```
1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,140
```

2 00:00:01,140 --> 00:00:03,685 Sometimes I think it was just yesterday.

3 00:00:03,685 --> 00:00:06,420

4 00:00:06,420 --> 00:00:08,790 This is a continuation of the United States Holocaust

5 00:00:08,790 --> 00:00:11,880 Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview

6 00:00:11,880 --> 00:00:13,890 with Ursula Guttstadt McKinney.

7 00:00:13,890 --> 00:00:16,440 This is track number two, and we were

8 00:00:16,440 --> 00:00:21,600 talking about the end of the war and the mother

9 00:00:21,600 --> 00:00:24,080 coming back from Auschwitz.

10 00:00:24,080 --> 00:00:28,670 Any other memories of that particular time we

11 00:00:28,670 --> 00:00:29,610 can talk about.

12 00:00:29,610 --> 00:00:33,850 13 00:00:33,850 --> 00:00:36,730 So people came back, you know?

14 00:00:36,730 --> 00:00:38,500 You never knew.

15 00:00:38,500 --> 00:00:41,530 You never knew, and you never trusted any of it.

16 00:00:41,530 --> 00:00:45,070 But we got that death certificate from Vati.

17 00:00:45,070 --> 00:00:48,470 And you see, my father was a civil servant.

18 00:00:48,470 --> 00:00:50,290 He worked for the Reichsbahn, which

19 00:00:50,290 --> 00:00:54,420 is now Bundesbahn, which would be the federal, you know,

20 00:00:54,420 --> 00:00:56,770 railway system.

21 00:00:56,770 --> 00:01:02,590 And then when my father--

22 00:01:02,590 --> 00:01:05,110 when they kicked him out in '36, they

23 00:01:05,110 --> 00:01:07,780 gave him a special assignment.

24 00:01:07,780 --> 00:01:11,710 And then in '38, certainly everything was over.

25 00:01:11,710 --> 00:01:16,090 And so they paid the pension for my father.

26

00:01:16,090 --> 00:01:17,360 Only, we never got it.

27

00:01:17,360 --> 00:01:20,310 The Gestapo collected it.

28

00:01:20,310 --> 00:01:25,470 Because the German railroads, they thought we cannot--

29

00:01:25,470 --> 00:01:27,900 we have no reason not to give it--

30

00:01:27,900 --> 00:01:28,900 send it.

31 00:01:28,900 --> 00:01:33,000 We have to have a disciplinary thing if he murder somebody

32

00:01:33,000 --> 00:01:34,860 or something, you know?

33

00:01:34,860 --> 00:01:35,770 So they paid it.

34

00:01:35,770 --> 00:01:38,470 And the Gestapo collected it.

35

00:01:38,470 --> 00:01:42,030 You had said that you were hoping even in '45

36

00:01:42,030 --> 00:01:43,670 that your father would come.

37 00:01:43,670 --> 00:01:44,430 Back, yeah.

38 00:01:44,430 --> 00:01:46,170 Did you go looking for him?

39 00:01:46,170 --> 00:01:49,080 No, we-- no, we didn't look for him.

40 00:01:49,080 --> 00:01:53,110 But my mother walked--

41 00:01:53,110 --> 00:01:55,740 my mother walked to Frankfurt Oder.

42 00:01:55,740 --> 00:01:59,370 She didn't dare to take Brigitte and me with her, because this

43 00:01:59,370 --> 00:02:01,680 was all occupied by Russians.

44 00:02:01,680 --> 00:02:05,010 And she walked because there was no train and nothing.

45 00:02:05,010 --> 00:02:08,340 And she walked to Frankfurt Oder and looked

46 00:02:08,340 --> 00:02:11,050 if our house was still there.

47 00:02:11,050 --> 00:02:14,136 That's about what, 60 miles or so?

48 00:02:14,136 --> 00:02:16,030 Uh-huh. 49 00:02:16,030 --> 00:02:22,650 And then she-- and then she went to whatever government

50 00:02:22,650 --> 00:02:25,010 there was in the city of Frankfurt Oder.

51 00:02:25,010 --> 00:02:28,100 And so they knew very well that she was there,

52 00:02:28,100 --> 00:02:30,680 that she was alive and she was there,

53 00:02:30,680 --> 00:02:32,240 and they had her address.

54 00:02:32,240 --> 00:02:36,920 And my mother for a while administered the house.

55 00:02:36,920 --> 00:02:37,790 She stayed in--

56 00:02:37,790 --> 00:02:38,660 No, no, no, no, no.

57 00:02:38,660 --> 00:02:40,190 She stayed in Berlin.

58 00:02:40,190 --> 00:02:44,300 Because then after '45, my mother got us an apartment.

59 00:02:44,300 --> 00:02:49,610 But she was the one who collected the rent for a while

60 00:02:49,610 --> 00:02:51,500 and was responsible for it.

61 00:02:51,500 --> 00:02:53,350 But then she gave it up.

62 00:02:53,350 --> 00:02:57,600 It was too difficult with the East and so on.

63 00:02:57,600 --> 00:03:00,830 But the city of Frankfurt Oder.

64 00:03:00,830 --> 00:03:05,090 After, you know-- this is called "Grundbuch" in German.

65 00:03:05,090 --> 00:03:09,500 It's a registry for all the properties.

66 00:03:09,500 --> 00:03:11,720 And there was at first Richard Guttstadt.

67 00:03:11,720 --> 00:03:12,920 Then it was crossed out.

68 00:03:12,920 --> 00:03:14,630 Then it was Richard Israel Guttstadt.

69 00:03:14,630 --> 00:03:16,340 That was crossed out.

70 00:03:16,340 --> 00:03:18,230 Then it was the Third Reich.

71 00:03:18,230 --> 00:03:20,930 And then this was crossed out in '45

72 00:03:20,930 --> 00:03:24,950 and it became poverty of the city of Frankfurt Oder.

73 00:03:24,950 --> 00:03:29,120 And the person who rented then our house

74 00:03:29,120 --> 00:03:32,180 was a physician from Silesia.

75 00:03:32,180 --> 00:03:35,150 And he had his practice on the first floor

76 00:03:35,150 --> 00:03:37,310 and lived on the second floor.

77 00:03:37,310 --> 00:03:39,350 And so it was in very good condition,

78 00:03:39,350 --> 00:03:43,610 because as a physician he also got electrical repairs and all

79 00:03:43,610 --> 00:03:44,550 of that.

80 00:03:44,550 --> 00:03:47,780 So it was maintained very well.

81 00:03:47,780 --> 00:03:51,860 And then he died in the house somewhere in the '60s.

82 00:03:51,860 --> 00:03:56,060 And then a family came who rented it,

83 00:03:56,060 --> 00:03:57,890 and they wanted to buy it. 00:03:57,890 --> 00:04:01,580 And they asked the city of Frankfurt Oder and said, look,

85 00:04:01,580 --> 00:04:03,350 it is Wessi property--

86 00:04:03,350 --> 00:04:06,830 You know, West German people who had escaped.

87 00:04:06,830 --> 00:04:09,820 They didn't know that it was Jewish property--

88 00:04:09,820 --> 00:04:11,720 they had escaped.

89 00:04:11,720 --> 00:04:14,490 And so we want to buy it.

90 00:04:14,490 --> 00:04:20,089 And the city of Frankfurt Oder said, sorry, it's not for sale.

91 00:04:20,089 --> 00:04:23,740 And it's not Wessi property.

92 00:04:23,740 --> 00:04:27,160 So that was our salvation.

93 00:04:27,160 --> 00:04:29,650 So my sister and I got the house back.

94 00:04:29,650 --> 00:04:30,470 You did?

95 00:04:30,470 --> 00:04:30,970 Mm-hmm.

96 00:04:30,970 --> 00:04:35,620 My sister got a lawyer through friends.

97 00:04:35,620 --> 00:04:36,940 And he only took 10--

98 00:04:36,940 --> 00:04:38,320 15%.

99 00:04:38,320 --> 00:04:42,520 Much less than the other outfits did.

100 00:04:42,520 --> 00:04:44,130 And--

101 00:04:44,130 --> 00:04:46,440 What year was that, that you got the house back?

102 00:04:46,440 --> 00:04:49,710 After the wall fell.

103 00:04:49,710 --> 00:04:50,370 You know.

104 00:04:50,370 --> 00:04:51,900 After the wall fell.

105 00:04:51,900 --> 00:04:57,000 Because-- and then he-- because then we had all the papers.

106 00:04:57,000 --> 00:05:00,870 My mother had always a little suitcase

107 00:05:00,870 --> 00:05:04,590 during the war, where the papers of the house were in,

108 00:05:04,590 --> 00:05:07,500 the death certificate of my father and all that.

109

00:05:07,500 --> 00:05:11,960 And we carried-- she carried that said wherever she went.

110

00:05:11,960 --> 00:05:16,790 And then when my mother died in '81, I had it.

111

00:05:16,790 --> 00:05:18,980 So we had all the papers.

112

00:05:18,980 --> 00:05:22,640 And then the city had my father's name and everything.

113

00:05:22,640 --> 00:05:28,930 So-- and we sold it to the people who want to buy it.

114

00:05:28,930 --> 00:05:35,410 But we didn't had all these difficulties, because you see--

115

00:05:35,410 --> 00:05:38,770 and for God's sake, Frankfurt was very destroyed, too.

116

00:05:38,770 --> 00:05:41,810 But the registry was intact.

117

00:05:41,810 --> 00:05:44,870 You know, because if this would all have been gone,

118

00:05:44,870 --> 00:05:47,390 then it would have been very difficult.

119

00:05:47,390 --> 00:05:48,950

But this was all there.

120 00:05:48,950 --> 00:05:51,480 And you know, you could trace it.

121 00:05:51,480 --> 00:05:55,040 And so my sister and I got the house back,

122 00:05:55,040 --> 00:05:56,930 and then we sold it.

123 00:05:56,930 --> 00:05:59,160 My sister wanted to move back.

124 00:05:59,160 --> 00:06:01,716 And I said no deal.

125 00:06:01,716 --> 00:06:04,350 [CHUCKLING]

126 00:06:04,350 --> 00:06:04,880 And so on.

127 00:06:04,880 --> 00:06:06,620 And so we didn't.

128 00:06:06,620 --> 00:06:08,360 But we got it back, yes.

129 00:06:08,360 --> 00:06:12,150 And we sold it to the people who had it.

130 00:06:12,150 --> 00:06:14,990 So my mother, really, went she went in '45

131 00:06:14,990 --> 00:06:17,480 and she walked to Frankfurt Oder.

00:06:17,480 --> 00:06:20,450 She wanted to make sure that the house was still there,

133

00:06:20,450 --> 00:06:24,810 and she wanted to make sure that they know where she is.

134

00:06:24,810 --> 00:06:29,470 So if Vati would come, he would find us.

135

00:06:29,470 --> 00:06:33,450 So when did you finally realize that he was not

136

00:06:33,450 --> 00:06:35,680 going to come back?

137

00:06:35,680 --> 00:06:36,370 Pretty soon.

138

00:06:36,370 --> 00:06:39,205 Pretty soon.

139

00:06:39,205 --> 00:06:43,624 Pretty soon, pretty soon.

140

00:06:43,624 --> 00:06:44,610 Yeah.

141

00:06:44,610 --> 00:06:46,600 You stayed in Berlin?

142

00:06:46,600 --> 00:06:47,100 Yes.

143

00:06:47,100 --> 00:06:48,700 With your sister and your mother.

144

00:06:48,700 --> 00:06:49,210 Yes.

145

00:06:49,210 --> 00:06:52,750 And what did you do then, when the war was over?

146

00:06:52,750 --> 00:06:54,640 When the war was over, I tried to get

147

00:06:54,640 --> 00:06:57,860 my Abiturium, which was awful.

148

00:06:57,860 --> 00:07:01,780 And I went to a school which was--

149

00:07:01,780 --> 00:07:05,320 we were all Jewish or half-Jewish kids who

150

00:07:05,320 --> 00:07:08,020 wanted to finish high school.

151

00:07:08,020 --> 00:07:13,100 And anytime there was exam, we all blanked out.

152

00:07:13,100 --> 00:07:14,990 It was awful.

153

00:07:14,990 --> 00:07:16,730 We just couldn't function.

154

00:07:16,730 --> 00:07:21,000 And nobody ever thought that we need any help.

155

00:07:21,000 --> 00:07:23,690 One person one time said to me, you

00:07:23,690 --> 00:07:27,530 know, you are like somebody who walks along a corridor

157

00:07:27,530 --> 00:07:32,150 and sees an open door and runs in, in this open door and says,

158

00:07:32,150 --> 00:07:32,870 oh, no.

159

00:07:32,870 --> 00:07:34,160 I don't want to be here.

160

00:07:34,160 --> 00:07:35,540 And then she keeps on running.

161

00:07:35,540 --> 00:07:42,220 Next open door-- and you know, but it never occurred to them

162

00:07:42,220 --> 00:07:43,910 that I really--number one, I didn't

163

00:07:43,910 --> 00:07:45,290 know what I wanted to do.

164

00:07:45,290 --> 00:07:47,180 I never knew what--

165

00:07:47,180 --> 00:07:52,520 You know, I mean, it was OK, though it was over.

166

00:07:52,520 --> 00:07:54,070 They said, OK, fine, it's over.

167

00:07:54,070 --> 00:07:56,990 Now you start your life again.

168

00:07:56,990 --> 00:07:57,790 But how?

169

00:07:57,790 --> 00:08:00,240 How?

170

00:08:00,240 --> 00:08:01,080

You know?

171

00:08:01,080 --> 00:08:02,280

So--

172

 $00:08:02,280 \longrightarrow 00:08:05,760$

Did you talk about

your experiences

173

00:08:05,760 --> 00:08:07,260

with the other students?

174

00:08:07,260 --> 00:08:08,240

No, no.

175

00:08:08,240 --> 00:08:09,460

Did you all exchange?

176

00:08:09,460 --> 00:08:11,675

No, nobody of us talked.

177

00:08:11,675 --> 00:08:12,300

We didn't talk.

178

 $00:08:12,300 \longrightarrow 00:08:13,092$

Between each other?

179

00:08:13,092 --> 00:08:15,770

No, we didn't talk.

180

00:08:15,770 --> 00:08:17,477

We didn't talk.

181

00:08:17,477 --> 00:08:18,560

Because you were all numb.

182

00:08:18,560 --> 00:08:20,570

We were all numb.

183

 $00:08:20,570 \longrightarrow 00:08:21,500$

Numb, yeah.

184

 $00:08:21,500 \longrightarrow 00:08:24,590$

I mean, sometimes someone said something, and you realized,

185

00:08:24,590 --> 00:08:27,990

you know, they were in hiding and so on.

186

00:08:27.990 --> 00:08:34.110

Most of them were kids who

had been in hiding, and so on.

187

 $00:08:34,110 \longrightarrow 00:08:39,110$

But no, we just-- we just

blanked out, you know?

188

 $00:08:39,110 \longrightarrow 00:08:41,179$

My sister was a

little bit more lucky.

189

00:08:41,179 --> 00:08:45,110

She had her abiturium, so she

could go to the university.

190

 $00:08:45,110 \longrightarrow 00:08:47,620$

191

00:08:47,620 --> 00:08:53,490

But I had-- it was very

difficult to get back

 $00:08:53,490 \longrightarrow 00:08:55,320$

to a normal life.

193

00:08:55,320 --> 00:08:57,390 And it kept on--

194

00:08:57,390 --> 00:09:04,460 you know-- and you felt somewhere-- then

195

00:09:04,460 --> 00:09:07,190 you felt maybe more an outcast than before.

196

00:09:07,190 --> 00:09:10,700 Because before you were so busy trying to survive all that,

197

00:09:10,700 --> 00:09:13,770 that you couldn't even think about anything.

198

00:09:13,770 --> 00:09:18,530 And then suddenly life was supposed

199

00:09:18,530 --> 00:09:20,630 to be more normal again.

200

00:09:20,630 --> 00:09:23,690 And as I said, my mother got us an apartment.

201

00:09:23,690 --> 00:09:26,240

202

00:09:26,240 --> 00:09:28,280 But then you were in danger again.

203

00:09:28,280 --> 00:09:33,030 You know, because I couldn't-my sister registered with

204

00:09:33,030 --> 00:09:34,370 the IRO.

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media. It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

205 00:09:34,370 --> 00:09:38,240 You know, with the International Relief Organization.

206 00:09:38,240 --> 00:09:41,240 And she came over with a coal boat.

207 00:09:41,240 --> 00:09:43,580 You know, one of those boats which brought coal

208 00:09:43,580 --> 00:09:45,750 over and went back empty.

209 00:09:45,750 --> 00:09:51,170 But I was-- she then had a temporary visa for West Berlin.

210 00:09:51,170 --> 00:09:56,180 Because in '48, they opened the Free University in West Berlin.

211 00:09:56,180 --> 00:09:57,740 And my sister was in the--

212 00:09:57,740 --> 00:10:00,620 East Germany had only one university

213 00:10:00,620 --> 00:10:03,440 in Berlin, the Humboldt University,

214 00:10:03,440 --> 00:10:05,390 which was in East Berlin.

215 00:10:05,390 --> 00:10:08,240 And so she could go to West Berlin. 00:10:08,240 --> 00:10:10,880 And she got a temporary visa.

217

00:10:10,880 --> 00:10:14,450 And on this she registered and could get out.

218

00:10:14,450 --> 00:10:16,430 But I was in East Berlin.

219

00:10:16,430 --> 00:10:19,250 And any time you registered with the IRO

220

00:10:19,250 --> 00:10:22,460 and were in East Berlin, the Russians

221

00:10:22,460 --> 00:10:26,760 would arrest you as a spy.

222

00:10:26,760 --> 00:10:27,990 So you couldn't do that.

223

00:10:27,990 --> 00:10:30,660

224

00:10:30,660 --> 00:10:31,765 So--

225

00:10:31,765 --> 00:10:32,890 Let's go back a little bit.

226

00:10:32,890 --> 00:10:36,670 When you the coal boat, the boat going from?

227

00:10:36,670 --> 00:10:39,400 Oh, there were the boats after the war,

228

00:10:39,400 --> 00:10:40,460

which came from America.

229

00:10:40,460 --> 00:10:42,610 They had coal in and so on.

230

00:10:42,610 --> 00:10:46,180 They brought it to West Germany for these people.

231

00:10:46,180 --> 00:10:48,700 I guess it was part of the Marshall Plan.

232

00:10:48,700 --> 00:10:50,680 And then they went empty back, and they

233

00:10:50,680 --> 00:10:52,780 had refugees on going back.

234

00:10:52,780 --> 00:10:53,340 I see.

235

00:10:53,340 --> 00:10:53,840 I see.

236

00:10:53,840 --> 00:10:55,540 So she went--

237

00:10:55,540 --> 00:10:59,800 She went at first to the Freie University, the Free University

238

00:10:59,800 --> 00:11:01,120 in West Berlin.

230

00:11:01,120 --> 00:11:02,290 Yeah.

240

00:11:02,290 --> 00:11:05,420

And she studied there, and then came--

00:11:05,420 --> 00:11:07,150 her major was history.

242

00:11:07,150 --> 00:11:10,450 And there came a professor from the United States,

243

00:11:10,450 --> 00:11:13,360 who was a German Jewish immigrant originally.

244

00:11:13,360 --> 00:11:16,270 But he was, in the meantime, an American citizen

245

00:11:16,270 --> 00:11:18,220 and a professor of history.

246

00:11:18,220 --> 00:11:19,670 And he talked to my sister.

247

00:11:19,670 --> 00:11:22,640 And he said, I get you got a scholarship to--

248

00:11:22,640 --> 00:11:24,040 An American college.

249

00:11:24,040 --> 00:11:25,600 Yeah, so he did.

250

00:11:25,600 --> 00:11:27,700 So she went to Sweet Briar.

251

00:11:27,700 --> 00:11:29,620 So she was able to get out.

252

00:11:29,620 --> 00:11:30,120 Mm-hmm.

253

00:11:30,120 --> 00:11:31,537 And she came to the United States.

254

00:11:31,537 --> 00:11:32,980 And she had no sponsor.

255

00:11:32,980 --> 00:11:35,515 My sister had a sponsor, the world [? churches ?]

256

00:11:35,515 --> 00:11:37,710 were her sponsor.

257

00:11:37,710 --> 00:11:42,630 So IRO got her a sponsor, which was very impersonal.

258

00:11:42,630 --> 00:11:44,230 And this was in '48?

259

00:11:44,230 --> 00:11:47,110 No, my sister-- no.

260

00:11:47,110 --> 00:11:49,420 That was for between--

261

00:11:49,420 --> 00:11:52,870 really, between '49 and '50.

262

00:11:52,870 --> 00:11:53,870 That's all.

263

00:11:53,870 --> 00:11:54,520 Yeah.

264

00:11:54,520 --> 00:11:56,170 And you said goodbye.

265

00:11:56,170 --> 00:11:57,310

Oh, yeah.

00:11:57,310 --> 00:11:59,130 I said goodbye to the--

267

00:11:59,130 --> 00:12:03,260 when my Jewish relatives went to the concentration camp,

268

00:12:03,260 --> 00:12:05,140 I went and said goodbye.

269

00:12:05,140 --> 00:12:06,670 We always knew.

270

00:12:06,670 --> 00:12:08,620 I had all my aunts.

271

00:12:08,620 --> 00:12:11,620 I went-- they had the papers.

272

00:12:11,620 --> 00:12:13,680 I know where they're going, and I went there

273

00:12:13,680 --> 00:12:14,970 and I said goodbye.

274

00:12:14,970 --> 00:12:17,710 And I always knew I wouldn't see them again.

275

00:12:17,710 --> 00:12:21,240 How do you say goodbye in such a situation?

276

00:12:21,240 --> 00:12:24,830 It was very-- it was very difficult, because one

277

00:12:24,830 --> 00:12:28,190 of my aunts said to me, "you know,

00:12:28,190 --> 00:12:32,180 I'm going to go to the concentration camp

279

00:12:32,180 --> 00:12:33,980 because I'm Jewish.

280

00:12:33,980 --> 00:12:36,080 I don't know why I go there.

281

00:12:36,080 --> 00:12:38,540 Because I don't believe in anything.

282

00:12:38,540 --> 00:12:41,630 I never go to the synagogue or anything.

283

00:12:41,630 --> 00:12:43,250 But I'm Jewish."

284

00:12:43,250 --> 00:12:46,670 And I felt so bad for her.

285

00:12:46,670 --> 00:12:50,120 Because I thought, if she would believe in it--

286

00:12:50,120 --> 00:12:52,880 and during the camps, the Orthodox Jews

287

00:12:52,880 --> 00:12:55,750 were off the best, because they had a faith

288

00:12:55,750 --> 00:12:57,590 to set against that horror.

289

00:12:57,590 --> 00:13:02,060

But people like her, they died off very fast, 290 00:13:02,060 --> 00:13:05,640 because they had nothing to set against it.

291

00:13:05,640 --> 00:13:10,060 And I said to so many of them, we said goodbye.

292

00:13:10,060 --> 00:13:11,880 You always knew when they went--

293

00:13:11,880 --> 00:13:14,830 we had a young--

294

00:13:14,830 --> 00:13:17,520 one of the cousins, and they had--

295

00:13:17,520 --> 00:13:19,166 and they had gotten the baby--

296

00:13:19,166 --> 00:13:20,815 [PHONE RINGING]

297

00:13:20,815 --> 00:13:26,520

298

00:13:26,520 --> 00:13:29,730 I can take it off the hook.

299

00:13:29,730 --> 00:13:32,050 They were-- you know, they all knew that they

300

00:13:32,050 --> 00:13:34,650 go to the concentration camp.

301

00:13:34,650 --> 00:13:44,410 But they couldn't-- and many of my relatives were really 302 00:13:44,410 --> 00:13:45,720 in Posen.

303

00:13:45,720 --> 00:13:50,730 You know, Poland was partly German, partly Austrian,

304

00:13:50,730 --> 00:13:51,965 and partly Hungary--

305

00:13:51,965 --> 00:13:53,130 partly Russian.

306

00:13:53,130 --> 00:13:56,340 And after the war, Poland was united again.

307

00:13:56,340 --> 00:13:59,070 And my relatives lived in the German-- many of them

308

00:13:59,070 --> 00:14:02,160 in German part, which was then Poland.

309

00:14:02,160 --> 00:14:04,470 After World War I, they could either

310

00:14:04,470 --> 00:14:09,300 opt for Poland or for Germany, and they opted for Germany.

311

00:14:09,300 --> 00:14:10,660 And then they were shipped back.

312

00:14:10,660 --> 00:14:15,010

313

00:14:15,010 --> 00:14:18,910

But they-- somewhere we all knew that--

314 00:14:18,910 --> 00:14:20,740 and they knew about--

315 00:14:20,740 --> 00:14:23,590 they didn't think that they're going to leave

316 00:14:23,590 --> 00:14:25,510 a camp or anything like that.

317 00:14:25,510 --> 00:14:27,130 They all knew that--

318 00:14:27,130 --> 00:14:31,290 at least my relatives all knew that was the end.

319 00:14:31,290 --> 00:14:34,840 Yeah, and that young family, you know, who had that little boy,

320 00:14:34,840 --> 00:14:39,700 Berl, and he was supposed to be born in the United States,

321 00:14:39,700 --> 00:14:41,740 except they didn't get in.

322 00:14:41,740 --> 00:14:44,230 So he went.

323 00:14:44,230 --> 00:14:48,460 You said that you had known even in '42 about the camps.

324 00:14:48,460 --> 00:14:50,000 Sure.

325 00:14:50,000 --> 00:14:55,610 When did you learn the real extent of the camps? 326 00:14:55,610 --> 00:14:59,030 Oh, naja, this, I guess we knew about the camp.

327

00:14:59,030 --> 00:15:02,630 My father knew about that camp, and he told us about it.

328

00:15:02,630 --> 00:15:12,360 And I had-- but the extent of the--

329

00:15:12,360 --> 00:15:18,100 I guess we only learned, really, after the war how ma--

330

00:15:18,100 --> 00:15:20,040 but we knew that they had chambers,

331

00:15:20,040 --> 00:15:23,100 that they died and so on.

332

00:15:23,100 --> 00:15:33,390 And we knew that people didn't had a chance

333

00:15:33,390 --> 00:15:37,440 to come back, except very few.

334

00:15:37,440 --> 00:15:40,360 Some way through the grapevines, you know?

335

00:15:40,360 --> 00:15:46,030 There were always some people who got news out of it.

336

00:15:46,030 --> 00:15:50,080 You know, like this one train which went into Auschwitz.

00:15:55,120 --> 00:15:58,270 One time the Swedish Red Cross came in,

339

00:15:58,270 --> 00:16:04,780 and they said they put linen on the beds and everything,

340

00:16:04,780 --> 00:16:07,030 in order to make it look good.

341

00:16:07,030 --> 00:16:11,330 And then they said there will be a train going to Switzerland

342

00:16:11,330 --> 00:16:13,750 the next morning, and hardly anybody

343

00:16:13,750 --> 00:16:16,660 went because nobody believed it.

344

00:16:16,660 --> 00:16:18,070 But one of the German--

345

00:16:18,070 --> 00:16:21,140 Frankfurt Oder Jews did.

346

00:16:21,140 --> 00:16:21,812 And it went.

347

00:16:21,812 --> 00:16:24,704

348

00:16:24,704 --> 00:16:30,620 The Germans, in some ways, sometimes you had a chance.

00:16:30,620 --> 00:16:34,870

350

00:16:34,870 --> 00:16:38,080 And that train went almost empty.

351

00:16:38,080 --> 00:16:39,700 Because people were afraid.

352

00:16:39,700 --> 00:16:40,990 They said that's a trap.

353

00:16:40,990 --> 00:16:44,430

354

00:16:44,430 --> 00:16:47,870 But then these people talked.

355

00:16:47,870 --> 00:16:49,950 So you heard things.

356

00:16:49,950 --> 00:16:51,800 And so you knew.

357

00:16:51,800 --> 00:16:54,920 I mean, we didn't know how many camps were there.

358

00:16:54,920 --> 00:16:59,930 I mean, the number of camps, this we didn't know.

359

00:16:59,930 --> 00:17:10,140 And we didn't know the extent of how many people really were--

360

00:17:10,140 --> 00:17:15,810 I mean, how really is the capacity was of this.

361

00:17:15,810 --> 00:17:18,780

But you know, there is a place where--

362

00:17:18,780 --> 00:17:22,700 there were certain places already within in Germany,

363

00:17:22,700 --> 00:17:24,780 where they tried out some of these things

364

00:17:24,780 --> 00:17:27,663 on the mentally retarded.

365

00:17:27,663 --> 00:17:29,110 Right.

366

00:17:29,110 --> 00:17:32,160 And so then the medical profession somewhere

367

00:17:32,160 --> 00:17:35,330 heard about it and so on.

368

00:17:35,330 --> 00:17:39,720 So I think something to that extent,

369

00:17:39,720 --> 00:17:43,650 it was very difficult to keep it completely secret.

370

00:17:43,650 --> 00:17:46,650 I never quite understand how people can

371

00:17:46,650 --> 00:17:49,770 say they never knew about it.

372

00:17:49,770 --> 00:17:52,620

I mean, didn't they see the carts coming in?

00:17:52,620 --> 00:17:57,060 And didn't they smell all this and so on?

374

00:17:57,060 --> 00:18:02,820 But the trouble is that Hitler got in power

375

00:18:02,820 --> 00:18:05,250 when the Depression was.

376

00:18:05,250 --> 00:18:08,400 And people were out of work, and he promised them work,

377

00:18:08,400 --> 00:18:10,870 and he built factory, prepared for the war.

378

00:18:10,870 --> 00:18:15,150 And he built the Autobahn and all this, and people had money.

379

00:18:15,150 --> 00:18:16,770 Suddenly had money.

380

00:18:16,770 --> 00:18:20,790 And by the time they realized politically wasn't everything

381

00:18:20,790 --> 00:18:23,130 that great, they were trapped.

382

00:18:23,130 --> 00:18:28,360 That's one reason I'm some way afraid of this country here.

383

00:18:28,360 --> 00:18:29,580 That's the way how it goes.

384

00:18:29,580 --> 00:18:34,420 How bad can it get so many people to come to these things.

385

00:18:34,420 --> 00:18:37,890 But so it was a bad time.

386

00:18:37,890 --> 00:18:41,940 And then there was so many people who

387

00:18:41,940 --> 00:18:45,090 really didn't know any Jews.

388

00:18:45,090 --> 00:18:51,360 So Hitler, when they talked about them,

389

00:18:51,360 --> 00:18:53,130 some people will believe anything which

390

00:18:53,130 --> 00:18:54,300 is written black and white.

391

00:18:54,300 --> 00:19:00,290

392

00:19:00,290 --> 00:19:10,070 So it's very difficult. And I mean, there was a curfew

393

00:19:10,070 --> 00:19:14,330 after the 20th of July.

394

00:19:14,330 --> 00:19:17,050 You know, when they tried to kill Hitler, Stauffenberg

395

00:19:17,050 --> 00:19:18,980 and these people.

396

00:19:18,980 --> 00:19:21,110

There was a curfew.

397 00:19:21,110 --> 00:19:24,780 You know, you could see there were before--

398

00:19:24,780 --> 00:19:29,270 when the Jews, still before they were all more or less disposed

399

00:19:29,270 --> 00:19:36,040 of, there were signs on parks, "No Jews allowed" and so on.

400

00:19:36,040 --> 00:19:38,120 So it was very obvious.

401

00:19:38,120 --> 00:19:39,830 And people can read.

402

00:19:39,830 --> 00:19:41,630 All the Germans could read.

403

00:19:41,630 --> 00:19:45,650 There were no people who couldn't read.

404

00:19:45,650 --> 00:19:52,840 But I guess many of themand some of the people

405

00:19:52,840 --> 00:19:55,370 who were very daring, and nothing happened to them.

406

00:19:55,370 --> 00:19:57,960 We had a high school teacher who taught

407

00:19:57,960 --> 00:20:00,750 us maths and physics and so on.

408

00:20:00,750 --> 00:20:04,260

And he was one of these golden Partei members.

409 00:20:04,260 --> 00:20:07,100 You know, people who joined before '33.

410 00:20:07,100 --> 00:20:10,440 They had a golden rim around their party member--

411 00:20:10,440 --> 00:20:13,170 party thing.

412 00:20:13,170 --> 00:20:19,600 And they [INAUDIBLE] and so on, and were enthusiastic about it.

413 00:20:19,600 --> 00:20:27,730 And then he sent in '38 or '39 or something around there,

414 00:20:27,730 --> 00:20:30,190 he sent his membership back.

415 00:20:30,190 --> 00:20:34,790 And he said, that's not the party I joined.

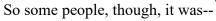
416 00:20:34,790 --> 00:20:37,070 He always kept on teaching.

417 00:20:37,070 --> 00:20:38,300 Nothing happened to him.

418 00:20:38,300 --> 00:20:39,500 Absolutely nothing.

419 00:20:39,500 --> 00:20:44,340

420 00:20:44,340 --> 00:20:48,210



00:20:48,210 --> 00:20:52,700 there were always some people had a loophole or something,

422

00:20:52,700 --> 00:20:55,460 they got through.

423

00:20:55,460 --> 00:20:57,600 The majority of my high school teachers

424

00:20:57,600 --> 00:20:58,680 were not party members.

425

00:20:58,680 --> 00:21:03,100

426

00:21:03,100 --> 00:21:05,710 But I guess they didn't have enough teachers there

427

00:21:05,710 --> 00:21:06,840 to keep them.

428

00:21:06,840 --> 00:21:08,160 [INAUDIBLE]

429

00:21:08,160 --> 00:21:08,660 Yeah.

430

00:21:08,660 --> 00:21:14,620

431

00:21:14,620 --> 00:21:17,460 When they kicked me out of school

432

00:21:17,460 --> 00:21:21,090 and I was walking the street in Frankfurt Oder, one

433 00:21:21,090 --> 00:21:25,830 of my former classmates, which was really 100--

434 00:21:25,830 --> 00:21:29,340 300% Nazi, and so was her whole family,

435 00:21:29,340 --> 00:21:32,160 she stopped me in the street.

436 00:21:32,160 --> 00:21:36,998 And she said, I'm sorry that they kicked you out.

437 00:21:36,998 --> 00:21:38,140 I said, oh.

438 00:21:38,140 --> 00:21:42,070

439 00:21:42,070 --> 00:21:45,360 I guess for her, I was just another classmate.

440 00:21:45,360 --> 00:21:48,360

441 00:21:48,360 --> 00:21:53,180 What's it like to feel to be an outcast?

442 00:21:53,180 --> 00:21:54,010 It feels awful.

443 00:21:54,010 --> 00:21:55,070 When I was standing--

444 00:21:55,070 --> 00:21:59,090 I remember that one time when Hitler's birthday was,

445

00:21:59,090 --> 00:22:04,000 and everybody came in uniform, Hitler Youth uniform--

446

00:22:04,000 --> 00:22:05,240 everybody.

447

00:22:05,240 --> 00:22:07,190 So being a member of the Hitler Youth,

448

00:22:07,190 --> 00:22:09,650 that didn't really mean that you were a Nazi.

449

00:22:09,650 --> 00:22:11,020 They were all members.

450

00:22:11,020 --> 00:22:17,580 And I was there private.

451

00:22:17,580 --> 00:22:20,180 It's an awful feeling.

452

00:22:20,180 --> 00:22:21,730 I always thought, you know, I would

453

00:22:21,730 --> 00:22:25,490 feel like I'm the only Black in a white school.

454

00:22:25,490 --> 00:22:28,300

455

00:22:28,300 --> 00:22:34,850 And nobody harassed me or anything, but I came home.

456

00:22:34,850 --> 00:22:38,810 And I said Mommy, next

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time I'm not going.

457 00:22:38,810 --> 00:22:41,950 So then I started, when anything like this was going on,

458 00:22:41,950 --> 00:22:44,138 I didn't go.

459 00:22:44,138 --> 00:22:45,055 Did you feel inferior?

460 00:22:45,055 --> 00:22:49,100

461 00:22:49,100 --> 00:22:51,080 Or just angry?

462 00:22:51,080 --> 00:22:55,180 I was afraid more than I was feeling inferior.

463 00:22:55,180 --> 00:22:58,250

464 00:22:58,250 --> 00:23:03,420 Maybe-- a certain extent, yes.

465 00:23:03,420 --> 00:23:06,380 Because when I went to--

466 00:23:06,380 --> 00:23:09,360 when I went to physical therapy school, you know,

467 00:23:09,360 --> 00:23:12,300 before I immigrate to the United States, I became--

468 00:23:12,300 --> 00:23:14,640 I went to the University of Frankfurt 469 00:23:14,640 --> 00:23:16,860 and became a physical therapist.

470 00:23:16,860 --> 00:23:19,240 And one of the things I said to myself,

471 00:23:19,240 --> 00:23:24,540 I want that the people need me, that they want me.

472 00:23:24,540 --> 00:23:28,530 Because before nobody needed me, nobody wanted me.

473 00:23:28,530 --> 00:23:31,200 I also went then back to the university,

474 00:23:31,200 --> 00:23:35,220 to American U and Catholic U, and I got two master's degrees,

475 00:23:35,220 --> 00:23:38,760 and I was a straight A student, and I got a summa cum

476 00:23:38,760 --> 00:23:40,710 laude and so on.

477 00:23:40,710 --> 00:23:43,710 And people say, oh, you were so ambitious.

478 00:23:43,710 --> 00:23:48,930 I said, no, but I had to prove to myself I can do it.

479 00:23:48,930 --> 00:23:50,360 That you're not an outcast.

480

00:23:50,360 --> 00:23:52,250 Yeah, that I can do it.

481

00:23:52,250 --> 00:23:54,150

You know?

482

00:23:54,150 --> 00:23:58,980 So in some ways, this all stuck to me all the time, yes.

483

00:23:58,980 --> 00:24:01,640

Yeah.

484

00:24:01,640 --> 00:24:03,760

Let's get back just a

little bit to the post-war.

485

00:24:03,760 --> 00:24:06,730

So your sister left.

486

 $00:24:06,730 \longrightarrow 00:24:12,060$

You stayed with your

mother in Berlin.

487

00:24:12,060 --> 00:24:14,686

Naja, I went illegally

to West Germany.

488

00:24:14,686 --> 00:24:15,440

Yeah.

489

 $00:24:15,440 \longrightarrow 00:24:16,230$

Illegally?

490

00:24:16,230 --> 00:24:16,730

Oh, yeah.

491

00:24:16,730 --> 00:24:17,300

Sure.

492

00:24:17,300 --> 00:24:18,800

I danced.

493 00:24:18,800 --> 00:24:22,280 I took-- I went to ballet school in Berlin.

494 00:24:22,280 --> 00:24:23,290 This was my big--

495 00:24:23,290 --> 00:24:25,910 I danced.

496 00:24:25,910 --> 00:24:29,180 I danced when I was in Frankfurt Oder,

497 00:24:29,180 --> 00:24:32,780 and I was on the stage at the Stadttheater.

498 00:24:32,780 --> 00:24:34,530 And then they kicked me-- they told me

499 00:24:34,530 --> 00:24:35,660 you couldn't come anymore.

500 00:24:35,660 --> 00:24:38,590 You are half-Jewish.

501 00:24:38,590 --> 00:24:40,540 And that was very hard.

502 00:24:40,540 --> 00:24:42,940 That was more difficult for me, really,

503 00:24:42,940 --> 00:24:44,700 than to be kicked out of school.

504 00:24:44,700 --> 00:24:47,430 Because I love dancing. 505 00:24:47,430 --> 00:24:51,180 So then in '45, I went back to ballet school,

506 00:24:51,180 --> 00:24:54,760 and I wanted to become a professional dancer.

507 00:24:54,760 --> 00:24:59,640 And so I joined a group, and we traveled--

508 00:24:59,640 --> 00:25:02,790 and this was-- you know, at this point there was no wall,

509 00:25:02,790 --> 00:25:05,970 so you could go very easy from East Berlin to West Berlin

510 00:25:05,970 --> 00:25:07,710 and so on.

511 00:25:07,710 --> 00:25:11,130 And so then we went to West Germany.

512 00:25:11,130 --> 00:25:13,890 And every time I had to go to the police station

513 00:25:13,890 --> 00:25:16,710 and they put on that I was illegally there.

514 00:25:16,710 --> 00:25:20,260

515 00:25:20,260 --> 00:25:25,410 So but there was in Hamburg a woman who took pity on me, 00:25:25,410 --> 00:25:29,790 and she was in this office where they give you housing.

517 00:25:29,790 --> 00:25:32,110 Because you know, the cities were destroyed,

518 00:25:32,110 --> 00:25:36,270 so first you had to wait until you got something.

519 00:25:36,270 --> 00:25:37,750 And so she said, all right.

520 00:25:37,750 --> 00:25:39,280 She said, keep in touch.

521 00:25:39,280 --> 00:25:41,460 Send me sometimes a postcard.

522 00:25:41,460 --> 00:25:43,170 So I sent her a postcard.

523 00:25:43,170 --> 00:25:44,940 And one time I was in Goettingen, which

524 00:25:44,940 --> 00:25:46,920 isn't too far from Hamburg.

525 00:25:46,920 --> 00:25:52,810 And I got a postcard, "come to Hamburg as soon as you can."

526 00:25:52,810 --> 00:25:53,980 I said OK.

527 00:25:53,980 --> 00:25:56,290 So I took the train and went to Hamburg. 00:25:56,290 --> 00:25:57,450 I only went in--

529

00:25:57,450 --> 00:26:00,400 and you were so trained in those things, you didn't say "boo."

530

00:26:00,400 --> 00:26:02,860 And I only said, "hello."

531

00:26:02,860 --> 00:26:04,390 And she said, oh, I'm so glad you

532

00:26:04,390 --> 00:26:07,570 came, because it's no good to walk around

533

00:26:07,570 --> 00:26:11,990 without the identification card.

534

00:26:11,990 --> 00:26:14,200 I said, mm-hmm.

535

00:26:14,200 --> 00:26:16,140 And then she gave me a form, and she

536

00:26:16,140 --> 00:26:19,695 knew where I were, you know that I had this East

537

00:26:19,695 --> 00:26:21,170 German card in my pocket.

538

00:26:21,170 --> 00:26:25,530 And in this format, that I lost my identification card.

539

00:26:25,530 --> 00:26:28,850 It was not written if

it was East or West.

540

00:26:28,850 --> 00:26:30,190 So I got the best German card.

541

00:26:30,190 --> 00:26:33,210

542

00:26:33,210 --> 00:26:38,980 And on this, then, I could register to immigrate.

543

00:26:38,980 --> 00:26:43,300 Because then I was legally in West Germany.

544

00:26:43,300 --> 00:26:46,270 I was always a little bit of afraid then when I--

545

00:26:46,270 --> 00:26:49,300 and one of my uncles in New York sponsored me.

546

00:26:49,300 --> 00:26:53,650 But I was a little bit afraid when I then

547

00:26:53,650 --> 00:26:57,430 registered, when the Americans would find out

548

00:26:57,430 --> 00:27:03,580 that I'm not really, really in West Germany.

549

00:27:03,580 --> 00:27:06,340 Or they didn't care, whatever.

550

00:27:06,340 --> 00:27:11,380 But then, you see, I was legally in West Germany.

55

00:27:11,380 --> 00:27:14,320

And then my sister was already here,

552

00:27:14,320 --> 00:27:18,190 and she had switched from history to sociology.

553

00:27:18,190 --> 00:27:22,180 So she became a psychotherapist.

554

00:27:22,180 --> 00:27:24,220 And she said, you know you always

555

00:27:24,220 --> 00:27:26,650 liked dancing and gymnastics.

556

00:27:26,650 --> 00:27:29,290 Why don't you become a physical therapist?

557

00:27:29,290 --> 00:27:32,170 That's very much needed in the United States.

558

00:27:32,170 --> 00:27:37,180 And you see we got restitution from the government.

559

00:27:37,180 --> 00:27:39,130 And so I did.

560

00:27:39,130 --> 00:27:41,380 And then so I did, and that's the reason

561

00:27:41,380 --> 00:27:43,840 I didn't come until '56.

562

00:27:43,840 --> 00:27:47,170

Because I went there first and got my degree.

563 00:27:47,170 --> 00:27:49,330 And then I worked one year, because it

564 00:27:49,330 --> 00:27:52,138 takes some time before you get all the immigration going.

565 00:27:52,138 --> 00:27:53,680 And you were living with your mother?

566 00:27:53,680 --> 00:27:54,220 No, no, no.

567 00:27:54,220 --> 00:27:56,670 I was living in Frankfurt Main.

568 00:27:56,670 --> 00:27:58,150 I was in West Germany.

569 00:27:58,150 --> 00:27:59,470 My mother was in Berlin.

570 00:27:59,470 --> 00:28:00,512 And she stayed in Berlin.

571 00:28:00,512 --> 00:28:02,980 And she was still in East Berlin at first.

572 00:28:02,980 --> 00:28:07,340 And then she got a card from the post office.

573 00:28:07,340 --> 00:28:07,840 Oh, no.

574 00:28:07,840 --> 00:28:12,460 She was already then also in West Berlin without me. 575

00:28:12,460 --> 00:28:13,780 She left that apartment.

576

00:28:13,780 --> 00:28:16,000 Just locked it up and was gone.

577

00:28:16,000 --> 00:28:21,460 And then she got a card, which said that she and I should

578

00:28:21,460 --> 00:28:22,860 come to the post office.

579

00:28:22,860 --> 00:28:24,820 There is a letter which is registered.

580

00:28:24,820 --> 00:28:26,800 We should pick it up.

581

00:28:26,800 --> 00:28:29,440 We never went there.

582

00:28:29,440 --> 00:28:34,492 Because the East Germans were as bad as the Gestapo.

583

00:28:34,492 --> 00:28:38,030 And so we never went there.

584

00:28:38,030 --> 00:28:40,160 But then my mother was in West Berlin,

585

00:28:40,160 --> 00:28:44,850 and she got herself an apartment there.

586

00:28:44,850 --> 00:28:47,870 And then when the wall came, then

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587 00:28:47,870 --> 00:28:50,250 she went to Hanover, because she was afraid

588

00:28:50,250 --> 00:28:55,730 that they would cut us off, cut her off from my sister and me.

589

00:28:55,730 --> 00:28:58,030 And then how did you come to the United States?

590

00:28:58,030 --> 00:29:00,890 Naja, then I've had the physical therapy degree.

591

00:29:00,890 --> 00:29:02,500 And you worked for the year.

592

00:29:02,500 --> 00:29:04,450 And I worked there, and then I registered.

593

00:29:04,450 --> 00:29:06,860 You know, I put in an application.

594

00:29:06,860 --> 00:29:11,200 And one of the cousins of my father, Uncle Hans,

595

00:29:11,200 --> 00:29:12,185 he sponsored me.

596

00:29:12,185 --> 00:29:13,210 He sponsored you.

597

00:29:13,210 --> 00:29:15,220 Because my sister couldn't sponsor me,

598

00:29:15,220 --> 00:29:18,110

because she was just in graduate school then.

599 00:29:18,110 --> 00:29:19,810 And so she didn't have enough money.

600 00:29:19,810 --> 00:29:25,660 You had to put down \$5,000 in order to--

601 00:29:25,660 --> 00:29:31,210 so Uncle Hans sponsored me, and then I came over here.

602 00:29:31,210 --> 00:29:34,830 And then I stayed in Alexandria with my sister here.

603 00:29:34,830 --> 00:29:37,360 And what did-- and your mother stayed back in--

604 00:29:37,360 --> 00:29:39,850 She stayed back in Frank--

605 00:29:39,850 --> 00:29:41,500 in Germany.

606 00:29:41,500 --> 00:29:44,150 She got the pension restored for my father.

607 00:29:44,150 --> 00:29:45,590 My mother was very good.

608 00:29:45,590 --> 00:29:49,030 She got-- she got the restoration and so on.

609 00:29:49,030 --> 00:29:51,430 She wrote all these letters and so on. 610 00:29:51,430 --> 00:29:53,110 She was very, very good in that.

611 00:29:53,110 --> 00:29:58,540 And she got a lawyer to help her and all those things and so on.

612 00:29:58,540 --> 00:30:03,790 And so she-- she stayed then in Germany.

613 00:30:03,790 --> 00:30:05,810 She came over here all the time.

614 00:30:05,810 --> 00:30:06,580 To visit.

615 00:30:06,580 --> 00:30:07,630 To visit.

616 00:30:07,630 --> 00:30:10,150 But she didn't want it.

617 00:30:10,150 --> 00:30:13,940 Number one, the exchange rate at this point was 1 to 4.

618 00:30:13,940 --> 00:30:16,870 So her pension would have been very small,

619 00:30:16,870 --> 00:30:19,750 and she didn't want to be a burden.

620 00:30:19,750 --> 00:30:22,330 And so then to the end, really to the end--

621 00:30:22,330 --> 00:30:24,670 my mother died with 95-- 622 00:30:24,670 --> 00:30:28,060 she said, I wished I would have made the decision to come.

623

00:30:28,060 --> 00:30:33,230 Because then we always traveled forth and back, and so forth.

624

00:30:33,230 --> 00:30:35,480 And I was there when she died.

625

00:30:35,480 --> 00:30:39,940 But she was-- then she regretted it.

626

00:30:39,940 --> 00:30:43,060 But then she also was, you see, the trouble

627

00:30:43,060 --> 00:30:44,350 is just foreign language.

628

00:30:44,350 --> 00:30:46,090 One of my uncles, not the one who

629

00:30:46,090 --> 00:30:49,030 sponsored me but one of my other uncles,

630

00:30:49,030 --> 00:30:53,990 when he was in the Jewish home for the aged in New York,

631

00:30:53,990 --> 00:30:57,370 and when he-- he suddenly only spoke German.

632

00:30:57,370 --> 00:30:58,340 Yeah.

633

 $00:30:58,340 \longrightarrow 00:31:01,150$ And he was fluent in English.

634

00:31:01,150 --> 00:31:06,260 And my mother was afraid that she said, if I get sick,

635

00:31:06,260 --> 00:31:08,780 I can't communicate.

636

00:31:08,780 --> 00:31:12,030 And we had a patient at GW, where

637

00:31:12,030 --> 00:31:15,530 I worked as a physical therapist, who had a stroke,

638

00:31:15,530 --> 00:31:18,890 and who can speak German.

639

00:31:18,890 --> 00:31:20,390 Who [? again ?] speaks German.

640

 $00:31:20,390 \longrightarrow 00:31:22,480$ So I said, OK.

641

 $00:31:22,480 \longrightarrow 00:31:25,880$ So he couldn't speak a word except German.

642

00:31:25,880 --> 00:31:30,220 And then he recovered, and he spoke fluent English.

643

00:31:30,220 --> 00:31:33,660 And then we all said, ah!

644

00:31:33,660 --> 00:31:35,937

But he couldn't.

645

00:31:35,937 --> 00:31:36,770

And that's the deal.

646 00:31:36,770 --> 00:31:39,120 So Mommy was very much aware of that.

647 00:31:39,120 --> 00:31:41,730 And she said, I didn't want to be a burden,

648 00:31:41,730 --> 00:31:43,870 and I don't want to lose the ability

649 00:31:43,870 --> 00:31:45,570 that I can communication.

650 00:31:45,570 --> 00:31:51,660 She was very independent and in control.

651 00:31:51,660 --> 00:31:56,020 And so she didn't want to have this happen to her.

652 00:31:56,020 --> 00:32:00,330 How fluent were you in English when you came here?

653 00:32:00,330 --> 00:32:04,254 I was better in English English than American English.

654 00:32:04,254 --> 00:32:06,489 [LAUGHTER]

655 00:32:06,489 --> 00:32:08,220

656 00:32:08,220 --> 00:32:11,550 I took-- I mean, I had in high school English. 657 00:32:11,550 --> 00:32:14,100 My first foreign language was French.

658 00:32:14,100 --> 00:32:17,220 And I was much better in French than in English.

659 00:32:17,220 --> 00:32:20,910 And then the second was English, and the third was Latin.

660 00:32:20,910 --> 00:32:25,410 But then before I immigrated I took English lessons again.

661 00:32:25,410 --> 00:32:28,490 And then I came here, and I couldn't understand very well

662 00:32:28,490 --> 00:32:31,380 the Americans.

663 00:32:31,380 --> 00:32:33,850 Because the English is so much easier.

664 00:32:33,850 --> 00:32:36,650 You know, the pronunciation is so much more distinct.

665 00:32:36,650 --> 00:32:37,590 The Americans--

666 00:32:37,590 --> 00:32:39,952 [IMITATES AMERICAN ACCENT]

667 00:32:39,952 --> 00:32:41,190 You know?

668 00:32:41,190 --> 00:32:42,570 But I go a job. 669 00:32:42,570 --> 00:32:49,920 At first I worked at the office of three surgeons,

670 00:32:49,920 --> 00:32:51,480 orthopedic surgeons.

671 00:32:51,480 --> 00:32:54,030 And then I came to GW and so on.

672 00:32:54,030 --> 00:32:55,220 But if you learn--

673 00:32:55,220 --> 00:32:58,470 if you're always surrounded by it

674 00:32:58,470 --> 00:33:05,410 and you don't hear anything else but English, you get--

675 00:33:05,410 --> 00:33:07,850 and then I also didn't make--

676 00:33:07,850 --> 00:33:09,220 I read books.

677 00:33:09,220 --> 00:33:11,965 Like Agatha Christie is good to read because there there

678 00:33:11,965 --> 00:33:15,320 is so much dialogue in.

679 00:33:15,320 --> 00:33:16,800 Which is important.

680 00:33:16,800 --> 00:33:19,690 And one of the things you should never do-- 681

00:33:19,690 --> 00:33:23,530 have a dictionary beside you and if you don't know a word,

682

00:33:23,530 --> 00:33:24,590 look it up.

683

00:33:24,590 --> 00:33:26,290 Then the next, look it up.

684

00:33:26,290 --> 00:33:27,760 You never get anywhere.

685

00:33:27,760 --> 00:33:31,210 Just say OK, in this context it must

686

00:33:31,210 --> 00:33:33,460 be meaning something like that.

687

00:33:33,460 --> 00:33:34,000 Yeah.

688

00:33:34,000 --> 00:33:38,210 Because if you start to do that, you never get fluent.

689

00:33:38,210 --> 00:33:38,710 Yeah.

690

00:33:38,710 --> 00:33:40,360 So you stayed with your sister, and you

691

00:33:40,360 --> 00:33:43,370 worked at GW, George Washington Hospital?

692

00:33:43,370 --> 00:33:44,600

And then?

693

00:33:44,600 --> 00:33:45,880 Then I met my husband.

694

00:33:45,880 --> 00:33:47,626 Oh, then you met your husband.

695

00:33:47,626 --> 00:33:48,880

OK.

696

00:33:48,880 --> 00:33:50,080

And he was American?

697

00:33:50,080 --> 00:33:50,810

Oh, yes.

698

00:33:50,810 --> 00:33:52,250

Yes, and he spoke also--

699

00:33:52,250 --> 00:33:55,090

[IMITATING AMERICAN ACCENT]

I mean, I could-- by then

700

00:33:55,090 --> 00:33:56,650

I could understand that.

701

 $00:33:56,650 \longrightarrow 00:34:00,200$

But all our friends, you

know, anybody who came over,

702

 $00:34:00,200 \longrightarrow 00:34:02,170$

they all had trouble

to understand him.

703

00:34:02,170 --> 00:34:04,000

Because you know,

he speaks like that.

704

 $00:34:04,000 \longrightarrow 00:34:07,270$

He was-- my husband is

from Altoona, Pennsylvania.

705

00:34:07,270 --> 00:34:09,060

So he also had--

706

00:34:09,060 --> 00:34:12,699 when we dated, we were sitting at the railroad tracks,

707

00:34:12,699 --> 00:34:14,190 watching the trains going by.

708

00:34:14,190 --> 00:34:17,030 Because his father worked for the Pennsylvania railroad,

709

00:34:17,030 --> 00:34:20,690 and my father the German railroad.

710

00:34:20,690 --> 00:34:23,409 So when we came back, we lived in an old house,

711

00:34:23,409 --> 00:34:25,540 in old town Alexandria.

712

00:34:25,540 --> 00:34:29,050 And then we also had another roommate,

713

00:34:29,050 --> 00:34:33,139 which was a classmate from graduate school for my sister.

714

00:34:33,139 --> 00:34:33,639 Jean.

715

00:34:33,639 --> 00:34:35,580 And she said, oh, you are lying.

716

00:34:35,580 --> 00:34:38,996 And my sister said, uh-uh, I don't think so.

717

00:34:38,996 --> 00:34:42,310 [LAUGHTER]

718

00:34:42,310 --> 00:34:43,880 So what year did

you get married?

719

 $00:34:43,880 \longrightarrow 00:34:44,975$

'58.

720

 $00:34:44,975 \longrightarrow 00:34:46,214$

'58.

721

00:34:46,214 --> 00:34:48,449

Mm-hmm.

722

00:34:48,449 --> 00:34:50,340

And then you

continued on working?

723

 $00:34:50,340 \longrightarrow 00:34:51,570$

Oh, yeah.

724

 $00:34:51,570 \longrightarrow 00:34:54,110$

I worked all the time.

725

00:34:54,110 --> 00:34:54,659

Yeah.

726

00:34:54,659 --> 00:34:55,679

But then I went back.

727

 $00:34:55,679 \longrightarrow 00:34:58,230$

728

 $00:34:58,230 \longrightarrow 00:35:02,760$

Physical therapy, I was

a very good therapy.

729

00:35:02,760 --> 00:35:05,340

But the trouble with

physical therapy

730 00:35:05,340 --> 00:35:12,540 is, you are involved in the whole family, psychological.

731 00:35:12,540 --> 00:35:16,800 And you work mentally with the patient and physical,

732 00:35:16,800 --> 00:35:20,510 which makes it very difficult. Like I had--

733 00:35:20,510 --> 00:35:22,310 I had one patient.

734 00:35:22,310 --> 00:35:25,750 I worked also then for the visiting nurses.

735 00:35:25,750 --> 00:35:28,320 And so we went to the homes.

736 00:35:28,320 --> 00:35:31,860 And there was one lady, and she lived near DuPont Circle.

737 00:35:31,860 --> 00:35:35,640 And the house was several levels.

738 00:35:35,640 --> 00:35:38,040 And she was in the bedroom upstairs.

739 00:35:38,040 --> 00:35:42,270 And they had put in an elevator on the stairs.

740 00:35:42,270 --> 00:35:44,130 And she was frightened to death. 00:35:44,130 --> 00:35:47,190 And I said, you can do it!

742

00:35:47,190 --> 00:35:49,980 I come after work, and we do it.

743

00:35:49,980 --> 00:35:53,940 And you make sure that your husband and your son is there.

744

00:35:53,940 --> 00:35:54,580 And so on.

745

00:35:54,580 --> 00:35:55,470 So they were.

746

00:35:55,470 --> 00:35:58,030 And I said, OK, you can do it.

747

00:35:58,030 --> 00:36:01,450 And so you had to be-- and she was much taller than I am.

748

00:36:01,450 --> 00:36:05,490 And you had to be very strong to convince these people.

749

00:36:05,490 --> 00:36:09,420 I wasn't so sure if she can, but you can't let them know.

750

00:36:09,420 --> 00:36:11,070 So she did.

751

00:36:11,070 --> 00:36:12,450 And she went down.

752

00:36:12,450 --> 00:36:15,870 And then she had a Martini with her husband and her son.

753

00:36:15,870 --> 00:36:18,430

And then we went up again.

754

00:36:18,430 --> 00:36:19,150 And so on.

755

00:36:19,150 --> 00:36:20,460 So she can do it.

756

00:36:20,460 --> 00:36:24,750 And then I flew down the stairs, because I said, ah,

757

00:36:24,750 --> 00:36:26,300 I wasn't sure if we managed.

758

00:36:26,300 --> 00:36:29,310 And so the husband then said to me, yeah,

759

00:36:29,310 --> 00:36:32,230 my wife told me that you don't walk down the stairs,

760

00:36:32,230 --> 00:36:35,280 you fly down.

761

00:36:35,280 --> 00:36:38,100 And so one time my mother was there,

762

00:36:38,100 --> 00:36:41,160 and John and my mother and I, we went to a party.

763

00:36:41,160 --> 00:36:44,290 And everybody was there, and then they couldn't find me.

764

00:36:44,290 --> 00:36:45,870 And then I was sitting in one room.

765

00:36:45,870 --> 00:36:49,380 At this point, I was the chief therapist of the Easter Seals

766 00:36:49,380 --> 00:36:52,560

Treatment Center in Rockville.

767

00:36:52,560 --> 00:36:54,340 And they couldn't find me.

768

00:36:54,340 --> 00:36:56,030 And then they found me in a room,

769

00:36:56,030 --> 00:37:00,000 sitting on a sofa sound asleep.

770

00:37:00,000 --> 00:37:07,260 Because as a chief therapist, I always thought if anything is--

771

00:37:07,260 --> 00:37:10,530 I told the other therapists, OK, you take it easy,

772

00:37:10,530 --> 00:37:12,910 and I took an extra patient.

773

00:37:12,910 --> 00:37:15,300 And I was just plain exhausted.

774

00:37:15,300 --> 00:37:19,730 So my husband then talked to the librarian at this point,

775

00:37:19,730 --> 00:37:21,500 at the bureau of standards.

776

00:37:21,500 --> 00:37:25,890 It's now the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

00:37:25,890 --> 00:37:29,230 And he said you always loved books and so on.

778 00:37:29,230 --> 00:37:32,770 So I talked to her, and then I took an exam

779 00:37:32,770 --> 00:37:37,020 with the civil service in translating German

780 00:37:37,020 --> 00:37:38,820 into English.

781 00:37:38,820 --> 00:37:43,410 And after-- so that I could work as a translator.

782 00:37:43,410 --> 00:37:46,740 And it was the National Bureau of Standards.

783 00:37:46,740 --> 00:37:51,400 And after I was finished, I thought, gosh,

784 00:37:51,400 --> 00:37:54,180 if I would be a few years younger,

785 00:37:54,180 --> 00:37:58,440 I would have flunked my old native tongue.

786 00:37:58,440 --> 00:38:03,092 Because it was all in German, old German script.

787 00:38:03,092 --> 00:38:04,900 Yeah.

788 00:38:04,900 --> 00:38:09,185 And I came home, and I said, John, they still have it

789

00:38:09,185 --> 00:38:11,860 in the old German script.

790

00:38:11,860 --> 00:38:12,860 I was--

791

00:38:12,860 --> 00:38:16,180 And so then I worked as a translator in the library

792

00:38:16,180 --> 00:38:18,200 at the National Bureau of Standards.

793

00:38:18,200 --> 00:38:21,230 And I realized that you don't get anywhere in a library

794

00:38:21,230 --> 00:38:23,330 except you have that master's degree.

795

00:38:23,330 --> 00:38:26,810 You can have 10 PhDs or whatever.

796

00:38:26,810 --> 00:38:30,800 You have to have that master's degree in library science.

797

00:38:30,800 --> 00:38:36,000 So then I went to Catholic U and got the master's degree.

798

00:38:36,000 --> 00:38:37,520 And then I had to [? side ?] pass,

799

00:38:37,520 --> 00:38:41,450 because I didn't have enough--

800 00:38:41,450 --> 00:38:45,020 I had all these medical courses.

801 00:38:45,020 --> 00:38:47,840 So I didn't had enough liberal arts courses.

802 00:38:47,840 --> 00:38:51,870 So they sent me pick to undergraduate school.

803 00:38:51,870 --> 00:38:54,070 So I went to undergraduate school.

804 00:38:54,070 --> 00:38:57,320 And in order to get it faster, I said, OK, I

805 00:38:57,320 --> 00:39:00,560 take German literature.

806 00:39:00,560 --> 00:39:02,600 And so I graduate-and art history,

807 00:39:02,600 --> 00:39:05,020 because I had both in them background.

808 00:39:05,020 --> 00:39:07,860 So I said, OK, so I got this.

809 00:39:07,860 --> 00:39:09,170 And then I went there.

810 00:39:09,170 --> 00:39:13,130 And then I worked as a librarian, yeah.

811 00:39:13,130 --> 00:39:15,830 And I worked first at NBS, and then

812

00:39:15,830 --> 00:39:18,320 I worked for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

813

00:39:18,320 --> 00:39:21,080 as a reference librarian and I worked--

814

00:39:21,080 --> 00:39:24,800 and then when I retired, I worked there as a consultant.

815

00:39:24,800 --> 00:39:27,770 And I had all the foreign documents

816

00:39:27,770 --> 00:39:31,730 coming from Vienna, you know, the National Atomic Energy

817

00:39:31,730 --> 00:39:34,830 Commission and all of these places.

818

00:39:34,830 --> 00:39:37,040 Yeah.

819

00:39:37,040 --> 00:39:43,220 So I worked until 2005.

820

00:39:43,220 --> 00:39:45,150 And when my husband collapsed, I said,

821

00:39:45,150 --> 00:39:47,420 my gosh, I wish I had my job back.

822

00:39:47,420 --> 00:39:50,630

It's the best thing

you can have is a job.

823

00:39:50,630 --> 00:39:53,670 You have to function.

824

00:39:53,670 --> 00:39:58,400 And something-- also as a physical therapist, you know,

825

00:39:58,400 --> 00:40:01,260 like with that lady--

826

00:40:01,260 --> 00:40:05,250 when I was with the Easter Seal, I had an old lady.

827

00:40:05,250 --> 00:40:06,820 Then I thought was old.

828

00:40:06,820 --> 00:40:08,330 Was 80 or something.

829

00:40:08,330 --> 00:40:12,260 She had a hip operation, and she walked with a cane.

830

00:40:12,260 --> 00:40:15,620 And she said, "the doctor told me I would be like new,

831

00:40:15,620 --> 00:40:18,140 and here I am walking with a cane."

832

00:40:18,140 --> 00:40:21,290 I said, "now if I'm in your age and just have a cane,

833

00:40:21,290 --> 00:40:23,548 I think that would be very happy."

00:40:23,548 --> 00:40:25,090 And she said, "you have good talking.

835 00:40:25,090 --> 00:40:27,440 You have nothing ever experienced wrong."

836 00:40:27,440 --> 00:40:29,270 I said, "you really want to know?"

837 00:40:29,270 --> 00:40:31,400 And I told her my past.

838 00:40:31,400 --> 00:40:34,550 And then she said, "oh, I think I'm very

839 00:40:34,550 --> 00:40:36,710 happy to have a cane only."

840 00:40:36,710 --> 00:40:41,150 But you learn to smile.

841 00:40:41,150 --> 00:40:45,980 And people don't expect that you have anything like this

842 00:40:45,980 --> 00:40:48,180 in your past, and so on.

843 00:40:48,180 --> 00:40:51,020 And at first, I never really talked.

844 00:40:51,020 --> 00:40:55,040 You know, you didn't talk about it in any case, and so on.

845 00:40:55,040 --> 00:40:57,500 But one thing, neither John or I could have-- 846 00:40:57,500 --> 00:40:59,790 we couldn't have children.

847 00:40:59,790 --> 00:41:01,050 I couldn't put any--

848 00:41:01,050 --> 00:41:03,990 I thought it was so awful, that I would never

849 00:41:03,990 --> 00:41:06,300 expose any child to the world.

850 00:41:06,300 --> 00:41:10,210 Who knows if not something like this happens again?

851 00:41:10,210 --> 00:41:13,360 And John was drafted with 18, and he

852 00:41:13,360 --> 00:41:15,850 was at the Battle of the Bulge.

853 00:41:15,850 --> 00:41:18,100 And he came back very badly wounded.

854 00:41:18,100 --> 00:41:20,260 He has a Purple Heart and everything.

855 00:41:20,260 --> 00:41:23,440 He lives in-- he is buried in Arlington.

856 00:41:23,440 --> 00:41:28,290 And we both made a decision, we don't want children.

857 00:41:28,290 --> 00:41:31,720 Because he thought it was so awful, and I thought--

858

00:41:31,720 --> 00:41:35,790 and I always think, how can all these people have children?

859

00:41:35,790 --> 00:41:40,044 I just-- I just couldn't.

860

00:41:40,044 --> 00:41:42,600 I just couldn't.

861

00:41:42,600 --> 00:41:47,960 And I confronted my mother one time, when Hitler was on.

862

00:41:47,960 --> 00:41:50,900 And I said, you know, only because you and Vati

863

00:41:50,900 --> 00:41:54,490 wanted to have children I had to be born.

864

00:41:54,490 --> 00:41:56,150 And my mother told me that later,

865

00:41:56,150 --> 00:41:58,970 and she said she was horrified, and so on.

866

00:41:58,970 --> 00:42:00,980 But it was so awful for me.

867

00:42:00,980 --> 00:42:02,460 It was so awful.

868

00:42:02,460 --> 00:42:06,380 And I was in school, and I had classmates, and I had friends, 869 00:42:06,380 --> 00:42:11,870 but Lalways know that

but I always know that somewhere there is no--

870

00:42:11,870 --> 00:42:13,280 it will hit me.

871

00:42:13,280 --> 00:42:19,830 And I just couldn't see to have anybody putting into the world.

872

00:42:19,830 --> 00:42:22,570 But most people did.

873

00:42:22,570 --> 00:42:25,200 And I don't know how they could manage.

874

00:42:25,200 --> 00:42:26,460 Did your sister get married?

875

00:42:26,460 --> 00:42:28,693 No, my sister never got married.

876

00:42:28,693 --> 00:42:29,610 She never got married.

877

00:42:29,610 --> 00:42:31,470 No, no.

878

00:42:31,470 --> 00:42:33,820 No, she never got married.

879

00:42:33,820 --> 00:42:35,230

So I don't know.

880

00:42:35,230 --> 00:42:39,920

I just-- you know--

881

00:42:39,920 --> 00:42:43,420

882 00:42:43,420 --> 00:42:46,270 and Mommy's family was--

883 00:42:46,270 --> 00:42:48,570 you know, they were all--

884 00:42:48,570 --> 00:42:49,420 Mommy.

885 00:42:49,420 --> 00:42:51,010 Mommy, my mother had one brother,

886 00:42:51,010 --> 00:42:52,390 and they were very close.

887 00:42:52,390 --> 00:42:56,740 And when Vati died, he refused to see her.

888 00:42:56,740 --> 00:42:59,080 And it was awful.

889 00:42:59,080 --> 00:43:04,430 So when he died, John and I were actually in Germany.

890 00:43:04,430 --> 00:43:07,370 And it was awful for my mother, really.

891 00:43:07,370 --> 00:43:09,880 But I said, I can't go to his funeral.

892 00:43:09,880 --> 00:43:11,140 I just can't pretend.

893 00:43:11,140 --> 00:43:14,070 I'm sorry.

00:43:14,070 --> 00:43:16,690 Yeah, so I didn't go.

895

00:43:16,690 --> 00:43:19,810 Let's talk a little

bit about Germany now.

896

00:43:19,810 --> 00:43:21,620 Do you feel very German?

897

00:43:21,620 --> 00:43:22,120

No.

898

 $00:43:22,120 \longrightarrow 00:43:24,890$

899

00:43:24,890 --> 00:43:26,650 Do you feel American?

900

00:43:26,650 --> 00:43:30,800 Yes, yes, yes.

901 00:43:30,800 --> 00:43:34,000 See, I'm a docent for the National Gallery of Art.

902

00:43:34,000 --> 00:43:36,990 And I give tours in

English on weekends.

903

00:43:36,990 --> 00:43:40,010

I'm a weekend docent.

904

00:43:40,010 --> 00:43:42,280

They drafted me to give tours in German,

905

00:43:42,280 --> 00:43:47,440

because there are only four of

them, foreign language docents.

00:43:47,440 --> 00:43:50,740 And one has ovarian cancer, and one has some kind

907 00:43:50,740 --> 00:43:53,410 of another intestine problem.

908 00:43:53,410 --> 00:43:58,360 And so there are practically only two left which give tour--

909 00:43:58,360 --> 00:44:01,570 So I give regularly tours in German.

910 00:44:01,570 --> 00:44:06,450 And somewhere, each time I have to jump over my own shadow

911 00:44:06,450 --> 00:44:08,710 to give it in German.

912 00:44:08,710 --> 00:44:10,254 Psychologically, you mean.

913 00:44:10,254 --> 00:44:11,040 Mm-hmm.

914 00:44:11,040 --> 00:44:11,540 Why?

915 00:44:11,540 --> 00:44:14,280 What are your thoughts about?

916 00:44:14,280 --> 00:44:15,750 I don't want to speak German.

917 00:44:15,750 --> 00:44:17,400 You don't want to speak the language.

918 00:44:17,400 --> 00:44:19,580 That's right.

919

00:44:19,580 --> 00:44:21,800 I've always said, naja, here in this building,

920

00:44:21,800 --> 00:44:24,410 as I told you,
German conversation,

921

00:44:24,410 --> 00:44:27,530 they're almost all German survivors.

922

00:44:27,530 --> 00:44:29,630 I mean, Holocaust survivors.

923

00:44:29,630 --> 00:44:31,610 And they speak German.

924

00:44:31,610 --> 00:44:33,410 And then I speak German.

925

00:44:33,410 --> 00:44:36,650 And I always-- one time--

926

00:44:36,650 --> 00:44:39,840 next time I think I ask them.

927

00:44:39,840 --> 00:44:42,450 Because at first, they didn't know.

928

00:44:42,450 --> 00:44:43,550 They said, you know--

929

00:44:43,550 --> 00:44:45,480 I said, OK, I come one time, and I

930

00:44:45,480 --> 00:44:48,450 thought that would be one time

I would come and that's all.

931

00:44:48,450 --> 00:44:51,620 And then realized that they are all more or less Jewish, and so

932

00:44:51,620 --> 00:44:52,120 on.

933

00:44:52,120 --> 00:44:55,770 So I have been going from time to time.

934

00:44:55,770 --> 00:44:57,140 But I don't know.

935

00:44:57,140 --> 00:44:58,910 They don't seem to have that problem.

936

00:44:58,910 --> 00:45:01,920 But I don't want to speak to them.

937

00:45:01,920 --> 00:45:03,650 I also dream in English.

938

00:45:03,650 --> 00:45:05,410 And I count in English.

939

00:45:05,410 --> 00:45:09,830 And when I go to Germany, I go in a store and count, one, two,

940

00:45:09,830 --> 00:45:10,690 three, four.

941

00:45:10,690 --> 00:45:12,410 Purposely or just naturally?

942

00:45:12,410 --> 00:45:14,260 Naturally.

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943 00:45:14,260 --> 00:45:16,650 So you go back to Germany frequently or?

944

00:45:16,650 --> 00:45:19,510 I was-- while my mother lived, when she was very old,

945

00:45:19,510 --> 00:45:20,850 I went over there quite often.

946

00:45:20,850 --> 00:45:21,630 Yeah.

947

00:45:21,630 --> 00:45:24,190 Yeah, I was there when she died and so on.

948

00:45:24,190 --> 00:45:25,660 When my mother died--

949

00:45:25,660 --> 00:45:29,650 and you know, my mother lived in a senior citizen home.

950

00:45:29,650 --> 00:45:31,720 And the people were all very nice to me.

951

00:45:31,720 --> 00:45:33,730 And I only read English books.

952

00:45:33,730 --> 00:45:37,450 And I said, I don't want that they are nice to me.

953

00:45:37,450 --> 00:45:39,880 I don't want that they are nice to me.

954

00:45:39,880 --> 00:45:41,480

I just didn't.

955

00:45:41,480 --> 00:45:44,720 And my husband spent a year in--

956

00:45:44,720 --> 00:45:47,510 was sent from NBS to England.

957

00:45:47,510 --> 00:45:50,770 And he was supposed to be one year in England and half--

958

00:45:50,770 --> 00:45:52,730 and the other half-half a year in England,

959

00:45:52,730 --> 00:45:55,510 half a year in Goettingen. And I told John,

960

00:45:55,510 --> 00:45:59,140 OK, I come visit to England, and then I go home and you

961

00:45:59,140 --> 00:46:00,960 go to Goettingen.

962

00:46:00,960 --> 00:46:03,150 And needless saying, he didn't go to Goettingen.

963

00:46:03,150 --> 00:46:05,310 He extended his time in Germany.

964

00:46:05,310 --> 00:46:08,040 But I couldn't live for half a year in Germany.

965

00:46:08,040 --> 00:46:08,760

I couldn't.

966

00:46:08,760 --> 00:46:10,510

He extended his stay in England, you mean.

967

00:46:10,510 --> 00:46:14,350 Yeah, he spent the whole year in England then.

968

00:46:14,350 --> 00:46:17,842 Well, what are your thoughts about Germany?

969

00:46:17,842 --> 00:46:19,900 How would you explain that to somebody?

970

00:46:19,900 --> 00:46:21,540 Naja, I don't understand.

971

00:46:21,540 --> 00:46:23,190 I mean, I can now--

972

00:46:23,190 --> 00:46:25,060 I can go to Germany.

973

00:46:25,060 --> 00:46:27,720 I can talk to the Germans.

974

00:46:27,720 --> 00:46:31,890 I can't-- especially the younger generation,

975

00:46:31,890 --> 00:46:35,920 when we come to Germany, my sister and I all see,

976

00:46:35,920 --> 00:46:38,970 for example, from my mother's family, the younger generation,

977

00:46:38,970 --> 00:46:41,100 they all come and want to see us.

978 00:46:41,100 --> 00:46:42,900 You know, the aunts from England--

979

00:46:42,900 --> 00:46:45,820 from the United States and so on.

980

00:46:45,820 --> 00:46:47,640 And they are all Aryans.

981

00:46:47,640 --> 00:46:50,950 You know, they are all very nice to us and so on.

982

00:46:50,950 --> 00:46:54,070 And I can talk to them.

983

00:46:54,070 --> 00:46:59,430 I don't feel that I have to hold this all against them.

984

00:46:59,430 --> 00:47:03,210 They were not even alive then.

985

00:47:03,210 --> 00:47:05,700 I don't think they have to apologize for what

986

00:47:05,700 --> 00:47:08,226 their parents did, you know?

987

00:47:08,226 --> 00:47:10,500 who knows how they would have reacted?

988

00:47:10,500 --> 00:47:12,090 Maybe different, maybe not.

989

00:47:12,090 --> 00:47:13,320 I don't know.

00:47:13,320 --> 00:47:17,040 But I can go to Germany now.

991

00:47:17,040 --> 00:47:19,320 In the beginning, I couldn't.

992

00:47:19,320 --> 00:47:24,540 But now I can go to Germany and talk to the Germans and so on.

993

00:47:24,540 --> 00:47:29,490 But I make sure I have only English books to read.

994

00:47:29,490 --> 00:47:33,480 And when my sister and I talk, when we go together,

995

00:47:33,480 --> 00:47:34,600 we talk English.

996

00:47:34,600 --> 00:47:35,190 You do?

997

00:47:35,190 --> 00:47:36,250 Oh, yeah.

998

00:47:36,250 --> 00:47:36,930 Yeah.

999

00:47:36,930 --> 00:47:39,750 And we were-- one time we went to the Lake Constance,

1000

00:47:39,750 --> 00:47:41,220 and we were in a train.

1001

00:47:41,220 --> 00:47:43,000 And there was a young lady.

1002

 $00:47:43,000 \longrightarrow 00:47:45,750$

And she finally asked us, and she said--

1003

00:47:45,750 --> 00:47:48,830 you know, because you realize that when we talked to her

1004

00:47:48,830 --> 00:47:51,400 we spoke German and so on.

1005

00:47:51,400 --> 00:47:54,420 And she said, but you always talk English to each other.

1006

00:47:54,420 --> 00:47:56,610 And we said yes.

1007

00:47:56,610 --> 00:47:59,670 And I think I do more than my sister, even.

1008

00:47:59,670 --> 00:48:02,220 But then she is two years older, which

1009

00:48:02,220 --> 00:48:05,580 makes slightly different maybe.

1010

00:48:05,580 --> 00:48:06,840 I don't know.

1011

00:48:06,840 --> 00:48:18,460 But I-- sometimes how Germany recovered and so on,

1012

00:48:18,460 --> 00:48:21,200 it's really remarkable.

1013

00:48:21,200 --> 00:48:24,270 You know, but I feel more East German

00:48:24,270 --> 00:48:29,470 than I feel West German, if you see that.

1015 00:48:29,470 --> 00:48:35,780 And it is very sad what's going on in East Germany.

1016 00:48:35,780 --> 00:48:38,460 Do you feel Jewish at all?

1017 00:48:38,460 --> 00:48:40,040 Yeah, because all my--

1018 00:48:40,040 --> 00:48:41,990 most of my friends are Jewish.

1019 00:48:41,990 --> 00:48:43,300 Really?

1020 00:48:43,300 --> 00:48:45,590 And I don't know how it happened.

1021 00:48:45,590 --> 00:48:48,070 The people, most of--

1022 00:48:48,070 --> 00:48:50,630 naja, the majority of people here are Jewish.

1023 00:48:50,630 --> 00:48:52,460 But the people I have dinner with--

1024 00:48:52,460 --> 00:48:55,370 I skip dinner very often, but the ones I have,

1025 00:48:55,370 --> 00:48:58,130 they're all Jews.

00:48:58,130 --> 00:49:01,058 And my best friends, like Renata [? Chernov ?] and so on,

1027 00:49:01,058 --> 00:49:01,850 they're all Jewish.

1028 00:49:01,850 --> 00:49:05,520

1029 00:49:05,520 --> 00:49:12,560 Is there anything today that reminds you of the war?

1030 00:49:12,560 --> 00:49:18,770 Times, sights or sounds or smells that bring a flashback?

1031 00:49:18,770 --> 00:49:20,720 Naja, when I see the--

1032 00:49:20,720 --> 00:49:22,610 when I see the wars, pictures, you

1033 00:49:22,610 --> 00:49:27,565 know, from Iraq or from Afghanistan and so on, yes.

1034 00:49:27,565 --> 00:49:31,030

1035 00:49:31,030 --> 00:49:34,240 A war is something awful in my eyes.

1036 00:49:34,240 --> 00:49:34,770 It's awful.

1037 00:49:34,770 --> 00:49:37,450

00:49:37,450 --> 00:49:40,900 And you always hit the civilians.

1039 00:49:40,900 --> 00:49:43,820

1040 00:49:43,820 --> 00:49:44,930 You know?

1041 00:49:44,930 --> 00:49:48,410 I mean, in Berlin when they bombed,

1042 00:49:48,410 --> 00:49:52,413 there's a whole part, which is Siemensstadt.

1043 00:49:52,413 --> 00:49:53,340 Siemens.

1044 00:49:53,340 --> 00:49:55,810 The Americans never bombed Siemensstadt.

1045 00:49:55,810 --> 00:49:59,470 Because they wanted to have all their patents.

1046 00:49:59,470 --> 00:50:01,510 They hit us.

1047 00:50:01,510 --> 00:50:05,760 You know, I always say, why didn't they hit Auschwitz?

1048 00:50:05,760 --> 00:50:07,620 I mean, it was awful for the people,

1049 00:50:07,620 --> 00:50:10,690 but it's better to be over with.

 $00:50:10,690 \longrightarrow 00:50:12,520$

They never hit it.

1051

00:50:12,520 --> 00:50:13,410

Why didn't they?

1052

00:50:13,410 --> 00:50:17,160

They knew that

Auschwitz existed.

1053

00:50:17,160 --> 00:50:19,980

And you know, this

one boat, when

1054

 $00:50:19,980 \longrightarrow 00:50:22,810$

you go to the Holocaust

Museum, you know, they show you

1055

00:50:22,810 --> 00:50:26,270

the boat which went to Cuba,

and they didn't let in,

1056

 $00:50:26,270 \longrightarrow 00:50:27,145$

and all the lengths--

1057

00:50:27,145 --> 00:50:27,840

The St. Louis.

1058

00:50:27,840 --> 00:50:29,420

The St. Louis.

1059

 $00:50:29,420 \longrightarrow 00:50:33,180$

And they didn't let them in.

1060

 $00:50:33,180 \longrightarrow 00:50:34,160$

You know?

1061

00:50:34,160 --> 00:50:35,670

And they knew.

1062

00:50:35,670 --> 00:50:39,070

I mean, sure, and my cousins, you

1063

00:50:39,070 --> 00:50:43,590 know, the ones who immigrated, who made it out in 30--

1064

00:50:43,590 --> 00:50:47,060 in '39, really, over in London they came here, and so on.

1065

00:50:47,060 --> 00:50:49,740 And [? Loni---?] and they are now all going

1066

00:50:49,740 --> 00:50:53,250 to the synagogues, and we go to the bat mitzvahs and all these

1067

00:50:53,250 --> 00:50:55,020 things when it happens in their family,

1068

00:50:55,020 --> 00:50:58,080 and they have Jewish weddings and everything certainly.

1069

00:50:58,080 --> 00:51:04,715 But Loni said we never prayed for the Jews in Germany.

1070

00:51:04,715 --> 00:51:06,910 She said we didn't.

1071

00:51:06,910 --> 00:51:10,330 No, we never did.

1072

00:51:10,330 --> 00:51:14,930 And then I feel you can't get mad at civilians.

1073

00:51:14,930 --> 00:51:18,900

I feel that they

abandoned us in Germany.

1074

00:51:18,900 --> 00:51:19,400

Yeah.

1075

00:51:19,400 --> 00:51:24,110

And it was almost

impossible to come out.

1076

00:51:24,110 --> 00:51:28,430

But the people who went over the Himalayas,

1077

00:51:28,430 --> 00:51:31,880

like the widow of

Mahler the composer

1078

00:51:31,880 --> 00:51:36,200

and so on, all these, the

top people, they got out.

1079

00:51:36,200 --> 00:51:39,370

But the little ones, the

Jews, they were stuck.

1080

 $00:51:39,370 \longrightarrow 00:51:43,650$

1081

00:51:43,650 --> 00:51:49,860

So then, you know, it's

the Germans were awful.

1082

 $00:51:49,860 \longrightarrow 00:51:52,630$

But then the people who came

back out of the concentration

1083

 $00:51:52,630 \longrightarrow 00:51:55,410$

camps, many of them, when

they went back to Poland,

1084

 $00:51:55,410 \longrightarrow 00:51:59,770$

the Poles killed them.

00:51:59,770 --> 00:52:01,240

So are they better?

1086

00:52:01,240 --> 00:52:03,900

And the Ukrainian

guards in the camps

1087

00:52:03,900 --> 00:52:07,560

were worse than

the German guards.

1088

00:52:07,560 --> 00:52:10,060

But nobody says

anything about it.

1089

00:52:10,060 --> 00:52:15,080

So sometimes, you

know, I think--

1090

00:52:15,080 --> 00:52:18,160

and the whole world looked on.

1091

00:52:18,160 --> 00:52:22,960

And America didn't go in

the war until much later.

1092

00:52:22.960 --> 00:52:26.140

By then everything was rolling.

1093

00:52:26,140 --> 00:52:29,010

And they knew about it.

1094

00:52:29,010 --> 00:52:31,090

You think it could happen again?

1095

 $00:52:31,090 \longrightarrow 00:52:32,710$

Yes.

1096

00:52:32,710 --> 00:52:36,700

Maybe different, not

with the gas chambers.

00:52:36,700 --> 00:52:40,630 One time my sister gave a party, and one of the people asked us.

1098

00:52:40,630 --> 00:52:44,260 This was-- I was already married then for [? one year. ?]

1099

00:52:44,260 --> 00:52:45,630 And he said, how do you feel?

1100

00:52:45,630 --> 00:52:47,530 And I said, "naja, sometimes I feel

1101

00:52:47,530 --> 00:52:50,650 like this is a really beautiful dream,

1102

00:52:50,650 --> 00:52:53,560 and one day I will wake up, and then

1103

00:52:53,560 --> 00:52:56,920 it's all again like it was."

1104

00:52:56,920 --> 00:52:58,810 And then I asked my sister, and she said,

1105

00:52:58,810 --> 00:53:01,810 just [? the words, ?] "that was a bad dream,

1106

00:53:01,810 --> 00:53:03,950 and this is a reality."

1107

00:53:03,950 --> 00:53:07,170 But yes, I think it can happen again.

1108

00:53:07,170 --> 00:53:11,210

And when East Germany-when the wall fell,

1109

00:53:11,210 --> 00:53:13,160 I had a terrible dream.

1110

00:53:13,160 --> 00:53:17,090 I was standing on a mountain, and there

1111

00:53:17,090 --> 00:53:18,830 was a railway station.

1112

00:53:18,830 --> 00:53:21,740 And I was in-- obviously in West Germany.

1113

00:53:21,740 --> 00:53:23,450 And the wall fell.

1114

00:53:23,450 --> 00:53:27,860 And I went down to the railroad station and entered the train.

1115

00:53:27,860 --> 00:53:31,200 And then the train went East, and all the people in there

1116

00:53:31,200 --> 00:53:33,370 were dead.

1117

00:53:33,370 --> 00:53:34,540 So it still haunts me.

1118

 $00:53:34,540 \longrightarrow 00:53:38,720$

1119

00:53:38,720 --> 00:53:40,810 So there are certain things, when they happen,

1120

00:53:40,810 --> 00:53:41,670

it just haunts me.

1121

00:53:41,670 --> 00:53:43,122 Yeah.

1122

00:53:43,122 --> 00:53:45,060 Yeah.

1123

00:53:45,060 --> 00:53:49,920 I never will get over it.

1124

00:53:49,920 --> 00:53:52,410 I never will get really over it.

1125

00:53:52,410 --> 00:53:55,170 And even people say I do so much.

1126

00:53:55,170 --> 00:54:00,290 Yes, and I do supposedly a very good job in giving tours

1127

00:54:00,290 --> 00:54:02,970 and so on.

1128

00:54:02,970 --> 00:54:07,810 But I feel very much different than the other docents.

1129

00:54:07,810 --> 00:54:09,950 I feel different.

1130

00:54:09,950 --> 00:54:15,710 And one of the things is, I feel different is they also--

1131

00:54:15,710 --> 00:54:19,580 one of our docents, there is a Jewish group.

1132

00:54:19,580 --> 00:54:22,560 And they immediately

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took her in.

1133

00:54:22,560 --> 00:54:24,000 But they didn't take me in.

1134

00:54:24,000 --> 00:54:25,640 I'm not really Jewish.

1135

00:54:25,640 --> 00:54:27,770 And I'm not really there either.

1136

00:54:27,770 --> 00:54:31,620 So all my life I have been struggling somewhere between.

1137

00:54:31,620 --> 00:54:34,530

1138

00:54:34,530 --> 00:54:38,460 I feel closer to the Jews, but I'm not really--

1139

00:54:38,460 --> 00:54:42,170

1140

00:54:42,170 --> 00:54:43,370 I don't know.

1141

00:54:43,370 --> 00:54:47,960 So John and I got married in the Unitarian Church.

1142

00:54:47,960 --> 00:54:49,400 How did you meet him?

1143

00:54:49,400 --> 00:54:51,890 Oh, I met him in a camp.

1144

00:54:51,890 --> 00:54:53,810 At Prince William Forest.

At I finee william I ofe.

00:54:53,810 --> 00:54:55,830 Oh.

1146

00:54:55,830 --> 00:54:59,370 My sister had a friend and colleague

1147

00:54:59,370 --> 00:55:03,480 who was a member of the 2030 Club of the Unitarian Church,

1148

00:55:03,480 --> 00:55:05,280 16th Street.

1149

00:55:05,280 --> 00:55:07,800 And they had--

1150

00:55:07,800 --> 00:55:11,430 Memorial Day, they went to a camp

1151

00:55:11,430 --> 00:55:15,120 in Prince William County Forest.

1152

00:55:15,120 --> 00:55:17,130 And they had three camps-- for men,

1153

00:55:17,130 --> 00:55:19,200 for women, and for families.

1154

00:55:19,200 --> 00:55:21,780 So Laura said to my sister, don't you

1155

00:55:21,780 --> 00:55:24,030 and Ursula want to come?

1156

00:55:24,030 --> 00:55:24,870 We said, oh, sure.

1157

00:55:24,870 --> 00:55:25,830

Why not?

1158

00:55:25,830 --> 00:55:27,550

So we did.

1159

00:55:27,550 --> 00:55:29,070

And then we get in--

1160

00:55:29,070 --> 00:55:31,980

I rowed-- was rowing a boat.

1161

00:55:31,980 --> 00:55:34,860

And there came a thunder

show, and it poured.

1162

 $00:55:34,860 \longrightarrow 00:55:37,710$

And the lake in the

middle had an island,

1163

00:55:37,710 --> 00:55:40,050

and everybody

tried to get there.

1164

 $00:55:40,050 \longrightarrow 00:55:43,160$

And there was a

gentleman who was John.

1165

00:55:43,160 --> 00:55:44,390

[LAUGHTER]

1166

00:55:44,390 --> 00:55:45,750

Who also went there.

1167

00:55:45,750 --> 00:55:49,270

He also had friends

who, roommates, who

1168

 $00:55:49,270 \longrightarrow 00:55:52,110$

were members of the 2030 Club.

1169

00:55:52,110 --> 00:55:54,690

And so he was in the men's camp.

00:55:54,690 --> 00:56:00,060 And then he asked me about cars, about Porsche and all these.

1171

00:56:00,060 --> 00:56:03,180 At this point, he had an MG.

1172

00:56:03,180 --> 00:56:05,255 And I didn't know.

1173

00:56:05,255 --> 00:56:06,570 It was all much--

1174

00:56:06,570 --> 00:56:09,430 I couldn't afford any of those things.

1175

00:56:09,430 --> 00:56:10,470 So I said, fine.

1176

00:56:10,470 --> 00:56:13,440 So then he asked me for a date, which I didn't take.

1177

00:56:13,440 --> 00:56:16,020 And then John had hay fever very badly.

1178

00:56:16,020 --> 00:56:19,950 So he came to GW for shots.

1179

00:56:19,950 --> 00:56:24,470 And I was outside of the physical therapy department,

1180

00:56:24,470 --> 00:56:26,840 because we had inpatient and outpatient.

1181

00:56:26,840 --> 00:56:29,720 And I waited for a patient,

and there came a gentleman

1182

00:56:29,720 --> 00:56:34,210 and he said, "oh, you probably don't remember me."

1183

00:56:34,210 --> 00:56:35,570 "No."

1184

00:56:35,570 --> 00:56:38,810 And then he said, "I now have a Porsche."

1185

00:56:38,810 --> 00:56:40,220 Oh.

1186

00:56:40,220 --> 00:56:41,300 That's this guy.

1187

00:56:41,300 --> 00:56:42,560 "And so you want to see it?"

1188

00:56:42,560 --> 00:56:44,340 "Sure."

1189

00:56:44,340 --> 00:56:47,510 Then I came home, and I said to my sister and her roommate--

1190

00:56:47,510 --> 00:56:50,690 and our roommate, if he asks me for a date again, I do it.

1191

00:56:50,690 --> 00:56:52,370 I want to be in this Porsche.

1192

 $00:56:52,370 \longrightarrow 00:56:55,550$

1193

00:56:55,550 --> 00:56:56,980

That's how it started.

00:56:56,980 --> 00:56:58,100 Oh, that's wonderful.

1195

00:56:58,100 --> 00:56:58,773 Yeah.

1196

00:56:58,773 --> 00:56:59,700 That's wonderful.

1197

00:56:59,700 --> 00:57:02,690 So I still had the Porsche when John died.

1198

00:57:02,690 --> 00:57:05,570 I always said, if the Porsche go, I go.

1199

00:57:05,570 --> 00:57:07,410 How long ago did he die?

1200

00:57:07,410 --> 00:57:10,580 Only on the 15th of January 2009.

1201

00:57:10,580 --> 00:57:11,960 Oh.

1202

00:57:11,960 --> 00:57:15,030 He had heart attacks before.

1203

00:57:15,030 --> 00:57:19,907 And he collapsed on the platform of DuPont Circle.

1204

00:57:19,907 --> 00:57:21,940 Oh, my.

1205

00:57:21,940 --> 00:57:24,640 We went-- we went to GW for tests,

00:57:24,640 --> 00:57:27,190 and everybody thought he was sailing along.

1207

00:57:27,190 --> 00:57:32,290 He had a kind of a leukemia, and he had this heart condition,

1208

00:57:32,290 --> 00:57:35,200 and his kidneys didn't function that well anymore.

1209

00:57:35,200 --> 00:57:37,570 But everybody thought he was a [INAUDIBLE]..

1210

00:57:37,570 --> 00:57:39,940 And we went to Kramer's.

1211

00:57:39,940 --> 00:57:41,920 And we had lunch.

1212

00:57:41,920 --> 00:57:43,350 And he really made plans.

1213

00:57:43,350 --> 00:57:44,200 We made plans.

1214

00:57:44,200 --> 00:57:46,030 He thought, oh, maybe we go back.

1215

00:57:46,030 --> 00:57:50,380 We liked to go to Virginia, to the state parks.

1216

00:57:50,380 --> 00:57:55,450 And then he went back to the railroad station and collapsed.

1217

00:57:55,450 --> 00:58:00,220 And they took him to GW, but he was braindead already.

1218 00:58:00,220 --> 00:58:03,280 And they asked me then if we really vigorous

1219 00:58:03,280 --> 00:58:04,630 wanted to revive him.

1220 00:58:04,630 --> 00:58:08,120 And I said, if he has no brain function, no.

1221 00:58:08,120 --> 00:58:12,620 And then he died in the night.

1222 00:58:12,620 --> 00:58:15,040 And he was gone.

1223 00:58:15,040 --> 00:58:17,240 And he was buried-- you said, buried in Arlington.

1224 00:58:17,240 --> 00:58:17,980 Yeah.

1225 00:58:17,980 --> 00:58:23,494 So we were married for 50 years and five months.

1226 00:58:23,494 --> 00:58:24,410 Oh, yeah.

1227 00:58:24,410 --> 00:58:25,210 Yeah.

1228 00:58:25,210 --> 00:58:27,180 That was a shock.

1229 00:58:27,180 --> 00:58:29,860 Yeah, yeah.

Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection

00:58:29,860 --> 00:58:32,060 It was very strange.