,440

There'll be a school.

762

00:36:17,440 --> 00:36:19,970

That's what was  
happening in my house

763

00:36:19,970 --> 00:36:23,950

when I was leaving for  
school in the afternoon.

764

00:36:23,950 --> 00:36:24,910

That was happening.

765

00:36:24,910 --> 00:36:27,000

They already knew  
it was happening.

766

00:36:27,000 --> 00:36:28,370

So it was being organized.

767

00:36:28,370 --> 00:36:31,289

They already were  
planning for it.

768

00:36:31,289 --> 00:36:43,530

769

00:36:43,530 --> 00:36:45,960

This is a continuation of  
the United States Holocaust

770

00:36:45,960 --> 00:36:48,600

Memorial Museum Volunteer  
Collection interview

771

00:36:48,600 --> 00:36:50,580

with Tilda Finzi Cohen.

772

00:36:50,580 --> 00:36:54,360

This is tape number  
one, side B. And we're

773

00:36:54,360 --> 00:36:57,990

talking about the Fall of 1941.

774

00:36:57,990 --> 00:37:01,332

You had just been  
told by your teacher--

775

00:37:01,332 --> 00:37:02,790

or by your father  
that you were not

776

00:37:02,790 --> 00:37:05,330

able to continue on to school.

777

00:37:05,330 --> 00:37:07,830

And you had mentioned something  
about a white-- little white

778

00:37:07,830 --> 00:37:08,400

fur coat.

779

00:37:08,400 --> 00:37:10,530

Can you say something  
more about that?

780

00:37:10,530 --> 00:37:13,860

White little fur coat,  
which just, I guess,

781

00:37:13,860 --> 00:37:19,140

a coat that one of my uncles

must have sent me for a gift.

782

00:37:19,140 --> 00:37:22,890

My mother had quite a few  
brothers that were not married

783

00:37:22,890 --> 00:37:25,920

and I was spoiled by them.

784

00:37:25,920 --> 00:37:30,900

So the little fur coat they  
sent, I think, before the end--

785

00:37:30,900 --> 00:37:33,000

before the beginning  
of the war, or just

786

00:37:33,000 --> 00:37:34,920

maybe 1940 or something.

787

00:37:34,920 --> 00:37:38,910

This little fur white  
coat that looked like a--

788

00:37:38,910 --> 00:37:41,310

like spun candy or something.

789

00:37:41,310 --> 00:37:42,880

But it was very cold.

790

00:37:42,880 --> 00:37:46,090

The-- Split didn't  
have a lot of snow,

791

00:37:46,090 --> 00:37:48,900

but it was a very cold  
city because of the wind.

792

00:37:48,900 --> 00:37:51,210

The wind they called  
bura, which was

793

00:37:51,210 --> 00:37:55,770

a very strong wind that  
came from the sea and it

794

00:37:55,770 --> 00:37:57,240

kind of penetrating.

795

00:37:57,240 --> 00:37:59,910

Of course, there was no  
transportation-- buses,

796

00:37:59,910 --> 00:38:01,620

but we didn't take this.

797

00:38:01,620 --> 00:38:04,370

So they sent me this  
little fur coat.

798

00:38:04,370 --> 00:38:08,810

And that was my coat, was very--

799

00:38:08,810 --> 00:38:10,980

and as a matter of  
fact, a few weeks

800

00:38:10,980 --> 00:38:14,070

after I was thrown out of  
school, the organization

801

00:38:14,070 --> 00:38:15,120

of the school took--

802

00:38:15,120 --> 00:38:17,850

to organize the Jewish  
school took a field--

803

00:38:17,850 --> 00:38:20,010

probably a month or six weeks.

804

00:38:20,010 --> 00:38:25,020

But after a few weeks, my  
non-Jewish little schoolmates

805

00:38:25,020 --> 00:38:28,562

who I still saw in the  
neighborhood started saying,

806

00:38:28,562 --> 00:38:30,270

why didn't you come  
back to school like--

807

00:38:30,270 --> 00:38:31,330

I said, I can't.

808

00:38:31,330 --> 00:38:33,240

Well, why don't you come?

809

00:38:33,240 --> 00:38:36,360

They won't allow me to  
come back to school.

810

00:38:36,360 --> 00:38:37,050

I'm Jewish.

811

00:38:37,050 --> 00:38:38,710

I can't come.

812

00:38:38,710 --> 00:38:42,810

And I still played with  
them in the neighborhood,

813

00:38:42,810 --> 00:38:45,930

in the garden-- in the  
back of the house, which

814

00:38:45,930 --> 00:38:47,860

was a garden type of thing.

815

00:38:47,860 --> 00:38:51,510

So what they ask the  
teacher, why can't Tilda

816

00:38:51,510 --> 00:38:54,330

come back to school?

817

00:38:54,330 --> 00:38:56,020

She didn't want to explain.

818

00:38:56,020 --> 00:38:58,110

She says, she didn't come back.

819

00:38:58,110 --> 00:38:59,220

Can she come back?

820

00:38:59,220 --> 00:39:01,130

Can we tell her to come back?

821

00:39:01,130 --> 00:39:02,005

They said, of course.

822

00:39:02,005 --> 00:39:05,200

823

00:39:05,200 --> 00:39:08,830

And they kept telling  
me the teacher

824

00:39:08,830 --> 00:39:11,470

said you could come back.

825

00:39:11,470 --> 00:39:13,470

I told that to my father.

826

00:39:13,470 --> 00:39:15,740

And my father say,  
honey, that is not true.

827

00:39:15,740 --> 00:39:17,110

It is not true.

828

00:39:17,110 --> 00:39:20,500

[INAUDIBLE] only like  
an eight-year-old

829

00:39:20,500 --> 00:39:24,250

only spoiled, only

child, a little spoiled.

830  
00:39:24,250 --> 00:39:27,610  
I threw an absolute fit.

831  
00:39:27,610 --> 00:39:29,830  
And I said I was going.

832  
00:39:29,830 --> 00:39:33,130  
Then my father said, no, honey.

833  
00:39:33,130 --> 00:39:37,030  
Finally, he said, OK,  
I'll take you, which was--

834  
00:39:37,030 --> 00:39:40,720  
many people blame him for it.

835  
00:39:40,720 --> 00:39:43,700  
Who I-- to whom I  
have told this story.

836  
00:39:43,700 --> 00:39:46,460  
He took me and went with me.

837  
00:39:46,460 --> 00:39:48,240  
I think it was in the afternoon.

838  
00:39:48,240 --> 00:39:49,870  
Somehow, there  
were two sessions.

839  
00:39:49,870 --> 00:39:53,590  
School started from  
[INAUDIBLE] early afternoon.

840  
00:39:53,590 --> 00:39:58,170  
And they were outside at  
some kind of an assembly.

841  
00:39:58,170 --> 00:40:00,260  
And my father went to

talk to the teacher.

842  
00:40:00,260 --> 00:40:02,560  
And I came with my book--

843  
00:40:02,560 --> 00:40:04,810  
book bag and everything.

844  
00:40:04,810 --> 00:40:07,170  
And she says, no,  
I made a mistake.

845  
00:40:07,170 --> 00:40:09,330  
I shouldn't have told  
the children to tell her

846  
00:40:09,330 --> 00:40:11,300  
she could come back.

847  
00:40:11,300 --> 00:40:16,640  
I just found it easier, or  
something to that effect.

848  
00:40:16,640 --> 00:40:20,340  
She was very apologetic  
and apologized.

849  
00:40:20,340 --> 00:40:22,370  
And I was standing  
in the background

850  
00:40:22,370 --> 00:40:24,050  
because my father  
was talking, and I

851  
00:40:24,050 --> 00:40:27,170  
remember she shook her head.

852  
00:40:27,170 --> 00:40:28,820  
That's all I remember.

853  
00:40:28,820 --> 00:40:32,210

And went back home.

854

00:40:32,210 --> 00:40:33,620

I think I cried.

855

00:40:33,620 --> 00:40:34,490

I'm sure I cried--

856

00:40:34,490 --> 00:40:36,450

I remember something.

857

00:40:36,450 --> 00:40:40,340

And it's kind of sad.

858

00:40:40,340 --> 00:40:43,460

I was a very  
strong-willed child,

859

00:40:43,460 --> 00:40:47,330

and my father and mother didn't  
know how to deal with this.

860

00:40:47,330 --> 00:40:50,420

861

00:40:50,420 --> 00:40:55,400

That rejection was  
worst, I think.

862

00:40:55,400 --> 00:40:59,570

But I guess we all could  
have done things better.

863

00:40:59,570 --> 00:41:03,230

But we do the best we can.

864

00:41:03,230 --> 00:41:06,410

Within a few weeks, the  
Jewish school started.

865

00:41:06,410 --> 00:41:08,630

And it was fun.

866  
00:41:08,630 --> 00:41:10,460  
Number one, there  
were older boys.

867  
00:41:10,460 --> 00:41:11,760  
I was eight or something.

868  
00:41:11,760 --> 00:41:14,150  
There were two or three  
grades thrown together

869  
00:41:14,150 --> 00:41:16,520  
and a big table,  
almost like this one,

870  
00:41:16,520 --> 00:41:20,960  
and just above someplace,  
above some store.

871  
00:41:20,960 --> 00:41:22,400  
And there were--  
they used to call

872  
00:41:22,400 --> 00:41:24,980  
it-- used to be a  
storage space and maga--

873  
00:41:24,980 --> 00:41:29,120  
but they cleaned it up,  
put a bathroom in there,

874  
00:41:29,120 --> 00:41:33,830  
put some lights, and it was OK.

875  
00:41:33,830 --> 00:41:36,130  
It was this whole group  
of Jewish children

876  
00:41:36,130 --> 00:41:39,584  
that were in different  
classes, in different--

877

00:41:39,584 --> 00:41:41,390

boys and girls were  
for the first time

878

00:41:41,390 --> 00:41:43,880

together, because I was  
in an all girls school.

879

00:41:43,880 --> 00:41:47,450

I mean, schools were  
all girls or all boys.

880

00:41:47,450 --> 00:41:50,210

So here we were thrown together.

881

00:41:50,210 --> 00:41:53,030

And there were no back--

882

00:41:53,030 --> 00:41:56,740

school-- in schools, you  
have what, where you sit?

883

00:41:56,740 --> 00:41:57,390

Desks.

884

00:41:57,390 --> 00:41:58,030

Desks.

885

00:41:58,030 --> 00:41:58,920

OK.

886

00:41:58,920 --> 00:42:00,630

Bunk here, I was thinking.

887

00:42:00,630 --> 00:42:02,090

OK.

888

00:42:02,090 --> 00:42:02,960

You have desks.

889

00:42:02,960 --> 00:42:05,480

We were not sitting  
at the desks.

890  
00:42:05,480 --> 00:42:10,870  
We were sitting in a very large  
table, very large, very long

891  
00:42:10,870 --> 00:42:12,830  
and narrow table on both sides.

892  
00:42:12,830 --> 00:42:15,330  
One grade was one side, and  
one grade and the other.

893  
00:42:15,330 --> 00:42:16,340  
We learned still.

894  
00:42:16,340 --> 00:42:18,110  
We still learned.

895  
00:42:18,110 --> 00:42:22,190  
And we had very good  
teachers, because these

896  
00:42:22,190 --> 00:42:24,860  
were the people that had  
lost their jobs teaching,

897  
00:42:24,860 --> 00:42:27,560  
the Jewish teachers  
that had lost their job.

898  
00:42:27,560 --> 00:42:29,380  
So we had professors teaching.

899  
00:42:29,380 --> 00:42:31,700  
By professors, I  
meant people that

900  
00:42:31,700 --> 00:42:34,040  
taught in high school,  
people that taught--

901

00:42:34,040 --> 00:42:36,830

had taught at the  
University that had escaped.

902

00:42:36,830 --> 00:42:41,870

So the teachers were marvelous,  
very, very good teacher.

903

00:42:41,870 --> 00:42:47,780

And we-- I went  
there for two years.

904

00:42:47,780 --> 00:42:50,030

And at the end of  
each year, school

905

00:42:50,030 --> 00:42:53,812

year, we gave exams  
to the-- in Italian.

906

00:42:53,812 --> 00:42:56,270

Now, we are being taught in  
Italian, you must [INAUDIBLE],,

907

00:42:56,270 --> 00:42:59,090

because we were given  
exams in Italian.

908

00:42:59,090 --> 00:43:03,260

And we were actually giving--

909

00:43:03,260 --> 00:43:06,410

being promoted and given  
exams, and given grades

910

00:43:06,410 --> 00:43:08,860

by the Italian government.

911

00:43:08,860 --> 00:43:09,830

He ever wanted--

912

00:43:09,830 --> 00:43:12,500

The government  
recognized this school.

913  
00:43:12,500 --> 00:43:14,930  
It was recognized  
in some respect--

914  
00:43:14,930 --> 00:43:16,640  
we couldn't-- but they did--

915  
00:43:16,640 --> 00:43:19,430  
and if you ever want to  
read a book about this,

916  
00:43:19,430 --> 00:43:24,170  
read the book The Garden of  
the Finzi-Continis written

917  
00:43:24,170 --> 00:43:26,900  
in Italian, but of  
course, in English.

918  
00:43:26,900 --> 00:43:28,730  
This book speaks  
of the same thing.

919  
00:43:28,730 --> 00:43:36,100  
Actually, speaks of the way  
the Italians treated the Jews.

920  
00:43:36,100 --> 00:43:38,980  
So we went to the end of the  
school year and gave exams.

921  
00:43:38,980 --> 00:43:40,990  
And of course,  
because many of us

922  
00:43:40,990 --> 00:43:46,300  
were Sephardic and  
spoke Ladino, we were--

923  
00:43:46,300 --> 00:43:49,510

we did wonderfully in  
Italian, and we picked it up

924  
00:43:49,510 --> 00:43:51,250  
immediately.

925  
00:43:51,250 --> 00:43:54,220  
There were people like  
my uncle who taught,

926  
00:43:54,220 --> 00:43:57,660  
but he had studied at  
the University of Milan.

927  
00:43:57,660 --> 00:43:59,110  
And his name?

928  
00:43:59,110 --> 00:44:01,270  
My-- Solomon Finzi.

929  
00:44:01,270 --> 00:44:03,670  
And he was an  
engineer, PhD engineer,

930  
00:44:03,670 --> 00:44:07,270  
who had studied in  
Milan and came back

931  
00:44:07,270 --> 00:44:09,040  
to Yugoslavia to practice.

932  
00:44:09,040 --> 00:44:14,290  
And he was an engineer  
in Belgrade, but he was--

933  
00:44:14,290 --> 00:44:18,250  
he had escaped to Split from  
Belgrade and he couldn't work.

934  
00:44:18,250 --> 00:44:21,410  
So he taught because  
his Italian was perfect.

935

00:44:21,410 --> 00:44:25,150

He had studied in university  
there for five years.

936

00:44:25,150 --> 00:44:27,400

And I think-- I  
thought it was perfect.

937

00:44:27,400 --> 00:44:28,720

I don't know.

938

00:44:28,720 --> 00:44:32,230

How many students were at  
the school in the beginning?

939

00:44:32,230 --> 00:44:33,310

Well, the two grades.

940

00:44:33,310 --> 00:44:36,400

We met in different places,  
in different houses.

941

00:44:36,400 --> 00:44:38,480

I had this--

942

00:44:38,480 --> 00:44:41,800

I was in second or third grade,  
or third and fourth grade,

943

00:44:41,800 --> 00:44:42,880

something.

944

00:44:42,880 --> 00:44:46,270

And then basically, we  
had elementary school

945

00:44:46,270 --> 00:44:49,850

for four years, then middle  
school, then high school.

946

00:44:49,850 --> 00:44:53,660

So basically, these three

groups met in different places.

947

00:44:53,660 --> 00:44:55,540

So there were no  
Jewish children who

948

00:44:55,540 --> 00:44:57,580

could go to the  
regular school all

949

00:44:57,580 --> 00:44:58,760

the way through high school.

950

00:44:58,760 --> 00:44:59,890

No, no.

951

00:44:59,890 --> 00:45:01,540

No, absolutely not.

952

00:45:01,540 --> 00:45:06,410

So they-- some met in  
my uncle's apartment.

953

00:45:06,410 --> 00:45:10,060

They had escaped so they had  
empty rooms in the apartment.

954

00:45:10,060 --> 00:45:11,860

So they form classrooms.

955

00:45:11,860 --> 00:45:16,060

And in different people's  
houses, there were classrooms.

956

00:45:16,060 --> 00:45:18,250

But they did you have  
to have the permission

957

00:45:18,250 --> 00:45:23,015

of the Italian  
authorities to do that.

958

00:45:23,015 --> 00:45:24,640

When you were out in  
the street and you

959

00:45:24,640 --> 00:45:28,720

saw Italian military people,  
what was that sight for you

960

00:45:28,720 --> 00:45:29,410

as a child?

961

00:45:29,410 --> 00:45:30,610

Was it frightening?

962

00:45:30,610 --> 00:45:32,860

It wasn't really frightening.

963

00:45:32,860 --> 00:45:39,740

964

00:45:39,740 --> 00:45:46,130

It wasn't frightening if they  
were not wearing black shirts.

965

00:45:46,130 --> 00:45:48,140

If they were wearing--  
if they were a fascist,

966

00:45:48,140 --> 00:45:49,310

it was frightening.

967

00:45:49,310 --> 00:45:52,070

If they're not, they  
were just soldiers.

968

00:45:52,070 --> 00:45:53,960

It was not frightening.

969

00:45:53,960 --> 00:45:57,470

As a matter of fact,  
we had what they

970

00:45:57,470 --> 00:45:59,870  
called coprifuoco, which is--

971  
00:45:59,870 --> 00:46:04,070  
well, you cannot  
go out at night.

972  
00:46:04,070 --> 00:46:04,700  
What is it?

973  
00:46:04,700 --> 00:46:05,220  
Curfew.

974  
00:46:05,220 --> 00:46:05,720  
Curfew.

975  
00:46:05,720 --> 00:46:06,980  
Forgive me.

976  
00:46:06,980 --> 00:46:10,190  
Speaking of this, the  
English is escaping me.

977  
00:46:10,190 --> 00:46:11,240  
Normally, doesn't.

978  
00:46:11,240 --> 00:46:12,990  
I speak English, I  
think, quite well.

979  
00:46:12,990 --> 00:46:16,200  
But it's funny, words--

980  
00:46:16,200 --> 00:46:19,280  
so we had a curfew.

981  
00:46:19,280 --> 00:46:21,260  
And my mother got very ill.

982  
00:46:21,260 --> 00:46:22,460  
We didn't have telephones.

983

00:46:22,460 --> 00:46:25,580

She was having a  
gallbladder attack.

984

00:46:25,580 --> 00:46:30,830

And below us an  
Italian officer had

985

00:46:30,830 --> 00:46:33,830

rented a room from a  
family, a non-Jewish family,

986

00:46:33,830 --> 00:46:35,340

because he was in the military.

987

00:46:35,340 --> 00:46:38,240

And he had rented a  
room with a balcony.

988

00:46:38,240 --> 00:46:41,720

And he was on the balcony  
smoking a cigarette

989

00:46:41,720 --> 00:46:43,700

and was about 1:00  
in the morning.

990

00:46:43,700 --> 00:46:48,380

And my father could not go out  
to get a doctor at that time,

991

00:46:48,380 --> 00:46:50,600

and didn't because he  
would be shot on sight.

992

00:46:50,600 --> 00:46:53,450

Not because he is Jewish,  
because just because there

993

00:46:53,450 --> 00:46:54,800

was a curfew.

994

00:46:54,800 --> 00:46:58,460  
So he, of course, spoke Italian.

995  
00:46:58,460 --> 00:47:02,210  
So from the upper floor, he  
addressed this gentleman.

996  
00:47:02,210 --> 00:47:05,870  
And he said, would  
you excuse me, please,

997  
00:47:05,870 --> 00:47:07,400  
but I need a doctor.

998  
00:47:07,400 --> 00:47:09,290  
My wife is very ill.

999  
00:47:09,290 --> 00:47:13,760  
And how could--

1000  
00:47:13,760 --> 00:47:16,130  
I know-- could you go  
to the police station

1001  
00:47:16,130 --> 00:47:20,430  
just a block down and ask them  
to call a doctor or something?

1002  
00:47:20,430 --> 00:47:24,920  
And he said, but I am a  
physician and I'll be right up.

1003  
00:47:24,920 --> 00:47:28,310  
Course, there was a mezuzah  
though, he knew we were Jewish.

1004  
00:47:28,310 --> 00:47:31,130  
But he was very lonely.

1005  
00:47:31,130 --> 00:47:33,740  
Nobody spoke Italian to him.

1006

00:47:33,740 --> 00:47:36,050

And he came and took  
care of my mother.

1007

00:47:36,050 --> 00:47:41,240

And from then on, used to come  
up to visit and how my mother

1008

00:47:41,240 --> 00:47:43,610

was and how my mother wasn't.

1009

00:47:43,610 --> 00:47:47,390

But it was very dangerous  
because then you could--

1010

00:47:47,390 --> 00:47:53,120

the Yugoslavian people who were  
pro communist and pro partisan,

1011

00:47:53,120 --> 00:47:57,035

you didn't want the  
association to be made.

1012

00:47:57,035 --> 00:47:58,670

So it was a very--

1013

00:47:58,670 --> 00:48:01,660

but he was a wonderful  
gentleman who took care, gave

1014

00:48:01,660 --> 00:48:04,760

her medicine, and actually--

1015

00:48:04,760 --> 00:48:08,650

so basically, I was  
not fearful then.

1016

00:48:08,650 --> 00:48:10,820

And sometimes when I went  
to the beach-- the beach--

1017

00:48:10,820 --> 00:48:13,140

there was one beach that

was rough beach where you

1018  
00:48:13,140 --> 00:48:15,720  
didn't-- wasn't a fancy beach  
where we could go, as well.

1019  
00:48:15,720 --> 00:48:16,880  
I still went swimming.

1020  
00:48:16,880 --> 00:48:19,550  
We're talking about 9-year-olds  
who went swimming to the beach

1021  
00:48:19,550 --> 00:48:21,560  
alone, met friends.

1022  
00:48:21,560 --> 00:48:27,840  
I used to walk through a  
bridge, and the Germans--

1023  
00:48:27,840 --> 00:48:30,470  
German-- Italian soldier  
were standing guard.

1024  
00:48:30,470 --> 00:48:32,900  
Not a black shirt now.

1025  
00:48:32,900 --> 00:48:38,660  
And he would stop me and  
he wanted to speak Italian.

1026  
00:48:38,660 --> 00:48:40,430  
He would address me in Italian.

1027  
00:48:40,430 --> 00:48:41,990  
By that time, I spoke Italian.

1028  
00:48:41,990 --> 00:48:45,380  
I don't know how, but  
I'd been going to school.

1029  
00:48:45,380 --> 00:48:48,960

And he would show me pictures  
of his family and his daughter.

1030  
00:48:48,960 --> 00:48:53,240  
And it was like we had  
made friends, this--

1031  
00:48:53,240 --> 00:48:55,660  
somebody on guard over bridge.

1032  
00:48:55,660 --> 00:48:57,200  
So, no, I was not--

1033  
00:48:57,200 --> 00:48:59,310  
I was never fearful  
of the Italians.

1034  
00:48:59,310 --> 00:49:03,260  
Some fascist, black shirt,  
I was a little fearful.

1035  
00:49:03,260 --> 00:49:04,970  
What did that mean to you?

1036  
00:49:04,970 --> 00:49:07,940  
It meant-- well, it  
actually meant a lot

1037  
00:49:07,940 --> 00:49:11,780  
because the fascist is  
the ones that initially

1038  
00:49:11,780 --> 00:49:18,410  
had beaten the Jews coming out  
of synagogue on a Friday night,

1039  
00:49:18,410 --> 00:49:24,025  
and took all the sacred books  
and burned them on the Piazza.

1040  
00:49:24,025 --> 00:49:26,780

1041

00:49:26,780 --> 00:49:30,020

And basically, this  
is what it meant.

1042

00:49:30,020 --> 00:49:33,600

You had to-- and beaten  
the older men that had been

1043

00:49:33,600 --> 00:49:34,100

[INAUDIBLE].

1044

00:49:34,100 --> 00:49:36,020

My father stopped  
going to synagogue.

1045

00:49:36,020 --> 00:49:40,580

He was-- but the older  
men continued going.

1046

00:49:40,580 --> 00:49:42,530

And they would be-- as  
they were coming out,

1047

00:49:42,530 --> 00:49:43,488

they were beating them.

1048

00:49:43,488 --> 00:49:44,586

It was this--

1049

00:49:44,586 --> 00:49:47,120

Is this the beating  
of June 1942?

1050

00:49:47,120 --> 00:49:47,810

Probably.

1051

00:49:47,810 --> 00:49:49,710

It was in the summer  
or [INAUDIBLE]..

1052

00:49:49,710 --> 00:49:50,990

OK.

1053  
00:49:50,990 --> 00:49:54,080  
It was-- and we were  
sitting and all at once,

1054  
00:49:54,080 --> 00:49:57,950  
we started seeing the chairs of  
the synagogue being transported

1055  
00:49:57,950 --> 00:50:01,790  
out on trucks.

1056  
00:50:01,790 --> 00:50:04,170  
By that, I mean,  
seeing them on trucks

1057  
00:50:04,170 --> 00:50:05,690  
and my father recognized it.

1058  
00:50:05,690 --> 00:50:08,720  
He was from-- so we knew  
something had happened.

1059  
00:50:08,720 --> 00:50:11,180  
And they burned all  
the sacred books.

1060  
00:50:11,180 --> 00:50:14,060  
And here, I happen to have a  
picture where there was such

1061  
00:50:14,060 --> 00:50:17,300  
a black mark on the Piazza.

1062  
00:50:17,300 --> 00:50:19,730  
And Jews never  
walk through here--

1063  
00:50:19,730 --> 00:50:21,410  
never, never walked.

1064  
00:50:21,410 --> 00:50:24,550

But they would walk  
around after that.

1065  
00:50:24,550 --> 00:50:26,240  
Never on that again.

1066  
00:50:26,240 --> 00:50:27,570  
Yeah, that was it.

1067  
00:50:27,570 --> 00:50:28,670  
That was in the summer.

1068  
00:50:28,670 --> 00:50:31,130  
I remember being hot-- warm.

1069  
00:50:31,130 --> 00:50:35,750  
And some of the orthodox  
older men, and they all

1070  
00:50:35,750 --> 00:50:37,610  
got beaten very badly.

1071  
00:50:37,610 --> 00:50:40,600  
And then everything from the  
synagogue was burned that was--

1072  
00:50:40,600 --> 00:50:42,600  
the sacred books were burned.

1073  
00:50:42,600 --> 00:50:44,440  
But some of the furniture.

1074  
00:50:44,440 --> 00:50:49,330  
I remember chairs being seen.

1075  
00:50:49,330 --> 00:50:51,100  
You are nine years old.

1076  
00:50:51,100 --> 00:50:52,690  
What does that do  
to a nine-year-old

1077

00:50:52,690 --> 00:50:55,150  
to hear about that, see that?

1078

00:50:55,150 --> 00:50:58,390  
Well, the fear of the  
fascist, because the fascist,

1079

00:50:58,390 --> 00:51:01,580  
we always distinguished between  
the Italian and the fascist.

1080

00:51:01,580 --> 00:51:05,710  
There was always a  
distinction in our minds.

1081

00:51:05,710 --> 00:51:11,770  
The fascists were the ones that  
beat the Jews, imprison them,

1082

00:51:11,770 --> 00:51:15,070  
came to pick up my  
uncle who lived with us,

1083

00:51:15,070 --> 00:51:18,640  
and took him to  
prison for no reason.

1084

00:51:18,640 --> 00:51:20,320  
This was normal.

1085

00:51:20,320 --> 00:51:22,540  
Actually, was a badge of honor--

1086

00:51:22,540 --> 00:51:24,130  
does that make sense--

1087

00:51:24,130 --> 00:51:25,720  
to be in prison.

1088

00:51:25,720 --> 00:51:28,660  
What does it feel like to  
have an uncle in prison?

1089  
00:51:28,660 --> 00:51:31,960  
My father, my mother were  
afraid to bring him food.

1090  
00:51:31,960 --> 00:51:36,940  
So who got chosen to go to  
the prison and bring food?

1091  
00:51:36,940 --> 00:51:41,340  
It was safest to  
send a nine-year-old

1092  
00:51:41,340 --> 00:51:42,420  
to go to the jail.

1093  
00:51:42,420 --> 00:51:46,040  
You see, the jail-- the people  
in jail did not get food there.

1094  
00:51:46,040 --> 00:51:49,080  
The families used to  
have to bring food.

1095  
00:51:49,080 --> 00:51:52,080  
So who got chosen?

1096  
00:51:52,080 --> 00:51:55,500  
The little girl was  
safe to send to the jail

1097  
00:51:55,500 --> 00:51:58,340  
to bring food to my uncle.

1098  
00:51:58,340 --> 00:52:00,780  
And I still spoke  
Italian so I spoke

1099  
00:52:00,780 --> 00:52:05,020  
to them Italian and they would  
open actually where they were.

1100

00:52:05,020 --> 00:52:06,660

And I could see him  
through the window.

1101

00:52:06,660 --> 00:52:07,950

And I would wave to him.

1102

00:52:07,950 --> 00:52:11,600

They would have never  
done that for an adult.

1103

00:52:11,600 --> 00:52:13,770

This is the uncle that  
was teaching Solomon?

1104

00:52:13,770 --> 00:52:18,010

No, that was my uncle  
Chaim [PERSONAL NAME]

1105

00:52:18,010 --> 00:52:20,260

who died during the war.

1106

00:52:20,260 --> 00:52:23,020

He died with the partisans.

1107

00:52:23,020 --> 00:52:27,760

He then got out of jail, went  
in the mountains with us,

1108

00:52:27,760 --> 00:52:30,550

and died fighting  
with the partisans.

1109

00:52:30,550 --> 00:52:32,290

What was the name of  
the physician that

1110

00:52:32,290 --> 00:52:35,560

helped your mother [INAUDIBLE]?

1111

00:52:35,560 --> 00:52:37,600

I'm sorry, I don't remember.

1112

00:52:37,600 --> 00:52:38,440

Don't know.

1113

00:52:38,440 --> 00:52:41,770

And were-- did your parents  
let you go out on the street

1114

00:52:41,770 --> 00:52:44,140

alone during the day?

1115

00:52:44,140 --> 00:52:44,920

I always went out.

1116

00:52:44,920 --> 00:52:47,680

I-- from what I remember.

1117

00:52:47,680 --> 00:52:49,780

First, I went with  
the maid every place,

1118

00:52:49,780 --> 00:52:54,350

and then I went  
every place alone.

1119

00:52:54,350 --> 00:52:56,550

Even after the  
Italian occupation.

1120

00:52:56,550 --> 00:52:57,050

Yeah.

1121

00:52:57,050 --> 00:52:59,565

There was no-- they  
would never hurt a child.

1122

00:52:59,565 --> 00:53:00,440

You don't understand.

1123

00:53:00,440 --> 00:53:01,770

We're not talking about--

1124

00:53:01,770 --> 00:53:04,810  
even the Jewish child, they  
would never hurt a child.

1125  
00:53:04,810 --> 00:53:09,160  
That's not part of  
the Italian mentality.

1126  
00:53:09,160 --> 00:53:11,970  
They were always very  
kind to children.

1127  
00:53:11,970 --> 00:53:14,750  
Strange.

1128  
00:53:14,750 --> 00:53:17,690  
So you-- tell me  
a little bit more

1129  
00:53:17,690 --> 00:53:21,650  
about the trip to the prison  
bringing your uncle food.

1130  
00:53:21,650 --> 00:53:22,420  
It was nothing.

1131  
00:53:22,420 --> 00:53:24,610  
It's just whatever time--

1132  
00:53:24,610 --> 00:53:26,690  
You did it more than once.

1133  
00:53:26,690 --> 00:53:31,760  
Daily basis, once a day, midday.

1134  
00:53:31,760 --> 00:53:34,880  
It used to be this  
little holders that

1135  
00:53:34,880 --> 00:53:38,330  
had little pots, one on top  
of another and the holder.

1136

00:53:38,330 --> 00:53:43,400  
And I would take the holder with  
the food, and I would come--

1137

00:53:43,400 --> 00:53:44,690  
of course, I spoke Italian.

1138

00:53:44,690 --> 00:53:46,670  
This was a tremendous advan--

1139

00:53:46,670 --> 00:53:49,820  
you can't-- and I  
would arrive there.

1140

00:53:49,820 --> 00:53:51,830  
And they would say  
hello to-- the prison

1141

00:53:51,830 --> 00:53:54,200  
guards say hello to me.

1142

00:53:54,200 --> 00:53:58,130  
And they would yell sometimes.

1143

00:53:58,130 --> 00:54:01,550  
Sometimes I would just  
give them the thing.

1144

00:54:01,550 --> 00:54:04,520  
And I would, I  
think, wait for the--

1145

00:54:04,520 --> 00:54:09,020  
so he could bring  
me back the pots,

1146

00:54:09,020 --> 00:54:10,820  
or I would pick them  
up the next day.

1147

00:54:10,820 --> 00:54:14,090  
I don't-- that part

I don't remember.

1148  
00:54:14,090 --> 00:54:16,520  
But then he says, do  
you want to see him?

1149  
00:54:16,520 --> 00:54:18,170  
He says, I'll call  
him to the window.

1150  
00:54:18,170 --> 00:54:23,130  
It was an inside courtyard--

1151  
00:54:23,130 --> 00:54:24,220  
an inside courtyard.

1152  
00:54:24,220 --> 00:54:25,850  
So they will open  
this door and then

1153  
00:54:25,850 --> 00:54:29,810  
we yell for him to come  
at the window of the cells

1154  
00:54:29,810 --> 00:54:31,060  
so he could see me.

1155  
00:54:31,060 --> 00:54:32,300  
I would wave.

1156  
00:54:32,300 --> 00:54:35,120  
So basically, I had made  
friends with the jailers.

1157  
00:54:35,120 --> 00:54:40,580  
And I came everyday  
and brought him food,

1158  
00:54:40,580 --> 00:54:43,580  
because my father and  
mother were afraid to go.

1159

00:54:43,580 --> 00:54:47,280

It was-- they knew that  
nobody would hurt--

1160

00:54:47,280 --> 00:54:51,950

it was a-- it's strange that  
it was a safe place for a child

1161

00:54:51,950 --> 00:54:52,970

in that time--

1162

00:54:52,970 --> 00:54:54,110

at that time.

1163

00:54:54,110 --> 00:54:55,490

You had said that  
other relatives

1164

00:54:55,490 --> 00:54:58,280

had been coming to Split.

1165

00:54:58,280 --> 00:55:01,280

Were any of them  
living with you?

1166

00:55:01,280 --> 00:55:03,980

The house was full of people.

1167

00:55:03,980 --> 00:55:06,020

Yes, they lived there.

1168

00:55:06,020 --> 00:55:10,790

Some of them rented private  
rooms in the building--

1169

00:55:10,790 --> 00:55:12,470

in the building.

1170

00:55:12,470 --> 00:55:15,620

People that were willing  
to make some extra money.

1171

00:55:15,620 --> 00:55:18,590

But I think every room  
in our house, which was

1172

00:55:18,590 --> 00:55:22,470

a three, four, five room house.

1173

00:55:22,470 --> 00:55:23,863

But every room was taken.

1174

00:55:23,863 --> 00:55:25,280

You're talking  
about an apartment.

1175

00:55:25,280 --> 00:55:28,100

It's an apartment,  
yeah, forgive me.

1176

00:55:28,100 --> 00:55:30,230

Every room was taken  
up with people.

1177

00:55:30,230 --> 00:55:32,510

And five people, four  
people in a room.

1178

00:55:32,510 --> 00:55:33,760

So you had to share your room.

1179

00:55:33,760 --> 00:55:35,760

Oh, we have to share everything.

1180

00:55:35,760 --> 00:55:37,620

Share the food, share the house.

1181

00:55:37,620 --> 00:55:39,770

Did you like that or  
did you resent it?

1182

00:55:39,770 --> 00:55:41,690

I don't think I resented it.

1183

00:55:41,690 --> 00:55:47,810

I was an only child and loved  
this houseful of people.

1184

00:55:47,810 --> 00:55:49,130

Didn't mind it, no.

1185

00:55:49,130 --> 00:55:50,460

I don't remember minding it.

1186

00:55:50,460 --> 00:55:54,200

I remember being a lot  
of work for my mother.

1187

00:55:54,200 --> 00:55:57,270

But the women helped and  
they all did the cooking.

1188

00:55:57,270 --> 00:55:59,195

Was there enough food?

1189

00:55:59,195 --> 00:55:59,695

Food?

1190

00:55:59,695 --> 00:56:02,930

1191

00:56:02,930 --> 00:56:05,690

There was bread and  
there was some food.

1192

00:56:05,690 --> 00:56:06,920

There were vegetables.

1193

00:56:06,920 --> 00:56:08,460

Meat was probably scarce.

1194

00:56:08,460 --> 00:56:11,060

There was probably fish.

1195

00:56:11,060 --> 00:56:16,230

We didn't have butter, and I

adored butter, and still do.

1196  
00:56:16,230 --> 00:56:18,360  
And there was kind of a--

1197  
00:56:18,360 --> 00:56:23,020  
I don't remember being hungry,  
but I'm sure my father was.

1198  
00:56:23,020 --> 00:56:30,060  
Because he always-- if there  
was something that I liked,

1199  
00:56:30,060 --> 00:56:31,670  
or something, he  
always gave it to me.

1200  
00:56:31,670 --> 00:56:33,860  
So I think he lost weight--

1201  
00:56:33,860 --> 00:56:39,320  
excuse me-- but I don't  
remember being hungry at all.

1202  
00:56:39,320 --> 00:56:44,690  
Being hungry for things, like  
butter, or something like that.

1203  
00:56:44,690 --> 00:56:48,320  
But don't remember being hungry.

1204  
00:56:48,320 --> 00:56:50,390  
Were you aware, or did--

1205  
00:56:50,390 --> 00:56:53,780  
or did you know, or did your  
parents talk about what was

1206  
00:56:53,780 --> 00:56:55,860  
happening in the rest of your--

1207  
00:56:55,860 --> 00:56:57,820

in '41, '42?

1208  
00:56:57,820 --> 00:56:58,730  
It was a great deal.

1209  
00:56:58,730 --> 00:57:00,230  
They liberated the city.

1210  
00:57:00,230 --> 00:57:03,950  
They took-- Germans  
were going, and it was--

1211  
00:57:03,950 --> 00:57:06,320  
the Germans were advancing.

1212  
00:57:06,320 --> 00:57:07,610  
The fear was great.

1213  
00:57:07,610 --> 00:57:10,400  
Already, I was aware  
that the fear was great.

1214  
00:57:10,400 --> 00:57:12,590  
The Germans are  
advancing in this front.

1215  
00:57:12,590 --> 00:57:16,340  
The fronts, on the  
Russian front, this front,

1216  
00:57:16,340 --> 00:57:20,780  
and the big talk at that  
point was the Americans

1217  
00:57:20,780 --> 00:57:23,630  
and the British were  
already in Sicily.

1218  
00:57:23,630 --> 00:57:25,670  
They were already  
in southern Italy.

1219

00:57:25,670 --> 00:57:26,900  
They are in southern Italy.

1220  
00:57:26,900 --> 00:57:28,910  
They going to  
cross the Adriatic,

1221  
00:57:28,910 --> 00:57:30,980  
and we are going  
to be liberated.

1222  
00:57:30,980 --> 00:57:34,250  
Not until-- it didn't happen.

1223  
00:57:34,250 --> 00:57:37,430  
But there was a  
great deal of hope

1224  
00:57:37,430 --> 00:57:42,510  
that the Allies would come,  
because they were already

1225  
00:57:42,510 --> 00:57:43,350  
set in Italy.

1226  
00:57:43,350 --> 00:57:45,620  
It just takes a  
boat ride to invade.

1227  
00:57:45,620 --> 00:57:46,790  
They didn't do it.

1228  
00:57:46,790 --> 00:57:48,530  
They never did it, actually.

1229  
00:57:48,530 --> 00:57:50,288  
Was not part of their plan.

1230  
00:57:50,288 --> 00:57:51,830  
So they were-- we  
were always talking

1231

00:57:51,830 --> 00:57:54,200  
at the Russian front  
and the African front,

1232  
00:57:54,200 --> 00:57:57,980  
I mean, these things were part  
of the everyday conversation.

1233  
00:57:57,980 --> 00:58:00,860  
Everybody was  
listening to some kind

1234  
00:58:00,860 --> 00:58:04,880  
of secret radios, shortwave,  
I don't know what they had.

1235  
00:58:04,880 --> 00:58:06,560  
Were radios forbidden?

1236  
00:58:06,560 --> 00:58:09,710  
Oh, yeah, it was  
all very forbidden.

1237  
00:58:09,710 --> 00:58:13,580  
And so there was our  
secrets, many secrets.

1238  
00:58:13,580 --> 00:58:15,860  
And the secret was  
other secrets--

1239  
00:58:15,860 --> 00:58:19,340  
collecting clothes,  
collecting money

1240  
00:58:19,340 --> 00:58:23,230  
for the partisans, [? Tito's ?]  
partisans, many of my--

1241  
00:58:23,230 --> 00:58:25,520  
my cousin, actually  
who died fighting

1242

00:58:25,520 --> 00:58:28,550  
was the parti--  
another Tilda Finzi.

1243  
00:58:28,550 --> 00:58:34,310  
My uncle Beppo Finzi,  
Joseph Finzi's daughter,

1244  
00:58:34,310 --> 00:58:35,930  
another Tilda Finzi.

1245  
00:58:35,930 --> 00:58:39,080  
They all named their children  
after the dead mother,

1246  
00:58:39,080 --> 00:58:42,170  
all the brothers,  
my father's brother.

1247  
00:58:42,170 --> 00:58:47,240  
And she joined the  
Communist Party

1248  
00:58:47,240 --> 00:58:50,960  
when she was about  
15 or 16 doing--

1249  
00:58:50,960 --> 00:58:53,090  
it's the-- it wasn't  
the Communist Party.

1250  
00:58:53,090 --> 00:58:59,350  
It was just the people that  
fought against the occupation.

1251  
00:58:59,350 --> 00:59:05,470  
And she, unfortunately,  
was one of--

1252  
00:59:05,470 --> 00:59:12,270  
threw some kind of petrol on one  
of the commanders of the city.

1253

00:59:12,270 --> 00:59:13,900

She was an attractive  
young woman,

1254

00:59:13,900 --> 00:59:17,040

and she walked by  
and threw petrol.

1255

00:59:17,040 --> 00:59:21,780

Because it was an  
anti-fascist movement.

1256

00:59:21,780 --> 00:59:26,160

And immediately the next  
day, she didn't get caught.

1257

00:59:26,160 --> 00:59:30,300

She was not caught, but  
she escaped and went

1258

00:59:30,300 --> 00:59:31,980

to the part-- went  
to the mountains

1259

00:59:31,980 --> 00:59:34,040

and was in the partisans.

1260

00:59:34,040 --> 00:59:39,712

She was the only daughter  
of my uncle, Beppo Finzi.

1261

00:59:39,712 --> 00:59:43,230

And she died fighting  
with the partisans.

1262

00:59:43,230 --> 00:59:46,770

Now, what was your  
father doing once he

1263

00:59:46,770 --> 00:59:47,970

helped to start this school?

1264

00:59:47,970 --> 00:59:50,910

Was he involved in resistance?

1265

00:59:50,910 --> 00:59:53,460

In the what?

1266

00:59:53,460 --> 00:59:54,627

Was he involved with school?

1267

00:59:54,627 --> 00:59:55,960

Was he involved with resistance?

1268

00:59:55,960 --> 00:59:56,730

What was he doing?

1269

00:59:56,730 --> 00:59:59,280

I think because of him--

1270

00:59:59,280 --> 01:00:08,070

his being known to have been  
Communist in his very youth,

1271

01:00:08,070 --> 01:00:08,720

he was 18.

1272

01:00:08,720 --> 01:00:13,910

He was coping-- keeping a very  
low profile, maybe collecting--

1273

01:00:13,910 --> 01:00:15,050

food collecting.

1274

01:00:15,050 --> 01:00:17,135

But he was keeping an  
extremely low profile.

1275

01:00:17,135 --> 01:00:20,540

1276

01:00:20,540 --> 01:00:24,830

As a matter of fact, they  
jailed my Uncle Beppo

1277

01:00:24,830 --> 01:00:30,140

for telling him that he was  
a communist in 1918, 1919.

1278

01:00:30,140 --> 01:00:32,870

He had not been.

1279

01:00:32,870 --> 01:00:37,040

He knew that who they were  
looking for was my father.

1280

01:00:37,040 --> 01:00:39,550

And he says, no, I was here  
but he never mentioned.

1281

01:00:39,550 --> 01:00:42,170

So my father was never--

1282

01:00:42,170 --> 01:00:45,110

my uncle-- but he was  
ill with something

1283

01:00:45,110 --> 01:00:47,310

so he was put in the hospital.

1284

01:00:47,310 --> 01:00:50,120

And he managed to survive.

1285

01:00:50,120 --> 01:00:52,100

Unfortunately,  
started and she died

1286

01:00:52,100 --> 01:00:54,950

fighting with the partisans.

1287

01:00:54,950 --> 01:00:57,380

And so your father, you  
said, kept a low profile.

1288

01:00:57,380 --> 01:00:59,510

What did he do to  
pass the time of day?

1289  
01:00:59,510 --> 01:01:01,310  
What he passed  
the time of day, I

1290  
01:01:01,310 --> 01:01:03,380  
guess, went from  
store visited his--

1291  
01:01:03,380 --> 01:01:05,070  
he had many  
non-Jewish friends who

1292  
01:01:05,070 --> 01:01:06,830  
owned stores, went to theirs.

1293  
01:01:06,830 --> 01:01:11,150  
A very interesting story,  
though, which I don't know.

1294  
01:01:11,150 --> 01:01:13,190  
He was very well thought of.

1295  
01:01:13,190 --> 01:01:15,740  
So there was an  
Italian family that

1296  
01:01:15,740 --> 01:01:19,670  
lived in Split who had a store.

1297  
01:01:19,670 --> 01:01:26,460  
And my father also used to  
kind of sell retail and sell--

1298  
01:01:26,460 --> 01:01:27,640  
how do you say--

1299  
01:01:27,640 --> 01:01:28,190  
Wholesale?

1300  
01:01:28,190 --> 01:01:30,160  
--wholesale.

1301  
01:01:30,160 --> 01:01:32,840  
Forgot those words already.

1302  
01:01:32,840 --> 01:01:34,430  
And there was a Jewish--

1303  
01:01:34,430 --> 01:01:37,190  
an Italian man, non-Jewish,  
who had a store--

1304  
01:01:37,190 --> 01:01:40,010

1305  
01:01:40,010 --> 01:01:41,620  
lingerie.

1306  
01:01:41,620 --> 01:01:46,220  
And was interesting because he  
went to Italy on a buying trip

1307  
01:01:46,220 --> 01:01:48,060  
with his wife, this man.

1308  
01:01:48,060 --> 01:01:50,000  
And had teenage--

1309  
01:01:50,000 --> 01:01:51,830  
20-year-old children  
or something

1310  
01:01:51,830 --> 01:01:55,310  
in the late teens, early 20s.

1311  
01:01:55,310 --> 01:02:00,420  
And the boat was torpedoed  
and both of them died.

1312  
01:02:00,420 --> 01:02:02,720  
So came the fascist--

1313

01:02:02,720 --> 01:02:07,130  
Italian fascist came to  
help them sell the store.

1314  
01:02:07,130 --> 01:02:10,610  
The children had to sell out  
the store, liquidate the store.

1315  
01:02:10,610 --> 01:02:12,800  
So they said, do  
you know anybody

1316  
01:02:12,800 --> 01:02:15,740  
who your father respected  
who could do this for you?

1317  
01:02:15,740 --> 01:02:20,250  
He says, sure, I do,  
Mr. Finzi [INAUDIBLE]..

1318  
01:02:20,250 --> 01:02:21,740  
But he said, he's Jewish.

1319  
01:02:21,740 --> 01:02:23,780  
But that's the only  
man in this city

1320  
01:02:23,780 --> 01:02:27,330  
that my father would trust  
with something like this.

1321  
01:02:27,330 --> 01:02:33,050  
So my father after having  
given up his business,

1322  
01:02:33,050 --> 01:02:39,160  
had to go and liquidate  
this store for the fascist,

1323  
01:02:39,160 --> 01:02:45,210  
because these young  
children wanted my father.

1324

01:02:45,210 --> 01:02:46,780

So it was an  
interest-- it's kind

1325

01:02:46,780 --> 01:02:50,800

of an interesting situation.

1326

01:02:50,800 --> 01:02:52,270

But that's-- so he--

1327

01:02:52,270 --> 01:02:56,380

I remember him working  
for them for almost six

1328

01:02:56,380 --> 01:02:59,980

months liquidating  
this store that he

1329

01:02:59,980 --> 01:03:01,750

used to sell merchandise to.

1330

01:03:01,750 --> 01:03:04,520

1331

01:03:04,520 --> 01:03:08,560

Did your parents  
talk about to you

1332

01:03:08,560 --> 01:03:11,590

what was happening on the  
other parts of the continent,

1333

01:03:11,590 --> 01:03:14,768

like what was happening in  
Poland, or did they know?

1334

01:03:14,768 --> 01:03:16,060

I don't think they really knew.

1335

01:03:16,060 --> 01:03:19,180

They knew by the time there  
were concentration camps.

1336

01:03:19,180 --> 01:03:20,830

They never mentioned that they--

1337

01:03:20,830 --> 01:03:22,660

I don't think they--

1338

01:03:22,660 --> 01:03:27,100

as I said, they spoke in

Ladino many of these things.

1339

01:03:27,100 --> 01:03:28,720

And I would hear about it.

1340

01:03:28,720 --> 01:03:32,680

I knew a lot, but

not by virtue--

1341

01:03:32,680 --> 01:03:34,840

also, you didn't

tell your children

1342

01:03:34,840 --> 01:03:37,240

in case they start

questioning the children.

1343

01:03:37,240 --> 01:03:43,690

You did not want them to

know what the families see--

1344

01:03:43,690 --> 01:03:45,595

the family thing.

1345

01:03:45,595 --> 01:03:47,470

When you were-- and you

were continuing to go

1346

01:03:47,470 --> 01:03:49,120

to school during this time.

1347

01:03:49,120 --> 01:03:52,500

What school-- what did you

talk about with your friends

1348  
01:03:52,500 --> 01:03:53,250  
in your free time?

1349  
01:03:53,250 --> 01:03:54,130  
Did you talk about--

1350  
01:03:54,130 --> 01:03:57,820  
Normal things that  
kids talked about.

1351  
01:03:57,820 --> 01:04:04,120  
Who liked whom, was  
he cute, was he not?

1352  
01:04:04,120 --> 01:04:05,950  
Did he pass you a note?

1353  
01:04:05,950 --> 01:04:09,970  
I [? assure you ?] we didn't  
talk about serious things

1354  
01:04:09,970 --> 01:04:10,870  
at all.

1355  
01:04:10,870 --> 01:04:14,090  
Plus, the teachers  
were not allowed.

1356  
01:04:14,090 --> 01:04:16,000  
See, they-- you were--

1357  
01:04:16,000 --> 01:04:20,620  
you can compromise yourself if  
you tell the children anything,

1358  
01:04:20,620 --> 01:04:22,210  
if they--

1359  
01:04:22,210 --> 01:04:25,360  
so you basically--  
but we were devilish.

1360  
01:04:25,360 --> 01:04:27,460  
We were-- I remember  
I was the devil.

1361  
01:04:27,460 --> 01:04:31,030  
I always remember this because  
from one teacher to the next,

1362  
01:04:31,030 --> 01:04:34,750  
like we had a Hebrew teacher  
that came who was the rabbi.

1363  
01:04:34,750 --> 01:04:36,730  
Well, I said, you know what?

1364  
01:04:36,730 --> 01:04:39,470  
Let's turn the lights off  
so he'll let us go home.

1365  
01:04:39,470 --> 01:04:40,720  
He says, well, we can't turn--

1366  
01:04:40,720 --> 01:04:42,400  
I said, well, let's  
get this-- he was--

1367  
01:04:42,400 --> 01:04:43,720  
he was late.

1368  
01:04:43,720 --> 01:04:47,980  
So we put a chair on top of  
the table and we climbed on top

1369  
01:04:47,980 --> 01:04:49,780  
and unscrewed all the bulbs.

1370  
01:04:49,780 --> 01:04:53,120  
And when he walked in,  
there was no light.

1371  
01:04:53,120 --> 01:04:54,550

So he sent us home.

1372

01:04:54,550 --> 01:04:55,840

So we had fun.

1373

01:04:55,840 --> 01:04:58,630

Don't-- we had--

1374

01:04:58,630 --> 01:05:01,390

it wasn't one of these  
oppressive type of thing, no.

1375

01:05:01,390 --> 01:05:05,620

It was-- and the rabbi came  
to give us our Hebrew lesson

1376

01:05:05,620 --> 01:05:08,350

after the regular teacher left.

1377

01:05:08,350 --> 01:05:10,630

You see, they left  
us alone also.

1378

01:05:10,630 --> 01:05:12,580

It was-- it's a different--

1379

01:05:12,580 --> 01:05:15,250

and we unscrewed all the bulbs.

1380

01:05:15,250 --> 01:05:18,010

And did your family feel free  
to celebrate Jewish holidays

1381

01:05:18,010 --> 01:05:19,330

during this time?

1382

01:05:19,330 --> 01:05:21,620

At home, yes, I think we did.

1383

01:05:21,620 --> 01:05:24,340

I think we did celebrate  
the Jewish holidays.

1384  
01:05:24,340 --> 01:05:26,140  
Not I think, I know.

1385  
01:05:26,140 --> 01:05:29,540  
The cooking-- might have  
been very little food,

1386  
01:05:29,540 --> 01:05:30,700  
but we did celebrate.

1387  
01:05:30,700 --> 01:05:33,560  
We did say all  
the prayers, yeah.

1388  
01:05:33,560 --> 01:05:35,142  
But did not go to the synagogue?

1389  
01:05:35,142 --> 01:05:35,850  
You said it had--

1390  
01:05:35,850 --> 01:05:37,030  
There was no synagogue.

1391  
01:05:37,030 --> 01:05:39,580  
What street was the  
synagogue located on?

1392  
01:05:39,580 --> 01:05:42,990  
On the same street  
as this bookstore,

1393  
01:05:42,990 --> 01:05:46,090  
and I don't remember, sorry.

1394  
01:05:46,090 --> 01:05:50,770  
So events went on  
without anything

1395  
01:05:50,770 --> 01:05:54,310  
too frightening until when?

1396

01:05:54,310 --> 01:05:56,230

Nothing particular.

1397

01:05:56,230 --> 01:05:58,300

People were taken to prison.

1398

01:05:58,300 --> 01:06:00,130

They were beaten in prison.

1399

01:06:00,130 --> 01:06:05,200

But if it didn't affect you  
personally, you kind of left--

1400

01:06:05,200 --> 01:06:08,560

well, there were  
events that took place.

1401

01:06:08,560 --> 01:06:13,960

There was a lot of resistance  
movement within the city.

1402

01:06:13,960 --> 01:06:19,450

So we had major curfews  
that started at 5:00

1403

01:06:19,450 --> 01:06:20,950

and all of this, the feeling.

1404

01:06:20,950 --> 01:06:25,090

But as far as Jewishness,  
was not really--

1405

01:06:25,090 --> 01:06:26,230

the fear was there.

1406

01:06:26,230 --> 01:06:27,850

You could, I think par--

1407

01:06:27,850 --> 01:06:32,840

you could feel the fear of the  
parents what was going to be.

1408

01:06:32,840 --> 01:06:35,740

Somehow we all, I think I--

1409

01:06:35,740 --> 01:06:42,040

what was going to be,  
especially around September when

1410

01:06:42,040 --> 01:06:44,330

the Italians first Tito--

1411

01:06:44,330 --> 01:06:48,910

first Mussolini was  
taken out of power.

1412

01:06:48,910 --> 01:06:50,230

He lost it.

1413

01:06:50,230 --> 01:06:52,650

Then Italy capitulated.

1414

01:06:52,650 --> 01:06:54,570

And now we're talking  
about September '43.

1415

01:06:54,570 --> 01:06:55,280

Yes.

1416

01:06:55,280 --> 01:06:58,390

Because up to September '43--

1417

01:06:58,390 --> 01:07:00,970

'43-- except for all these  
things we couldn't go here.

1418

01:07:00,970 --> 01:07:02,290

We couldn't go there.

1419

01:07:02,290 --> 01:07:02,920

We couldn't--

1420

01:07:02,920 --> 01:07:05,470

Did you have any identifying papers or anything

1421

01:07:05,470 --> 01:07:07,570  
to show that you were Jewish?

1422

01:07:07,570 --> 01:07:11,380  
By the way, this is something every Italian,

1423

01:07:11,380 --> 01:07:14,020  
every Yugoslavian had to have identity paper.

1424

01:07:14,020 --> 01:07:19,810  
And of course, any papers that we carried was marked as Jews.

1425

01:07:19,810 --> 01:07:21,910  
This was definitely.

1426

01:07:21,910 --> 01:07:25,360  
We did not wear any badges or anything of that sort,

1427

01:07:25,360 --> 01:07:27,950  
do I need the--

1428

01:07:27,950 --> 01:07:30,911  
[NON-ENGLISH], no, we did not.

1429

01:07:30,911 --> 01:07:34,300  
Did you yourself have your own set of papers?

1430

01:07:34,300 --> 01:07:36,070  
I think I was probably on my parents.

1431

01:07:36,070 --> 01:07:37,400  
I did not carry them.

1432

01:07:37,400 --> 01:07:41,910

I don't remember  
carrying papers, no.

1433

01:07:41,910 --> 01:07:44,650

And you said you did go out  
on the streets by yourself.

1434

01:07:44,650 --> 01:07:46,510

Yes, I went out on  
the streets by myself.

1435

01:07:46,510 --> 01:07:49,380

Went to school by  
myself, walked back.

1436

01:07:49,380 --> 01:07:52,060

This is my city, my town.

1437

01:07:52,060 --> 01:07:55,260

It was-- it was not  
a big-- but it was--

1438

01:07:55,260 --> 01:07:57,930

yeah, I felt quite independent.

1439

01:07:57,930 --> 01:08:00,090

And now it's September '43.

1440

01:08:00,090 --> 01:08:07,620

September '43,  
Italy capitulates.

1441

01:08:07,620 --> 01:08:14,470

That means there's arms all  
over thrown on the streets.

1442

01:08:14,470 --> 01:08:17,720

There-- the Italians  
are fleeing.

1443

01:08:17,720 --> 01:08:19,350

They are going up

to the mountains

1444

01:08:19,350 --> 01:08:21,569

to join the partisans.

1445

01:08:21,569 --> 01:08:23,430

My father says,  
we have to leave.

1446

01:08:23,430 --> 01:08:24,479

We have to leave.

1447

01:08:24,479 --> 01:08:28,680

We know that southern Italy  
is occupied by the Italians.

1448

01:08:28,680 --> 01:08:31,410

So he collects all  
the money he can,

1449

01:08:31,410 --> 01:08:34,920

everything, and they  
tried to hire a boat

1450

01:08:34,920 --> 01:08:37,620

to leave for southern Italy.

1451

01:08:37,620 --> 01:08:39,060

It didn't work.

1452

01:08:39,060 --> 01:08:39,960

We pack.

1453

01:08:39,960 --> 01:08:43,470

We go down to the pier.

1454

01:08:43,470 --> 01:08:45,149

The boat never was  
allowed to leave.

1455

01:08:45,149 --> 01:08:47,910

Somehow, there was

something that happened.

1456

01:08:47,910 --> 01:08:49,290

I don't know what.

1457

01:08:49,290 --> 01:08:51,779

Nobody left.

1458

01:08:51,779 --> 01:08:53,340

Or maybe one boat left.

1459

01:08:53,340 --> 01:08:54,930

We were not in that first boat.

1460

01:08:54,930 --> 01:08:57,910

The second boat never took off--

1461

01:08:57,910 --> 01:08:59,112

never left.

1462

01:08:59,112 --> 01:09:00,779

What was your reaction  
when your parents

1463

01:09:00,779 --> 01:09:03,510

said, that you're going to leave  
your town that you grew up in?

1464

01:09:03,510 --> 01:09:06,170

Well, they were talking  
the Germans are coming.

1465

01:09:06,170 --> 01:09:09,609

And so the Germans are  
coming, so it's bad.

1466

01:09:09,609 --> 01:09:10,470

We had to leave.

1467

01:09:10,470 --> 01:09:13,109

I mean, I knew from being  
thrown out from school,

1468  
01:09:13,109 --> 01:09:14,939  
I knew what to--

1469  
01:09:14,939 --> 01:09:17,412  
it was just going  
to be much worst.

1470  
01:09:17,412 --> 01:09:19,899  
So you did not  
question your parents?

1471  
01:09:19,899 --> 01:09:22,680  
You didn't question.

1472  
01:09:22,680 --> 01:09:25,109  
Question was not part of--

1473  
01:09:25,109 --> 01:09:27,180  
there was no time for questions.

1474  
01:09:27,180 --> 01:09:30,029  
But also you knew it was pow--

1475  
01:09:30,029 --> 01:09:35,250  
I mean, you could feel it  
in the air that was major.

1476  
01:09:35,250 --> 01:09:37,020  
We had to escape.

1477  
01:09:37,020 --> 01:09:41,220  
Some people cho-- and  
some people chose not to,

1478  
01:09:41,220 --> 01:09:42,060  
interesting.

1479  
01:09:42,060 --> 01:09:43,319  
They couldn't go.

1480

01:09:43,319 --> 01:09:46,170  
But I was a grown--

1481  
01:09:46,170 --> 01:09:48,660  
grown child.

1482  
01:09:48,660 --> 01:09:52,170  
Somehow I was a child that  
was an independent child.

1483  
01:09:52,170 --> 01:09:56,130  
And I could hear everything  
as if I knew we had to leave.

1484  
01:09:56,130 --> 01:09:57,270  
You are 10 years old.

1485  
01:09:57,270 --> 01:09:59,310  
Did you feel much  
older than what

1486  
01:09:59,310 --> 01:10:00,490  
we think of a typical ten--

1487  
01:10:00,490 --> 01:10:00,990  
Oh, yeah.

1488  
01:10:00,990 --> 01:10:03,780  
I don't know what a  
10-year-old is now.

1489  
01:10:03,780 --> 01:10:08,050  
I was very, very, very adult  
10-year-old, very adult

1490  
01:10:08,050 --> 01:10:09,390  
10-year-old.

1491  
01:10:09,390 --> 01:10:10,552  
And then now--

1492  
01:10:10,552 --> 01:10:13,010

Do you think that was because  
of what you were experiencing

1493  
01:10:13,010 --> 01:10:14,580  
or your personality?

1494  
01:10:14,580 --> 01:10:16,230  
I don't know.

1495  
01:10:16,230 --> 01:10:17,130  
It's hard to say.

1496  
01:10:17,130 --> 01:10:18,990  
I think it's what  
we experienced.

1497  
01:10:18,990 --> 01:10:20,280  
It was just the--

1498  
01:10:20,280 --> 01:10:22,510  
I don't think was  
my personality.

1499  
01:10:22,510 --> 01:10:27,120  
It was just that I was  
thrown into a situation.

1500  
01:10:27,120 --> 01:10:29,190  
And then now-- it was admired.

1501  
01:10:29,190 --> 01:10:32,170

1502  
01:10:32,170 --> 01:10:35,920  
It was considered--  
to be this way,

1503  
01:10:35,920 --> 01:10:39,520  
it was considered something  
positive for the times.

1504  
01:10:39,520 --> 01:10:43,090

Because my Uncle Solomon  
Finzi, the engineer,

1505  
01:10:43,090 --> 01:10:48,520  
he had a son that was a  
year or two younger than I.

1506  
01:10:48,520 --> 01:10:51,070  
And with him, they didn't--

1507  
01:10:51,070 --> 01:10:54,910  
the husband, my uncle,  
went into the partisan--

1508  
01:10:54,910 --> 01:10:57,340  
went to the partisans with us.

1509  
01:10:57,340 --> 01:10:59,620  
He didn't.

1510  
01:10:59,620 --> 01:11:01,090  
He stayed with his mother.

1511  
01:11:01,090 --> 01:11:04,240  
His mother couldn't--  
that he could handle being

1512  
01:11:04,240 --> 01:11:06,220  
in the mountains.

1513  
01:11:06,220 --> 01:11:10,840  
And unfortunately, my cousin  
Sasha Finzi and his mother

1514  
01:11:10,840 --> 01:11:13,720  
[PERSONAL NAME] that died  
in concentration camp.

1515  
01:11:13,720 --> 01:11:18,170  
His father-- so I  
always felt like--

1516

01:11:18,170 --> 01:11:20,090

I felt guilty  
somewhat about that,

1517

01:11:20,090 --> 01:11:24,200

because I always consider  
Sasha, oh, he's such a baby.

1518

01:11:24,200 --> 01:11:27,590

His mother used to  
hold him by his hand.

1519

01:11:27,590 --> 01:11:31,130

And I was an independent kind  
of-- but this was my city.

1520

01:11:31,130 --> 01:11:32,570

He was from Belgrade.

1521

01:11:32,570 --> 01:11:33,770

I grew up in this city.

1522

01:11:33,770 --> 01:11:36,565

I knew everybody and everything.

1523

01:11:36,565 --> 01:11:37,690

So what were your thoughts?

1524

01:11:37,690 --> 01:11:40,370

You just said, this is my city,  
and now I have to leave it.

1525

01:11:40,370 --> 01:11:41,060

Yeah.

1526

01:11:41,060 --> 01:11:42,800

Well, you leave it.

1527

01:11:42,800 --> 01:11:45,140

You just-- my father  
said we have to leave.

1528

01:11:45,140 --> 01:11:46,070  
I said, well--

1529  
01:11:46,070 --> 01:11:48,050  
I remember going up  
to the mountains,

1530  
01:11:48,050 --> 01:11:51,110  
but I knew that  
in the mountains,

1531  
01:11:51,110 --> 01:11:55,370  
the partisans was my  
uncle, was my cousin or--

1532  
01:11:55,370 --> 01:11:57,530  
I mean, this was  
a positive thing.

1533  
01:11:57,530 --> 01:11:59,930  
Tito was very good.

1534  
01:11:59,930 --> 01:12:06,897  
So we carried blankets,  
carried a few things, very few.

1535  
01:12:06,897 --> 01:12:08,480  
Was this right after  
you had gone down

1536  
01:12:08,480 --> 01:12:09,522  
and the boat didn't come?

1537  
01:12:09,522 --> 01:12:10,970  
A couple of days later.

1538  
01:12:10,970 --> 01:12:12,110  
Didn't-- couldn't get off.

1539  
01:12:12,110 --> 01:12:14,820  
Everything was packed to go.

1540

01:12:14,820 --> 01:12:16,700

We thought we were  
bringing a lot, no.

1541

01:12:16,700 --> 01:12:19,220

Now, we are walking.

1542

01:12:19,220 --> 01:12:22,220

There's no war--  
walking up the mountains

1543

01:12:22,220 --> 01:12:24,890

and walking for  
about a day or two.

1544

01:12:24,890 --> 01:12:27,920

Stopping, putting blankets  
down and sleeping.

1545

01:12:27,920 --> 01:12:29,900

And we going up the mountains.

1546

01:12:29,900 --> 01:12:30,830

Who was in your group?

1547

01:12:30,830 --> 01:12:34,680

1548

01:12:34,680 --> 01:12:37,110

My uncle across the  
street who was--

1549

01:12:37,110 --> 01:12:39,510

wanted to see his daughter.

1550

01:12:39,510 --> 01:12:44,940

An aunt, Beppo, my  
uncle Beppo Finz--

1551

01:12:44,940 --> 01:12:49,214

Beppo Finzi, my Aunt  
Sida, some of my--

1552

01:12:49,214 --> 01:12:53,600

1553

01:12:53,600 --> 01:12:55,820

some of-- nobody  
my age, actually.

1554

01:12:55,820 --> 01:12:57,470

But it was all relatives.

1555

01:12:57,470 --> 01:13:02,600

No, were friends-- friends,  
people that lived around us.

1556

01:13:02,600 --> 01:13:04,790

About how big a group was it?

1557

01:13:04,790 --> 01:13:07,400

Oh, it was, I think,  
hundreds of people.

1558

01:13:07,400 --> 01:13:09,500

We're not all Jews  
that were leaving.

1559

01:13:09,500 --> 01:13:11,800

Everybody was going  
up to the mountains

1560

01:13:11,800 --> 01:13:13,010

because Germans are coming.

1561

01:13:13,010 --> 01:13:16,310

Anybody that had been  
remotely a sympathi--

1562

01:13:16,310 --> 01:13:18,890

people-- oh, very interesting.

1563

01:13:18,890 --> 01:13:21,860

I told you about my  
father closing up the shop

1564  
01:13:21,860 --> 01:13:23,840  
with those Italians.

1565  
01:13:23,840 --> 01:13:28,580  
There they were-- the son  
and the daughter who were now

1566  
01:13:28,580 --> 01:13:31,190  
maybe a couple of years  
older or a year older,

1567  
01:13:31,190 --> 01:13:33,200  
they were going  
up the mountains.

1568  
01:13:33,200 --> 01:13:36,110  
They weren't going to  
stay for the Germans.

1569  
01:13:36,110 --> 01:13:37,600  
People were fearful of Germans.

1570  
01:13:37,600 --> 01:13:38,490  
It was a whole group.

1571  
01:13:38,490 --> 01:13:39,920  
It wasn't anything Jewish.

1572  
01:13:39,920 --> 01:13:42,020  
It was almost like  
droves of people

1573  
01:13:42,020 --> 01:13:45,020  
were walking up the mountain.

1574  
01:13:45,020 --> 01:13:47,900  
Did you take-- what did you  
take personally with you

1575  
01:13:47,900 --> 01:13:49,940  
from your home in Split?

1576  
01:13:49,940 --> 01:13:53,150  
I personally don't  
remember taking anything

1577  
01:13:53,150 --> 01:13:57,510  
except a blanket and  
maybe a couple of clothes.

1578  
01:13:57,510 --> 01:14:00,350  
Did you have a favorite  
doll or favorite toy?

1579  
01:14:00,350 --> 01:14:01,190  
I had a doll--

1580  
01:14:01,190 --> 01:14:02,030  
I had dolls.

1581  
01:14:02,030 --> 01:14:05,600  
I had a buggy, a  
fancy buggy doll.

1582  
01:14:05,600 --> 01:14:07,100  
It didn't ever occur--

1583  
01:14:07,100 --> 01:14:10,610  
it just didn't even  
come to mind to take it.

1584  
01:14:10,610 --> 01:14:13,610  
You had to take  
things that were--

1585  
01:14:13,610 --> 01:14:15,650  
for survival.

1586  
01:14:15,650 --> 01:14:17,150  
You even knew that  
as a 10-year-old.

1587  
01:14:17,150 --> 01:14:17,650

Yes.

1588  
01:14:17,650 --> 01:14:20,240  
Oh, by all means.

1589  
01:14:20,240 --> 01:14:22,220  
Now, my mother,  
interestingly enough,

1590  
01:14:22,220 --> 01:14:24,680  
Sandy showed it,  
the Seder plate,

1591  
01:14:24,680 --> 01:14:30,590  
took her Mezuzah from the  
house, removed it, and took

1592  
01:14:30,590 --> 01:14:34,420  
one spoon of her silver.

1593  
01:14:34,420 --> 01:14:39,100  
And Sandy had to stay there a  
couple nights a few nights ago.

1594  
01:14:39,100 --> 01:14:41,660  
Sandy said, what would you take?

1595  
01:14:41,660 --> 01:14:44,360  
And I said-- she asked me--

1596  
01:14:44,360 --> 01:14:46,040  
I said, I know what  
my mother took.

1597  
01:14:46,040 --> 01:14:51,740  
She took one spoon as part of  
her house, and she took one--

1598  
01:14:51,740 --> 01:14:53,270  
her Mezuzah.

1599  
01:14:53,270 --> 01:14:58,190

[? And ?] Sandy has,  
and all beat up by now.

1600  
01:14:58,190 --> 01:15:00,190  
I think she just  
has a part of it.

1601  
01:15:00,190 --> 01:15:03,050  
And that's all we  
took-- and blankets.

1602  
01:15:03,050 --> 01:15:10,010  
And we held onto those  
blankets till my mother died.

1603  
01:15:10,010 --> 01:15:12,830  
Those were the  
blankets from home.

1604  
01:15:12,830 --> 01:15:14,030  
They were all moth eaten.

1605  
01:15:14,030 --> 01:15:16,340  
They were wool heavy blankets.

1606  
01:15:16,340 --> 01:15:21,140  
But we-- those  
blankets we slept on.

1607  
01:15:21,140 --> 01:15:23,960  
And we took a few extra  
things, because my--

1608  
01:15:23,960 --> 01:15:28,250  
like clothing and-- because  
my father was walking.

1609  
01:15:28,250 --> 01:15:30,030  
So he was a strong man.

1610  
01:15:30,030 --> 01:15:33,110  
So we would walk, and  
we walked for two days

1611  
01:15:33,110 --> 01:15:36,800  
and made it up to the  
mountains someplace.

1612  
01:15:36,800 --> 01:15:37,760  
And--

1613  
01:15:37,760 --> 01:15:39,290  
Your mother's health  
by now is good.

1614  
01:15:39,290 --> 01:15:41,730  
She had recuperated  
from the gallbladder.

1615  
01:15:41,730 --> 01:15:42,480  
Oh, yeah, yeah.

1616  
01:15:42,480 --> 01:15:43,730  
She had had gallbladder, yeah.

1617  
01:15:43,730 --> 01:15:45,130  
My mother was fine.

1618  
01:15:45,130 --> 01:15:46,670  
My father was fine.

1619  
01:15:46,670 --> 01:15:49,520  
We got to this small village.

1620  
01:15:49,520 --> 01:15:52,320  
The name of the village?

1621  
01:15:52,320 --> 01:15:53,510  
No?

1622  
01:15:53,510 --> 01:15:55,820  
It was up in the  
mountains someplace.

1623

01:15:55,820 --> 01:15:57,370

And--

1624

01:15:57,370 --> 01:15:58,441