

This is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Agnes Hoffman, conducted by Gail Schwartz on January 10th, 2014 at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. This is track number one. Please tell me your full name.

My name is Agnes Hoffman.

And what name did you have at birth? What was your maiden name?

Agnes Weisbrun.

OK, and where were you born?

I was born in Budapest, Hungary, and I lived in a city called Miskolc.

When were you born?

January 21, 1931.

Let's now talk a little bit about your family. Your parents' names?

My mother's name was Anna Weisbrun and her maiden name was Weinstock.

And where was she from originally?

And she was from a small village, Ricse. And my father's name was Bela Weisbrun and he was born in Miskolc, Hungary.

All right, how far back can you go with your family? Your grandparents-- you have any information about your grandparents?

My grandfather had a store selling the finest of delicate meats and it was famous all over Europe. People were ordering food from him from everywhere in Europe. A delicacy and meats and fantastic--

How far back did his family go that you know? How many generations back?

Well, I--

Do you have any more information about that?

My grandfather was a very educated man, highly respected. And my father had a brother and his name was Jula. I will spell it later. And he had gone to-- at that time, it was Palestine. He moved to Palestine. Also, my father's sister, her name was Elsa.

They lived there until my Elsa died young. And then my uncle moved to Australia, and he had lived in Australia till the end. And my grandmother was a fantastic lady. Her name was Ida, or in Hungarian, Eda. And she was-- they were religious people. But my grandmother appeared in theater, was very, very well known.

And my whole family were practically writers. My father was a writer. He wrote movie manuscripts. He was in the movie business. He traveled to Budapest back and forth. He arranged and he picked the movies that the theaters would play. And he had also-- he had written novels.

And towards the end, he wrote a book that he told in the book that the war would be over in six months. Well, it was close to it, but he never made it. And he hid that book. He said, when the war is over, I am going to get this published.

So he put the book on the shelf in a certain place.

But I will tell you, when he traveled to Budapest when the Germans came in and we had to wear the yellow star, the Jews could not travel public transportation, could not go to any public places. But my father had to travel on the train. So he was wait-- and he took off his star in order to be able to go for his work.

And he was waiting for the train and a Hungarian man went to the SS and said, there is a Jew. So the soldier, he went over to my father and he said, what's your religion? And he said, Jewish. So they had to take him away right away. They put him, I assume, to a camp in Hungary until--

Well, we'll get to that a little bit later. I want to talk more about your childhood.

Yes. Oh, I want to tell you about just-- so the Jews had to go to a ghetto, but the first one was to move into an area of 33 streets.

Right. No, I know. We'll get to that in a few minutes. I want to get your childhood before the war first.

Oh, yeah.

OK, any information about your mother's side of the family? You told me about your father's side.

I loved going to the small town or village, Ricse, every summer as children. I have three little sisters, and every summer we went to Ricse. And we could not wait to go there. It was so much fun.

What were their names-- your sister's names?

My sister was Susan, or Zuzanna, and Elsa and Eva. And I was the oldest one-- 13. Susan, she was 11. Elsa was 6. And Eva was 2. And Eva won a beauty contest number one in Hungary.

And maternal grandparents? What about your mother's parents?

Yes. Weinstock, Samuel-- Samuel. And he was a fantastic, wonderful man and loving and caring. And he had, in the little village, he had the movie theater. And he had-- they called it a hotel, but it was a small one. So all the traveling salesmen and people, they stayed over there. But it was not a huge hotel.

And he also had a pub, the pub in the town where all the gendarmes came there and had their beer and wine. And at that time, they would give us a little wine also, because in Hungary you could have-- children could have a little wine.

Was your family very religious?

They were religious.

They were observant? You observed the holidays?

Oh, yes.

I'm talking about before the war now, but you observed all the holidays?

Yes, definitely. Yes.

Did you have many cousins around-- extended family nearby?

Yes. In Ricse, I had aunts and uncles. I had two single aunts, and then they had-- at that time. And they spoiled us. So when we arrived at the station, half the town's children were waiting for us. And then when we got to their house,

outside, before we went inside, my aunt came out with a big tray of fabulous homemade cakes. And this was a vision that we never forgot.

What kind of school did you go to-- elementary school?

You don't want me to tell more about Ricse?

Well, is there something you want to say? If you want to say it, fine.

So I had a lot more relatives there. Really, a whole lot of the people were relatives of ours. And so it was a very happy surroundings. And we had a famous uncle-- great, great uncle. I want to tell you about him. His name was Adolph Zukor.

Oh, yes.

Have you heard of him?

Yeah.

He was a great uncle and he was 16 years old. He lived in Ricse and his parents got killed in an accident. And my great grandfather had-- was raising him. And one day he said, uncle, I want to go to America. And my great grandfather was a well-to-do man. They had a very great business there going. And he said, OK, I'll take you to the ship.

So he traveled and he put him on the ship. And he gave him \$40 to go to America. And reason I'm telling you this is because he would come back to visit them often. And when he came, he would go to the temple and he would give thousands of dollars to the people in the temple.

And he had sent-- when all the aunts, like my mother and her sisters and her brother, when they all got married, he gave a lot of money for each of them as a gift. And my mother got the most. And it was really the Jewish people that lived there were really all my relatives.

When you were growing up, did you live in a Jewish neighborhood? Did you--

No, it was a mix.

It was a mixed. So did you have friends who were not Jewish when you were young? I'm talking about before the war now. Did you have friends who were Christian?

I think the ones that were in school. And we had lived our lives within the Jewish--

Community.

--community. And schools were mixed and I had friends there, yes.

And did you experience any anti-Semitism when you were young before the war.

No, never. Never.

Nothing from the teachers--

Nothing.

--or other non-Jewish friends?

No.

What language did you speak at home?

We spoke Hungarian. But my grandmother had a sister who was deaf, and she had gone to a deaf school in Vienna. And when she came back, she spoke German. And you know how they spoke not sounded clearly, but we all learned German. And we learned German in school, so we spoke German to her all the time. And in school, we learned. So we knew German, perfect German.

When you were growing up, what were your other interests? Did you like to read, or did you do any sports? What were your hobbies? Did you have any additional interests?

I'll tell you, it was not like America where you had any interests like that. I used to go to the movie theater that my father was associated with. And it was free for us. And we could take our friends and they were free to go in. And I was very popular.

I'm sure you were.

But I do want to tell you one incident after the Germans came in--

Well, we'll get--

--about the movie theater.

Yeah, we will get to that. Yeah, I just want to stay on before that.

Yes, OK.

Did you have any favorite holidays that you liked to celebrate with your family?

I had all of them, all of them in my family.

Did you like to do any sports? Were you very athletic?

No.

No, you were not.

In Europe in those days, they did not have that kind of life.

How would you describe yourself as a child? Were you very independent? Did you do things on your own, or were you more--

Well, I'll tell you one thing, I was very into everything that was going. On my father depended on me to take care of a lot of business. I knew how to-- as young as I was, 10, 11, he would send me to the movie theater to the boss, who would give the money to give to my father. He would-- anything I had to take care of, I could take care of it. And so he really trusted me with a lot of things that I could handle.

So you would describe yourself as an independent youngster?

Yeah.

Yeah, that's good. Were your parents strong Zionists at all?

Strong--

Zionists.

--Zionists. No, just regular Jewish.

So were you a member of any youth groups or anything like that? I know you were young. I know you were young, but were you in any kind of a youth group?

No.

No. OK, well let's--

I was very private life-- all the Jews.

Yeah, but you said you did have non-Jewish friends also.

Oh, yes.

You did. And did you go to their houses and play at their houses?

Maybe occasionally, but we were family-oriented.

Now when did you first start hearing about a man named Hitler? Do you remember what your first--

No, but I'll tell you, we had some relatives in Austria. And they came in-- the Germans came into Austria before Hungary. And our relatives there-- an uncle died, but another uncle wanted to take his place. And what they did was they asked where my grandfather had passed away. They had asked my grandmother to give them my grandfather's papers, so they could get out of Austria.

So that's how it all started. And we heard all the terrible things about Austria and other countries. And we did not believe it, but it was true. But we never saw the extent of it, and so we haven't really heard about Hitler's things-- what he did.

Did you ever hear him give a speech on the radio?

No.

You never heard that?

No.

OK, so you continued-- well, then the war started.

It has been-- had started.

Yeah. OK, and then the invasion of Poland and the war starting in September '39. Do you have any memories of that?

No.

You were very young. You were only eight. Was it the kind of thing that at a young age that your parents talked things over with you? Do you remember, you being the oldest child in the family, about what was happening in Europe? Did they discuss that with you?

Well, I did hear about-- because of the relatives in Austria, we heard about that.

Yeah. OK, so the war has started in other countries and you continue to go to school. When did life start to then change for you?

Well--

Do you remember the first change that you experienced?

We knew that the Germans were coming into Hungary, but that was the final blow. And so that's when they started--

OK, but up to that time, was your life affected in any way? Up to the time that the Germans came into Hungary, was your life changed in any way?

Well, they started had to stand in line for some bread. Everything was getting weaker and lower and not the normal kind of living.

I'm talking about before the Germans came in.

Yes. Yes, it started that way.

Life was changing.

Yes.

OK, and then the next change, the next thing that you remember?

Oh, and when they came in, they were taking over businesses. They were taking over any buildings or people that people owned. The movie theater, the big movie theater that my father was closest to, the owner had built a second floor. He had an extra apartment for himself. There was also a huge lounge where the people, when they came to the movie theater and had to wait, they went up there and sat and relaxed.

And now I'm going to tell you the story. So I would go and take my friends to the movies. And they had-- oh, and the German soldiers took over the second floor. He took-- they took over the owner's apartment. They were staying up there. And when we went to the movies, they had-- halfway through, they let you out and you walked around--

An intermission.

Intermission. And there were SS soldiers roaming around there in the lobby. And since they were talking German, and I don't know how it happened, that I started to answer them. And they didn't know I was Jewish. And they said, we are going to wipe all the Jews off the face of the Earth. And me, wise guy Agnes, 13 years old, said, I am Jewish too.

And he said, oh no, no, we didn't mean that. That isn't what we meant. And they tried to make it look better. They were showing me their family's pictures, their babies. And so we went back to the movies. When I came home and I told my mother about it she says, from now on you don't go out of the house, because I was a young girl, 13. I was not a child as such, but I was.

What was your first reaction when you saw a German soldier in uniform, an SS officer?

I had--

Was it frightening to see?

No, because they--

They weren't frightening.

--did not have anything to do with us except in that movie theater when they were talking to you.

Well, when you saw a swastika, did that have any meaning to you?

They were not obvious in our lives.

So the Germans invaded Hungary. You continued to go to school and be with friends, and then what was the next change?

When they said we had to go to a ghetto, that all the Jews had to go into a ghetto. And the ghetto, the first one, was an area of 33 streets. And we had friends there who lived there, and they let us move in with them at that time because we had to be in that area.

How much warning did you get? How much time did you have to move from one to the other?

Not much.

So what does a 13-year-old girl take with her? What did you take with you to the new--

Well, basically some clothes, very little because we didn't have a lot of things like here, and blankets and pillows and just basic--

Did you take any favorite books or anything favorite that you personally loved and wanted to keep with you?

I might have taken something, but we didn't have a lot of toys and books and things. We didn't have a lot. So basically--

Just the essentials.

The essentials, yes.

And how did your parents explain this to you and your younger sisters that you have to move?

Well, I was old enough--

To understand.

--to understand, but the children didn't need any explanation.

So you had grown up in an apartment?

It is--

What you grew up before the war was in a house?

It was--

Was it a house or an apartment?

It was a--

Townhouse?

It was not a house, not an apartment. It was a garden-- it was like a small house.

OK, so then you moved into the ghetto.

Yes.

And what was-- can you describe the description-- the conditions there?

Well, it was very nice. The people that we knew had a nice place and we were not there very long. And they started to bomb Hungary. And actually, they started not in the ghetto. They started to bomb where we lived at first in a small house, but not like the American kind of houses.

And they were bombing and we had to go down to the shelter. And my grandmother's sister, Johanna, she would not go. She didn't hear the sirens to go. She didn't hear the airplanes and the bombing. And we told her we had to go down. She says, no. She sat down by the window and she was praying from her prayers book. She'd stay there while we were down below.

And when we came back up, all around they had bombed the area, but where she sat was perfect. She didn't even hear the bombs because that window where she sat was perfect.

And so what did you do? What was a typical day in the ghetto like? Did you just sit inside? Did you--

It was a normal home that they had. Yeah, but children were not-- in those days and in that kind of times, it was not like you-- I don't recall us doing anything on the outside. They wouldn't want us to go outside.

Then did you move to another place? How long did you stay in that first--

At the very end from there, they-- it was an empty in a factory. How do you call-- a brick factory. And it had a place outside, a huge one, no sides only an awning over it. And we were there.

How did you know-- how did your family know to go there?

Well, they made us. The Germans came and they brought everybody. How they let us know, I don't know. But everybody had to move in there. That was the next step before Auschwitz. And all you could take with you from your home was what you could carry with you in your hands.

So we took blankets and pillows and whatever necessity we could carry with us in our hands. Because the people that we stayed with initially, they had a home and we were OK there.

Do you remember being very frightened?

Oh, yes. Yes.

And how did your mother or your father explain to you?

Well, I do want to tell you something. The last time just before we moved to the ghetto the first time, we had to leave our home, lock the door, and give them the key. So as we stepped outside after we locked the door and gave up the key, the mailman came and brought a postcard addressed to me from my father. Because when they caught my father, they put him in a camp in Hungary in some kind of-- and that was for political prisoners because he took off that star. So--

Do you know the name of the camp he was in?

No.



No.

We never knew. So the card said, Agnes, you should help your mother with your sisters. And you are now old enough to read Tolstoy's War and Peace and it is on the shelf. And he exactly explained where it was located. He hid it. And it was too late to get it.

The reason why he was saying that I'm old enough to read it and tell me, he was hoping-- he didn't know that we were going to the ghetto and he wanted me to take the book wherever we went. But it wouldn't have done any good because they would have taken-- they took everything away from us anyway. So that was-- and then we were under that--

And now you're back-- you're in the brick factory.

In the brick factory. We were there for-- I don't know-- one week or two weeks. I really cannot judge anymore how long, but not that long. And they were ready to load us up in cow wagons and take us destination Auschwitz.

How much food did you have in the brick factory?

They brought--

Did they hand out food?

--some. They brought some, but it wasn't very much. I offered to help serve. Actually, they asked me how I could help. And I don't know if I helped in the kitchen maybe one day to do dishes or whatever that was. But that was it, loaded us up and on the way to Auschwitz. We didn't really know where we were going. But my father was gone already, taken away before.

He never came back.

Never came back. And I got the research here, and can I tell you what it said?

Sure.

It said that from Hungary, they took him to Auschwitz but only for two days. From Auschwitz to Dachau-- not Dachau, another camp-- and from there to Bergen-Belsen. And that was the last stop, the last information. And when I called my aunt, who was older than I am and she was in Germany after the war-- she stayed for a while-- I told her what they said to me about my father. And she said Bergen-Belsen, that's where they were killing them. That's why they had no more information after that. That was it.

So now you're leaving the brick factory. What emotional state was your mother in? Do you remember? Was she holding herself together?

Yes. I wrote that she was only 35 years old, but she had showed strength and did not show any fear. And my grandmother also, she held some sister's hands and she also was very strong and gave us a lot of strength not to know really what was going to happen.

When you were in the factory, did you get together with any of the other children?

No, no.

No, you stayed with your family.

We stayed there. We were in one spot.

OK, now you're going on the train to go to Auschwitz, but you said you didn't know where you were going.

Right.

Did Auschwitz at that time have any meaning for you?

Auschwitz?

The name--

No.

--had no meaning?

No.

Tell me about the train ride, what the conditions were that you remember.

No, it was how they load cows in there. They had no windows, and so it was dark. And there were no toilets in there. There was nothing. It was just a box.

And so you and your family stayed together in the car.

Yes. Yes.

In the car. And other people--

And cried and cried.

Cried, yeah. Were you able to lie down at all to go to sleep?

No.

Didn't have enough room.

Nothing.

How long did the trip take?

No idea. No idea. You don't know.

Yeah. And so then you arrive at Auschwitz?

At Auschwitz, we arrived in the middle of the night. And they separated me from my mother and grandmother and my great aunt and my sisters. They said that women-- they took women from 18 to 35 that they put in one group. So they took me. The SS took me and put me in with the women from 18 to 35.

Did you look older than your age?

No, I didn't. I will show you a picture afterwards. I was a sweet, little, frail, little child, blue-eyed and some blonde hair. And they-- but I could speak German fluently. And I said, please, let me go with my mother, I am only 13 years old. And he said, no, you stay there. He knew what would happen if I went with them.

Then another SS came and I asked him. And he said, OK, go ahead. And the first SS said, no, you stay there. And when

they put my family-- mother, grandmother, the old people-- my mother was holding the sister's hand. So they put them in a shower and gas came out. Then they put the women and me in a shower. Before we went in the shower, we had to drop all our clothes on the floor and whatever else we had with us.

How does a 13-year-old girl feel about doing something like that? Do you remember being embarrassed or--

Well, it was--

--humiliated?

It was humiliated because you didn't know what was happening. We went in and when we came out we were naked. And then you had to pick up any of the outfits on top of the pile, take one and put it on. And it just happened so that the one on top-- when I came out, the one on top was a white-flowered, very long, a woman's-- an adult's dress, thin, a real thin summer one. It was June. But in Auschwitz, it was bitter cold. And I had to put it on.

And can I tell you, they had they had latrines outside. And it was only some boards across, you had to sit on there. But there was no paper, no nothing. And the German soldiers were standing behind you with guns. And so when we came out, I picked up that dress. And it was lucky for me, because after that, whenever I went to the latrines and I needed to use paper, which we didn't have, I tore off a piece of the bottom of my dress and I used this. And then after a while, the dress almost fit me.

So when we came out, they got us ready to go on wherever. We didn't know where. And that's when we took us to Auschwitz. We had to march for quite a while. Oh, and because it was so cold, my mother tore off-- no, she had a scarf and she put it on my head, which made me look older. And that is why I even survived, because I was not as tiny and young as my sisters, because 11 year old and I was 13. I wasn't much bigger or older looking.

So now you've finished, you've gotten your dress on, and then they take you to a barracks?

No, no. We marched. We marched for a long time--

To where?

--amidst beatings to walk faster and no food. And when we got to Auschwitz, they loaded us into barracks, about 1,200 people in one barrack, which means there were no beds, there were no blankets, there was nothing. You had to sleep on the floor. And with 1,200 people in it, you didn't even have much room and people were kicking each other at night.

Did you know anybody there from home?

Not from home.

Did you see any familiar faces?

No. But later on, I had some-- I made friends with people. There was one girl. I was 13, she was 18. Her name was Blanca Brown. And we were like family, like sisters. And I'm going to tell you, you heard of Mengele? Well, Mengele would come to make selections to take the skinny people, the sick looking ones. And he pulled them out of the line and put them inside the barrack until the search was finished.

And that night, a bus or a truck came and they loaded those sick looking people on and took them to the gas chamber and killed them because they had no use for sick people. Only what they figured is 18 to 35, people who could eventually go and work in their factories.

Now while I was-- it's very important to me. While I was in Auschwitz, Blanca and I were very close. And because she was already a nurse back in Hungary before they took her away young, they put her in the infirmary to help the German nurse.

One day the SS came when they had the selection. The Mengele put a young woman inside the barrack that happened to have been Blanca's best girlfriend from home. They put her in and Blanca knew what was coming. That night they would take her away and kill.

So she tried to get her out of there. And they had only a little window, like very narrow, little window up high. You could not get in or out. And so she found a box. And I don't know how because I can't recall any place that possibly could have found one.

So she stood on the box, reached in and tried to pull her girlfriend out the window, so she doesn't get killed. But they noticed it. They saw it and they put her in with her, which means she would be killed. The nurse from the infirmary walked into the barrack and said to her, Blanca, what are you doing here? Get back to work. She saved her life. That was the most, most fantastic thing. So after a while--

And to go back, did you get a tattoo? Did you get a number?

No. Because we got there in the middle of the night, they did not give tattoos.

And did you keep your--

Otherwise, I have none.

Yeah, and did you keep your hair? Did they take--

Oh, no, no. I'm glad you mentioned. They shaved your head. And before we were marching to Auschwitz, I tore off a piece from the bottom-- because it was freezing-- and tore off a piece of my dress and wrapped it around my head. And the German SS came to me, slapped me and pulled it off my head.

So did you-- you're in Auschwitz now. You're in the barracks. Did you go to work at all?

No, in Auschwitz, there was no work. What they did was, ridiculous enough, they had us go carry bricks from one end of the camp to the other and then back. That's it, for no reason at all. And after a while, when I was so weak from weeks after that, I could barely hold myself up, no less carry the bricks.

What did they give you to eat?

In the morning black coffee or tea, mostly black coffee. But they had us lined up five rows of people. So we had from the first to the last, like that. There were five people that they were giving coffee to in a pot. So they gave it to the first one, you drank some coffee, gave it to the person behind, and then to the next one. And sometimes by the time it came to the last one, it was all gone. That's all-- black coffee in the morning.

At noon time, they had-- everything was always that way in one pot. It was a soup that was green, thin green thing. And when you drank it, you had dirt going into your mouth because it was grass. They pulled it out of the grass and put it in the soup pot. That's what they cooked. That was all. So I could not even drink that.

At night time, they had-- they cut the loaf of bread in small pieces. They gave you a slice of bread. And you had either a piece of cheese, which is one little slice, and that was-- [? Clodiglee ?] was the name of it, which was smelly cheese, but it was very good cheese. Either the cheese or a little piece of margarine or a spoonful of jello-- jelly, a spoonful. So one slice of bread with something on top.

What did you know about your mother and your sisters at that point?

At that point, in the barracks, there was one woman always from Poland who came two years before. And they killed all of them except some of these young women, that they put them in charge of the new transports. When they came, they

were in charge of the barrack. And they had one little room at the end of the barrack. It was one long, long empty, dirty room. And they had a small room back there.

And they had a little stove there that these women had kept warm. They were not allowed to, these Polish women, but they did because they had men coming from transports. Polish men were meeting the transports from Hungary and do all the dirty work of what they had to do. And they would occasionally come and give these Polish or Czechoslovak women something that they would steal from the train.

So they lit the stove and they could heat something. And now that was only for them. And they had another tiny, little room, very small, with a bed. And they slept there and they had cover. These men had supplied them once and for all. They didn't come. They couldn't come to visit. They came to do some work.

So these women gave me-- once in a blue moon, they gave me a little something to drink or a little piece of bread. Because when I got my bread at night, when I slept, some of those women around me stole my bread. So they gave me a little something.

Were there any women who helped others? In other words, what was the atmosphere? Was it women helping women? As you said, some of them stole from you, but what about other women?

Well, it was rare. If you had somebody next to you that you were sleeping next to and if they were hungry, I guess they took the piece. But it was not as a rule.

So was it generally that women were helping other women to get through this?

Well, we were together. We had the same problems.

Were you the youngest?

Yes, I was the youngest.

You were the youngest.

13, because all the women were from 18 to 35.

You were the only one that young.

Now at the-- oh, yes. So then, because I could speak German, they made me a [? liefern, ?] which means a messenger girl. Can you come closer here?

Yeah.

A messenger girl. And they would send me-- oh, and they gave me-- luckily, they gave me a jacket, a gray and blue striped jacket, to wear. And when it was bitter cold, we had to stand outside for hours in wet and cold. And I would have that on and it helped me.

And so they would send me to the other barracks to the women in charge, or they would send me to the SS women who were guarding us, or, last of all, they would send me to the gate, to the entrance-- yeah, to the gate to the SS soldiers with messages. I was always afraid to go there because I never knew what to expect, what's going to happen.

But there was one woman. I wish I could find her. There was one older SS woman. Her name was Bruner and she was tough. But they all loved me because I was a child, and I was a miracle child to be there with the women.

So the people-- these block guards or whatever in the barrack, the women that were in charge, they were not allowed to light the fire in their little stove. And they used to put me outside the front of the barrack to watch if anybody was

coming. And if they did, I had to run back and tell them, and then they would put the fire out.

So this time, Bruner came and I was watching. And I had no time to run back, she wanted to go back with me. So she went way back and she saw the fire in the little, tiny stove. She said, who did that? I said, I don't know. The window was open. And she said, who was jumping out the window? I said, I don't know. And she said, was it someone who had hair or did not? And I would not tell because those women had their hair. They didn't cut their hair.

And so she said, was it a woman with or without the hair. I said, just bare, no hair. And she knew that anybody who lit the fire who was in the back there, it was the women who were in charge. And she loved the fact that I was so wonderful that I did not tell the truth, because that woman would have had trouble. So I said, it was no hair. And she was sort of smiling and walked out.

And then this I have to tell you before the rest of the story comes. But she loved me because I was such an innocent, little child. And after, at the end when they were dissolving Auschwitz, they sent all these women to factories. And she came in and said, wo ist der kleine mit den blauen augen? Where is the little one with the blue eyes?

And they said, she went on a transport. Ah, that was-- she was happy because she wanted to take me out of there, out of Auschwitz. So there were wonderful people, too, who could do as little or as much as possible to help you.

Did you see any bodies, any dead bodies, when you were in Auschwitz?

No.

You did not.

No. And when the transfer-- when they came from factories to pick people to go on the transport to work at the factory into cities, there was a beautiful, tall, beautiful, German, young SS woman, who actually tried or wanted to get out of there with a Polish man. They were going to sneak away from there, but that was impossible. But she was very sweet and sweet to me always.

And she said, I'll tell you something, don't go just with any transport. I will tell you what is the best and that's one that you should go with. But first the transports came and they were looking at the dainty fingers and somehow blue eyes or good eyes-- blue eyes. And they picked me to go to that factory, and they also picked Blanca to go to that factory. And it was such a thrill that we still were together.

So she got me to change. Wherever I was, she got me out to go with that transport. So next day, they took us. We marched and marched to Weisswasser. It was another city away. We had to march there. It was an ammunition factory.

What month was this? Do you know?

Oh, who knew months?

OK.

And so we were marching-- unbelievable-- hours, days. We didn't know. And we didn't get any food on the march there. And we got to this little town. And lo and behold, they had a house where they put us in there. And they had bunk beds and they had some kind of water or shower or something. Once every blue moon, they let us take a shower. But you could wash your hands. There was water. You could wash your hands.