

And where you came from, And then you can start on a part of the [INAUDIBLE].

My name is Molly Ingster. I was born Malka Bastocka in Vilna, Poland. In 1941, the Germans occupied Vilna, and we went into the ghetto-- Vilna ghetto.

My husband was killed with my brother right away when the Germans came in before the ghetto. They tortured and killed them. My sister with her four children I had-- was killed. My father, my brother-- my only brother, and my husband. Was before the ghetto. But the Germans came into Vilna-- I mean, officially, they came in Vilna on June 22, 1941.

Before the Germans occupied Vilna, the war started in 1939, September '39. And the Russians took over. And then when the Russians-- when the Germans attacked Vilna, they got all the-- they pulled the men out of their beds in their houses, you know. And they took them away, and they killed them. They shot them.

And that's how my only brother, and my oldest sister with her husband, four children, and my husband was killed. And then when we went into the ghetto, I had a little child. She was two years old. And my mother-- in one hand, in my right hand, I was pulling my baby, and the left hand I was pulling my mother because she was in a state of shock, you know.

And I remember the Lithuanian patrol, you know. They helped-- they were called the [? Patinga-- ?] the Lithuanian Nazis. They were called the-- they used to grab the people and take them and kill them, you see. They shot them. So they were calling them the Lithuanian [? Patinga. ?] And they did the dirty work for the Germans.

So they came the night before, and they said in 6:00 in the morning, you will have to leave your house. You can't take nothing except the clothes what you have on you, and you go, and you will go to the ghetto. And previously, before that, they took away your jewelry. They took away everything you possessed, you know what I mean?

They used to grab people at work. I used to-- they grabbed me several times, and I had to go and dig big holes, you know. Like 10 foot in the ground, you know. I can't tell everything. I'm getting upsetting, too, you know.

Anyway, so the next morning, I had to pull my baby with one hand my mother with the other hand, and I went into the ghetto. Right by the ghetto were laying hundreds of people already half dead, you know. Because if they couldn't walk fast enough, they got clubbed them over their heads, and they shot them, and did everything.

It was raining. I never forget, it was a rainy day. And we crawled into the ghetto, you know. It was so many people, one on top of the other. Before they made that part of the ghetto, they took all the people who lived there and they took them to prison. And from there, they took them to Ponary, the famous mass-- for the people, the big holes there.

Mass graves?

The mass graves. And they killed all those people off. So that's how they emptied the buildings for the ghetto, you see. And they took us from the other parts of the city. And we went in, and I remember I didn't know where I would go. And I remember it was about 3:00, 4:00. Was raining terrible, and my baby was a little child was crying. And my mother was broken to pieces, falling apart.

And I was supposed to be the hero, you know. And I went, God almighty, where am I going to go, you know? And we knocked at each door, you know. We went from house to house, and said, it's filled up. It filled up. And finally, we went into a place. We walked some steps, and we saw a man look through.

And he said-- I said, I have a little child. It's so late. It's raining and my mother and I have no place where to go. So he opened the door. He let us in, and we were 40 people in one room. Could you imagine? There was no place where to sit.

I remember I was standing by the door because I had no place to move. So I let my mother sit so she would have a place where to sit, and my baby, you know, I put next to my mother in a tiny little square. So I was standing so they could

sleep and rest, you know. Well, the starvation hunger was terrible there.

How many days were you?

In the ghetto, we were-- there were selections. We took people, used to grab at night, come in and grab people-- hundreds of them. I remember it was before Yom Kippur, you know, the holy day. And one of the police, you know, they had a Judenrat [NON-ENGLISH]. They had police-- Jewish police, you know.

And one of the policemen came over and said that get ready, get dressed, because these two buildings where you people are are going to be emptied. You're going on to work. You know, they give us the story, work, but they took everybody and they killed them.

So I remember it was like 10:00, 11:00 at night. My mother was dressed, my baby-- everybody was dressed. And I, being I had-- I never had a place where to sleep, so I took off my clothes and I laid down. Because everybody was standing ready to go. And somehow, by a miracle, they left that building out. They went, they took from the other building, and they didn't touch us.

My whole experience from the day I was arrested to my liberation was-- everything was miracles. I went through all the seven hells. Because then I was in Auschwitz. I was in three camps in Estonia. I was in Bergen-Belsen where I was liberated.

I was taken so many times to death and to gas chambers, but somehow, at the last second somebody would pull me out by the hair and say, that's it. Enough now. I can go on living again.

And yet I stopped believing in God. I shouldn't say that. Because in Auschwitz, when I came to Auschwitz, it's absolutely impossible to describe unless you were there and saw it with your own eyes. And when you saw this little baby, the transport, I remember, I'm skipping from one place to another. But I want to say a transport of little children in the cattle wagons came. It was in July of '44.

And you saw those tiny little faces through this-- my baby was already gassed and gone. And we were working. I was working for the [GERMAN] for the Germans. I was a Muselmann. A Muselmann was the lowest class of prisoner in Auschwitz.

And something-- a wheel broke down, and we had to cross this rails. And we were standing on this side, and here were the transport. And I said to myself, I said, if there is a God in heaven, he shouldn't let this transport with all these babies go in the gas chambers. And yet in two hours later, they repaired and they took them all to the gas chambers.

So I always said, where was God in Auschwitz? I mean, he could let this-- the Jewish God to possibly [NON-ENGLISH] got full of pity. I mean, a child is innocent. A child isn't guilty. I had never seen anything-- [CROSS TALK]

So not sad, right. So anyway, I was for two years in the-- I was for two years in the ghetto until the liquidated. The last transport. And this was the last transport to-- I had a father-in-law, who was previous sent to Estonia in the camps. And there was no-- the ghetto was closed, and everybody knew that we are all going to die, you know what I mean?

And the few people-- they will select a few people because it was closed up. They will separate the mothers from the children and women-- so much hunger. So much diseases during the ghetto. And I said, I'm not going to be separated from my baby.

And here, the mother left-- it was one evening, a Saturday, you know, they had some writing on the wall saying that everybody's relative in Estonia. You can go to a transport the following day. So I took my baby with me, and we went to the gates of the ghetto. And then came these trucks with the Nazis, and they put us on the trucks.

And we were-- and they took us somewhere. It was called, I forgot the name in the place, where they gathered all these people together. And everybody said, we are all going to Ponary. We're all going to death.

But as I said, it's always a miracle. We stayed overnight huddled together, you know. And next day, they put us in a train. And instead of going to Ponary, they went in the other direction. So I said, my whole experience was all full of horror and miracles.

And we were traveling for 10 days. Would you believe me? We had one case of water and one case of bread. And we were about 90 people in the cattle vans with the other people.

And we came to Estonia-- you know, [NON-ENGLISH]. This was the first time. And sure enough, they let us out there, but no. I'm not telling you the right. We were starving from a little bit of water. The people-- lips were parched. The tongue was swollen. You have nothing to drink.

We didn't think of food. Because if you are thirsty, you can't eat nothing. So a lot of military, you know, Germans. It's like a center where the military, where the Germans occupied-- they centralized them.

And they didn't open the trains, and we didn't know what's going on. Finally, a German came over and said, OK, let them out. So they let us all out, and they saw so many women with children, you know-- young women the children, and elderly-- a few elderly people. And they changed their mind right away, and they said, back in the trains, you know what I mean. So they pulled us back in the trains again.

How old were you then?

I was 22 years old, if I remember. This was 1943, no. I was 23 years old. And when I start talking, I get sick.

Anyway, to make-- I will try to make it as short as possible. Then when we put it back, then they took us out again. And one of the head of the German, obersturmführer-- I don't even know his name, a fat, big, bald German-- came over, you know. And he looked to the people who were standing in line, and I was holding my baby. And I was very-- I looked very young, you know. Looked like 18, 19.

And I said to me-- he said to me, come here. I said, I can't go, and I can't leave my child. He said, that's not your child. I said, yes, it's my baby. He said, you are so young. You have already a girl of five years?

No, my child was then four years, but she was tall, you know? I said, yes. He said, leave her for a while. I said, I'm not going to leave her. He said to me, it's a pity, you know, like that.

So some women did leave their children because they felt that they're going to-- that's going to be that for them. So they left their children standing on the rails, and they went with the German took them separate-- 200 women without children. And sent them away with their packages in the camp clothes, you know.

After the war, I got a letter. I found out that they were all burned before the they were liberated. In Estonia I'm talking about. The whole transport went to the gas chambers. I was the only one who escaped with my baby from that transport. They were crying terrible.

And one German came over. And he said, what kind of mothers would give their children like that? They were standing like that [INAUDIBLE] in there crying. A few mothers who did it-- not too many, you know.

And then what happened to the children?

Well, listen. Then they took all of us, the mothers who didn't leave the children with the children, and threw us back in the trains because of that. And then everybody started kiss each other and said, OK, we're going to death. But I was very young, and I didn't believe in death.

Somehow, no matter what, I said, are you crazy? Why should Hitler have to bring us from Vilna to Estonia when so much gasoline, you know, so much-- you know, the trains and everything to kill us now? Why? He could have killed us

right there and then, you know?

All they said, you are dumb. You don't know. I said, I have a feeling that we are not going to die. Anyway, we were very thirsty, and we were in very terrible state. And I said-- next to me was a woman, a young woman who didn't have any children. She was a rabbi's wife or whatever. And I said-- she was sticking to me because I was the only one who said we're not going to die.

I said, listen, I'm going to go up. There were old packages in the trunks in different cars they put in in that little window, and I'm going to scream water. And if anybody comes over with water, I said, let us jump out and get some old pots, whatever, get some water, you know. She says, OK.

So naturally, I went up. And it was like 5:00, 6:00 in the evening, and I start screaming, water, water, in German, you know. So two soldiers came by the Lithuanian Nazis, you know. And said, what do you want? I said, listen, give us some water.

So he said, OK. So he opened the door, and we grabbed a couple of pots, you know what I mean? And we went to get water. In the meantime, I had with me some money which I had from ghetto. My father-in-law left me before he went, and I had a gold watch which I was hiding all the time.

So when I went with him, I said, listen, if you would let us out, me and my baby, you know, we will give you the money, and we will give you my watch. And she had a watch. And he was a dumb-- from a village. He didn't even know how to speak well German, you know. He said, OK.

So we got the water, and we going back to our wagon where my baby was. And he opened the door, and I wanted to get my child. And the woman saw me when my baby starts crying, ma, ma mama, mama, mama. The woman saw me, you know. They didn't let her come out because it-- everybody wants to live, you know. The self-preservation.

So they start to jump on the train, so the other Nazis came over and threw us back in the train. Closed the door, and that was the end of the game. In the meantime, when they came back in the train, we lost all our hope. I didn't lose my hope.

But everybody was laying around and fell asleep from tiredness, from crying, from hunger. We had some water, but that's all what that was.

And about 11:00 at night, probably was 11:30 at night, I heard some steps going back and forth. And I was holding my baby like that because I don't know where to put it. She was sleeping in my arms. And I said to the woman, I said, I think that that patrol, that Nazi that was doing the Nazi-- this Estonian Nazi is not going to forget the money and the two watches because he probably never saw this in his whole life.

And if somebody walks back and forth again, I'm going to say hello and see what's going to happen. And sure enough, by midnight, was pitch dark. Everybody was very half asleep and crying. And knowing that I'm going to bed, and there was no hope and nothing salvation.

And I said, hello? And somebody says, hello. I said, are you the man I was talking to you? He said, yes. I said, listen. We will give you what I promised, but first I will throw you my baby out, and then I will jump, I said, because I didn't trust him. If I jump up, and I wouldn't be able to get my child, you know.

He said, OK. So he opened the door, and I threw the baby on his hand. And I jumped out, and the woman behind me. And the people-- you know, the iron, when you open up, makes a lot of noise. So people start to wake up.

So he closed. We jumped out, and he closed the door. And we give him my money. I give him the money and my watch, and she gave him his watch, and he went away.

And he said, you wait here. I will come back and I will show you how to go on. And I said to that girl, when he comes back, he will throw us back in the wagon because now he has everything, you see.

So I said, let's move. So with my baby in my arms, she was holding on and I was crawling under the trains under all the tracks. And sure enough, they start moving. And we saw about three, four pairs of feet with lights with the hand looking. He brought back his friends to put us back in the train, you see.

And I didn't trust him. I know that that's going to happen. They were looking, looking, but they couldn't see us, you see. Because I was very well hiding behind this train.

And sure enough, when the light went by, we crawled on the other side and we started to run, you know. And it was-- at night. The nights are very cold in Estonia-- very cold.

We were-- I was running around because you don't know where you're going. I was hiding under the train, and I was holding my baby. And she got-- we got snow on our face, and our eyelashes, and our hair, so cold it was.

And next morning, about 6:00 in the morning, at light, we started to look for where can we hide. And we find a farmer's little house where we can go in. And we came to a house, and they didn't want-- they didn't let us in, you know. I went to another house. They didn't let us in.

And were hiding. Once we got to a place where a woman had some little salty herrings, you know. And she saw my baby. You know, we were starving from hunger, you know?

And I said, can you give me for my child a piece of bread and some-- so she gave us. And we ate a piece of herring with the bread, you know, and it was very salty. And we went into hiding in a barn where it was only the hay, you know. And about 8:00, 9:00 at night, we needed to drink water. And we couldn't get out of the barn because we had so many people around, noises, you know.

Finally I said the woman, I have to go and look. I can't stay here because my baby was crying, mom, I want a little water. I want a little water. I want a little water, and I can't have water.

And I saw her. Her lips were parched. She couldn't go on like that. And that woman said, no, I'm going to stay, she says. I'm going out. I don't want to risk my life.

So I took my baby with me, and I went out of the-- I saw some shepherds with cows, with sheep, and goats. And we looked properly horrifying. And the clothes were torn, and we were filthy. We were already 12 days away in the traveling.

Anyway, I started to walk, and I saw again another little house, a little farm. And I came in, and I said to the woman if we can have any water-- some water. So she gave us some water for me and the child. In the meantime, a man walks in in a black uniform. He was from the Gestapo. He was her son.

He took a look and said, you damn dirty Jew. You filthy Jew, he said. If you're not going right back, he said, to the camps, because they had those camps there, I'm going to take you to the Gestapo will shoot you right there on the spot and your child. I said, OK, OK. I'm going, you know.

I took my baby from her hand-- by her hand, and we went. He watched us if we going on the road where the camps were. And we walked about a mile or two miles, and we saw a group of women and men standing and digging in the ground with the shovels, you know. And the Nazis with the big rifles watching them.

So I was hiding behind them, and I said to them, listen, I am an escapee from a transport from Vaivara, and I have to go in a camp because the Nazis-- that guy that is waiting for me is going to kill me and the baby. So they said to me, you wait until we finish. When it gets dark, we will try to get you in, and your father-in-law is in that camp, they said to me.

Well, they waited till it was pitch dark because they were counting how many people. And we somehow-- one was hiding my baby with a coat, you know what I mean. And I was in between, they were trying to hide me, and we went

into the camp.

And that night, there was no barracks. It was like-- they used to call it [NON-ENGLISH]. You know what is [NON-ENGLISH] huts? It's made of like a material, you know, like--

Something [INAUDIBLE].

Like a plastic, you know. And you sleep on the ground since it's always very wet because Estonia was very swampy. Anyway, next day, the SS came. There was another company, a German. They were called the OT. Then the SS-- the SS took over.

In fact, I went twice to Germany to testify against that obersturmführer against that Nazi. Because they caught him. Well, I'm going to make it fast. I think it's too long already.

[INAUDIBLE]

Yeah, well, I have to be [? to Teddy ?] downstairs. That's why I'm-- yeah. Well anyway, so this camp was called Viivikonna. And I went in that camp with my baby, and I met my father-in-law. He cried and cried. He says, why couldn't you hide yourself somewhere? I said, they didn't let me-- where I went they had big dogs in Estonia, you know.

And the Nazis were all around, and I had no place. Nobody wanted to hide me. I couldn't-- nobody wanted to accept me.

And for seven months, I was in that camp. And then they transferred us to another camp which called Vaivara.

What did you do each day at camp? What was life like?

Oh, terrible. It was shooting and killing. Yeah, they had a swamp-- this camp was on swamp grounds. So around the swamp was very deep canals-- you know, holes for the people to gather the water can run into the canals. So every morning, they would take out two, three men, and they would tell them to get undressed. And they would tell them to go into the swamps, and then they would stay with the big sticks-- big one, and they would beat him, beat him, beat him until he was all bleeding and died in the swampy water.

And this was done-- that was that Helmut Schnabel, the obersturmführer. Half of the women went to work, and almost all the women went to work. They took them out to dig for electric cables, holes, you know. Anything-- to carry big rocks, stones, making the exercise-- the torture exercise. They really never did anything of value, you know what I mean?

And the men, anybody who didn't feel well, or didn't go to work, they were tortured. They made me in charge first of the children who were-- that the women had. So I used to be with, because I had my little baby, so I was watching the children and my child.

And then they made me to clean the little barracks, you know what I mean. Because when he was torturing the man, he has blocksperr. Nobody could see it, you see. He didn't know, that murderer, but I was watching him.

Even I couldn't work because I was every time I used to say it, I used to get very, very ill. But if he would have caught me, he would have killed me right on the spot. Because when the killing started, nobody had to be around. You know what I mean?

That's what he was doing every single day. And we used to get-- for food, we used to get a little bit of watery soup with some kind of a grass to make it brown. And we used to get a slice of bread, which was also not from corn or anything. It was like some kind of a grass-- I don't know what-- they used to put chemicals in it, you know what I mean?

And the appels. In morning, appell, afternoon appell, and evening, appell, they used to count them. And if he didn't like somebody's face, he would shoot them. Somebody would stand in [INAUDIBLE], you know, this was killing, and

shooting, and beating 24 hours a day.

And since I had my baby, I was frightened for-- I was trying-- the main thing is to say that my baby should be well. and. After seven months, they liquidated that camp because there wasn't any water, any food, anything. And they moved us to a camp, it was called Vaivara.

And there, I used to go to work in a place where we used to call [NON-ENGLISH] because we have to dig out-- we had to count potatoes for the Germans in the ground, which was getting very cold. In the winter, was very cold. So we had to dig it out and give it to them.

So I used to get-- we used to be able to organize a few potatoes to bring it in the-- we used to eat raw potato slices to give for the children, you know? And a piece of black bread or something. We used to be able to organize-- that's how we used to survive.

And then I used to work over in the wood. I forget when I start working. You know-- the lumber, lumberyard. We used to do the cutting wood, and there were a group of Dutch war prisoners. And they were in charge of us.

And they were very nice people, the Dutch prisoners. Very nice to us. So one once gave me a piece of bread. One once gave me a potato-- boiled potato, you know. I took, I brought it for my baby, you know what I mean?

And then the typhus broke out, typhoid epidemic. So first was my baby got very sick. Because the baby was separated from the mother, they kept them in separate barrack. So I was a very, very courageous mother. I used to steal myself through from my barrack and going in that barrack, and sit with my baby as long as I could.

You know, she was unconscious for many-- the temperature, the fever. And she survived. And when she got better, I probably got it from her. And I got sick.

And my barrack was-- we were planning to burn down all the sick people with typhoid fever. And for 14 days, I was unconscious. When I experience, we had no bread. We had no water. We had no food. We were completely covered with [? side ?] lice and everything.

We had the excrement. You know, we had nobody to clean us, nothing. And we were laying and laying on wooden-- and, you know, it was like three planks, yes. And the doctor, the Jewish doctor who was with us, was a friend of mine from Vilna. And I used to beg him.

I used to say, Yakov, can't you give me an aspirin? He said, I don't have aspirin. I have nothing to give you.

Anyway, they had authorities from the German government-- the Nazis. They had Nazis came because I was a wonder from all of them. I was the only one who had the highest temperature the worst for 14 days, and I was still alive. So they came to look at me, you know, what kind of experiment they can do.

Well anyway, after 14 days, I start to get better would you believe, without food, and without medication-- without anything. And when I was-- and I couldn't-- when I got better, when my temperature was down, I had no electricity in my body. I couldn't put my feet down. Would you believe?

So I remember two girls who got well were holding me under their arms so they can walk me around. Because right away, I developed dysentery, you know-- diarrhea. I couldn't drink no water. When I was already better, I couldn't-- and they start somebody would bring a piece of bread. Somebody had [INAUDIBLE] whatever. I couldn't digest anything.

And then came an order that they're going to liquidate this camp. They're going to burn it down because it's old, and they're going to take us to another camp. It's called Ereda.

In the meantime, I forgot to tell before, I got ill. Every morning in the appell, the tallest man, the strongest man used to fall like flies. It was to die right on the spot from the typhoid fever. They just collapsed. They were gone-- the very

strong man.

And I remember the women who were with me in barracks, the one who had meat on their bodies, they wanted to develop a black poison in their body. They got black patches, and I had no meat on me. I was so thin. I was like a skeleton, and that's, I guess, how I survived the typhoid fever.

And then they took us to Ereda in a transport in the cattle trains, and they separated the children and the sick two kilometers in another. And I begged that same obersturmführer. I begged him, I said to him, the obersturmführer-- he was oberscharführer, but they made him for a week.

I said, am I going to be among the healthy one? He said, yes, why not? Because I was a pretty girl. I was young. I had full of hope and belief, and I don't know. I was lucky, I guess, in a way.

But since my baby was separated, I used to go through this-- the guard for the Nazis were standing downstairs, but they're there. And it was very cold in their barracks, and the freezing-- those little children were every day another baby was dying. So one night, I couldn't take it any longer. My baby got sick again, so I just took her out. I stole her out at night.

There were standing guard with the Nazis, the SS, with the big rifles. And somehow, I was lucky. I just took her, I covered her up, and I took her with me in the barrack with the woman. And I was hiding her.

And then six weeks later, somebody went and told them that there's a baby hiding. And then came an order that just before he was told that all children are going to go to a camp in Riga, which it wasn't-- that's what they was told-- Kaiserwald Riga, they said. And the night before the transfer, I was so happy that I was hiding him. Nobody knew.

The night before the transport, 12:00 at night, he came in with a half a dozen of his helpers. And he said, I was told that there's a child hiding in this barrack. You know, there were about 20 women in that room. And I had to stand up and say, yes. I couldn't jeopardize all the people. So he came over--

So he came over to me and he says, listen, all the children and the sick people have to go to Kaiserwald. It's a very good camp. I said to him, but I wouldn't go without my-- I wouldn't let my child go without me. He said, no, you can't go. He said, you're not sick.

I said, I won't let my baby go without me. And I said-- it was-- it was January, in the middle of January. It was all covered in snow. So he said-- I said, my baby will freeze in the transport. He says, well, there are plenty of children in Germany who are dying, you know, like that.

I said, listen, you have to let me go. And I was laying on the floor kissing his boots that he should let me go with my baby. And finally, it was 6:00 in the morning before he agreed to let me go with my child and we went on that transport. And that transport was Auschwitz gas chambers.

And we stopped at Kaiserwald Riga. We were in the cattle van without food, and the children-- there were about 80 children and me. And no, in my van was about 80. Then there was another one which was, again, all the leftover children and with the parents, and with some sick people.

And the children were sitting one by one, the little children, from cold, you know. They were frozen together. They couldn't move.

And they-- and they made. You know, they were all [INAUDIBLE] excrement. They couldn't get up, you know. It was very one on top of the other. And it was-- if you think about it, you know, the little baby-- innocent kids, children.

And naturally, I was with my baby, so I kept her clean, you know what I mean. I had a bottle with water, so I used to give her a drop-- three, four drops a day. And the babies, we couldn't move their hands. So on the walls of this iron van were frozen drops of snow, ice. So they used to make it with their fingers and lick it, you know. And their tongue, and



their lips.

And then we stopped in that concentration camp in Kaiserwald. So they threw out all the dead-- the people who died during the transport, and they closed the doors again. And after 10 days and 10 nights, we arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

I never heard before about Auschwitz, you see. I was in so many-- I was in three camps in Estonia and in ghetto. We never heard about Auschwitz. We didn't know that it existed a thing like gas chambers and crematoriums.

So it was light. It was a lot of electric lights. We came at night. And they opened the doors, and we saw men in these uniforms in the camp uniforms-- in the stripes.

And I figured, oh, it looks so clean here, and so nice. Maybe we'll have it good here, you know? And they told us to jump out from the trains. We came out, and all these people who were the camp inmates, they all had very sad faces.

And I said, why are they so sad? I mean, being I was used to hunger, I was used to starvation, and all the other things. And I start to ask him, why are you people so sad? So they said, didn't you hear about Auschwitz? I said, no. I never heard about Auschwitz.

And then they loaded us on trucks, on open trucks, and they took us-- which were later on, I found out, in the back of the gas chamber. You know, where you are getting-- it was a big hole. A big, big hole. And the first thing when we came in, you know, one on top of the other from traveling from Hungary-- from-- everybody was filthy and everything, the people who were still alive.

And there was some water in the corner. So I went the first thing, and I watched myself to make myself look clean because I was still young and I didn't feel sick enough. And the men who were in charge, you know, looked at me and looked at me. And they said-- they came over to me. There were so many people who came over to me and he said, what are you doing here like that?

I said, what do you mean? I came with the transport here. I said, why did you come here? I said, because my baby was sent here. He said, you mean you came voluntary because of your baby? I said, yes.

They said, oh, it's a pity you came voluntarily to death. And I still didn't know what they were talking about. They came over maybe three, four times. You know, were about three, four men, you know. One was in charge of them.

And first they told us to get undressed with the number, with the hanger. They have the soap, you know. Because in the back was the gas chamber, you see.

And we're starting to get undressed, and all of a sudden that man came in and he said, stop, wait. We have to choose some people who are still capable to work. These people, he said, will go to a family camp for children, you know, and people who are weak, and we give them white bread, he said, and milk. You know, I believed the whole story, you know. And these people who can still work will have to do hard work.

So I came over to him. I said, listen. And he said to me, you are the first to going to the working camp. I said, listen, do me a favor. Can you do something? I want to go with my child.

I will wash floors. I will do anything. Please let me be with my baby. He says, don't worry. If you don't like it, maybe I will be able to do something for you later on. Once a week, he says, it's visiting hours in the baby camp. Listen to that.

And I thought anything he said is true, you know. I figured, why should anybody lie to me? You know, he doesn't know me. I don't know him.

Well anyway, he choose me and two more women who were standing next to me, you know. They were holding on to my dress because they thought-- one had a 12-year-old child and a 14-year-old, and the other one had a 14-year-old

child. And they separated them like me, and they put us in the back of that room with a glass panel, you know.

And we was in the panel. We were in that little room, and the children with other people were on the other side. So it was one German who was a political prisoner there-- big German. I said to him-- my baby started to cry. I said, listen can you let me hold my baby until you will take us out? He says, sure. But he said, when the Nazi came, you have to give the baby right back, you know, on the other side.

So he took and gave me my child. I had my child for a few hours with me in that little room. We were in a tiny little room with a glass window, you know. You can looking outside, you know.

And went through the night-- the day and the night. And in the morning, he said-- all of a sudden, they said, OK, you people go to [NON-ENGLISH], to us-- [NON-ENGLISH] it's called. And then you come back, and you will have your baby.

So I remember I gave my child a little pot with the water, with little things what I had-- my last memories. And I said to her, either of us in a meeting, I said, hold this. I'm coming right back, you know.

And she said to me, mama, please don't go, you know. I said, I have to go on. I have to take a bath. And I come right back, and I will be with you. And they took us out, and that was the-- and they took us to the [NON-ENGLISH], it's called. And I still didn't know.

They shaved my head, you know. They shaved it all over, and they made a tattoo, my number. And I said to them, I said, when am I going to see my baby? And they looked at me. Your baby, they said, they going to [INAUDIBLE]. They said like that.

And when I started to beg him to let me go until they started to beat me, you know. And I still didn't want to believe, you know. Why do they take healthy people, and gas them, and burn them?

And they took us in the camp. And they called it quarantine camp. And next day, you know, it was blocked there. You not supposed to go out. So I ran out, you know. I was always very courageous.

I ran out, and I start to run the street. And there were the kapos-- the women kapos, you know. The prostitute they made for the people who were in charge of us. And German prostitutes with the big black capes, you know what I mean.

Well, I didn't know nothing. I ran over to one of these two women. I said, can you tell me where the family camp here? I have my baby there. But she saw my face and she said to me-- she didn't answer a damn thing. She just turned around and walked away, you know. She could have killed me right then and there because they have the big pistols hanging from their side.

And they didn't-- she didn't harm me. Then I went-- I was running around asking anybody where the family camp, and they just-- the next day, they put us on appell. You know, they give us one high heel shoe, one low heel. One red sock, one blue sock, you know. They put a piece of rag as a dress, and then they put a piece of rag like a coat, and they made a red cross-- they took red paint, a bucket with a big brush, and they painted the cross on you in the back-- in the back of your clothes.

What did that stand for?

For prison. Because my number had a half a triangle. My number has a half a triangle. That means that I'm a Jew. Because the Christian didn't have these triangles, you see.

And that red cross what they made them-- and that we are prisoners at the camp, you know. And all the clothes was red paint cross in the back so you couldn't escape any place. There was no place where to escape because Auschwitz was all electric wired everything.

Anyway, next day when they put us on appell, we saw that all from the big Kammers, from a tower, we saw this black smoke-- the red fire, the big cover in the sky, and the black smoke. And the smell of fat, you know, and human bones.

And the woman was in charge. She was an old prostitute-- a German prostitute. She started to count. And I said to her, can you tell me where the family camp? Because we came, I said, two days ago, and my baby was there.

She says, here's your baby, you see? She says, here, that smoke and the fire, that's where your baby is. And she said, don't worry. You will all go in the Kammers. None of you will ever go out.

So I said, if I survive, why did they wanted me to leave? I said, I wanted to be with my baby together. She said, well, you have to work as long as you can. Do hard labor. Then, she said, you will die.

So it's hard for me to tell you everything. Anyway, they made us carry big heavy rocks, you know, and jump like a rabbit, you know-- exercise, this was called. The quarantine. People got diarrhea.

They came a group of Dutch women who were not completely Jewish-- half Jewish, you know. Like the parents or the husbands were Jewish. They were Christian from Holland. And they came in that quarantine barrack where I was, and I was sitting and crying, you know, like that and crying because of my baby.

I cried so much that my eyes got swollen. I got blind. I couldn't see anymore anything.

So they were sitting on the other part of this place, and they said, why-- to ask him, why that girl sitting and crying like that, and she has no eyes anymore? They said, because she lost her baby there, you know? And they started to sing. They said, we are going to sing the [NON-ENGLISH].

Sure enough, we develop diarrhea, dysentery. And they took them all to the gas chambers, all those women, a week later.

Well, I had no will to live. I didn't want anymore to live. So I was looking any way I could just to die. Several times, I tried to go to the electric wire, you know. But there were the guards, you know, around. So they kick you by the head, and they didn't let you get to the wire.

But there were men-- a lot of men in the morning when they had appell who you'd go out, you take out-- three times a day they had you do appell, you know. And if it's rain, or ice, you were standing in ice water. And we used to get sometimes a cold potato and a piece of bread from the transport what people came in. There was constantly transport.

And you would see the men stuck like that because they grabbed the electric wires, so they got electrocuted, you see. So their whole body was stiff. They were standing-- they were dead, but they were standing like that-- stretched out their hands on the wire.

And then they took us to work in the Weberei. We used to make from shot down planes, from the materials, we used to make, like, I don't know how to say this, for the guns-- for cleaning guns, the Germans. So made it work that Weberei it was called.

And then the people in the camp who had-- [NON-ENGLISH] who had some relatives or husbands, so they used to throw over packages for them. But I was called a Muselmann because I had to get from the rations what we used to get in the camp. But it didn't bother me. I really didn't care for food or anything because I hadn't-- my life had no value there.

And they had-- they used to make experiments-- blocks of experiments on people, you know. I mean, somehow they never took me, but there were a lot of women who they took, you know, made a kind of experiment called the [NON-ENGLISH] where the sick people were. And every week, there was a selection. They used to come and tell everybody to come out of the barracks. And they would pick people like that, and take them, and put them on the open trucks, and take them to the gas chambers.

And this gas chamber was burning day and night, day and night. And the barrack where I was was number 26, was right across from the crematorium. And 12:00 at night, I used to go down from my-- because we were four women laying on a little space like that, And. We had no clothes. And if it was raining in the snow, our body was just pure water, you know.

And you would look through to the open entrance and see the big flames. You know, they cover the windows from the crematorium in bushes, you know-- bushes. And through the bushes, you could see those flames-- those terrible, big, burning, burning. And you would hear Shema Yisrael, Shema Yisrael, you know, 12:00, 1:00, at night.

The sky was always black in Auschwitz. And all of the big fire, the big Kammers was so big-- big chimneys, you know. Like the big buildings here, 10 story high. So the big chimneys they needed.

Well, I can't tell you everything. I will just make it short. But in 1944, in summer, they were building more trucks. And we had to walk by the trucks and by the gas chambers to work back and forth. And once we had to wait because there was transports coming, and I hear one blockfÃ¼hrer, one from the Nazis, the Germans, talk to this-- to the woman who were in charge-- the woman blockfÃ¼hrers.

And she said, what kind of trucks are we building now? I hear him say, well, you know the Hungarian Jews are coming. 50,000 Hungarian Jews are coming to the gas chambers. So they are building a train to go straight to the gas chamber.

And sure enough, it had to be done in 48 hours. We had three shifts were building the rails. And sure enough, in 48 hours we saw those trains coming-- trains coming. And the selection, you know. There were women standing in line going to the gas chambers with umbrellas with the little children. They didn't know where going. They didn't know like I didn't know, you know?

And they were holding the babies. They're playing, and they used to say, don't play. Don't play in the sun. We get there. They didn't know an hour later they wouldn't be anymore there. That's how the people went.

When you were there already, you knew. But when you came from another camp, you didn't know. That was the psychology of this. When you there, they didn't care anymore. But bringing you into the gas chamber, they wanted to make it as peaceful, as quiet as possible. Because Dr. Mengele was standing right, left, right, left with his white beautiful glove, you know.

That's how they took me out. Because this man, imagine 11 months later, we were taken again to the gas chambers. And then I-- didn't it didn't bother me anymore, you know. I didn't care. I only felt bad that I didn't go straight with my baby, but life had no meaning anymore for me.

So we were really Muselmans. In June, we didn't have-- we looked terrifying. So because they used to take us out in like 20 degrees below zero naked in the snow for 24 hours. And clothing, they had little bit of water. You know, we had no hair, and it didn't matter anymore. I remember the transport from Theresienstadt over there. They had their children with their families, and then they liquidated them.

But anyway, I was talking-- yeah, when they took me again to the gas chambers, I recognized that man who saved my life there. Imagine in all this hell I remembered him, and he remembered me. I came over to him. I said to him, why did you save my life?

He said, I will tell you why. I said, when I started to work here behind the gas chambers, he said, my mother came with my wife and children. And I couldn't save them, he said. Because if I would tell them that's my family, they would burn me with them together.

And all my friends who went to the gas chambers, I couldn't say nothing. But now, he said, when you came, he said, I lost already. I didn't care anymore. You were so young, he said, and you looked so fresh, and so innocent. And I wanted to save you, he said.

I said, but you let my baby go. And he said, well, maybe, he said, any day a bomb will fall. Maybe the Russians will liberate Auschwitz because they were pressuring on the other side. He said, you can always die, but maybe there's a chance, he said, that you will survive. That was his answer.

And still, in the last minute, they changed and took us back. They didn't put in the gas chambers again.

You don't know why?

Three times we were going to the gas chambers, and three times they returned us. Would you believe? A small group of people.

And then there was the Sonderkommando-- the people who used to put it in the gas chambers and burn the people from the gas chambers. Where, you know, were inmates-- like men inmates. And they looked like dead. You know, their faces were really dead skeleton faces.

So every three months, they used to burn them-- the gas men-- to get new because they-- So the last month, the last inmates rebelled. And they got ammunition-- I don't know where they got-- to where you gas-- not bombs. No. Explosives? Yes, something. And they exploded two gas chambers.

Grenades.

Grenades. Then the gas chambers. And they cut wires to escape because we had four gas chambers and four crematoriums. And they cut the wires to escape, but-- and I remember, we were back in Weberei, and all of a sudden, we had those terrifying noises. And we said, oh, well. That's it. That's the end of us anyway.

And they caught all those men, and they hanged them. They used-- anybody wanted to escape from Auschwitz never escaped because they used to catch them because it was wires, electric wires, camps, and camps, and camps, and camps, and electric wires. And there was no way to escape.

In fact, there was a girl, one girl, her name was Mala. And one of the blockfuhrer, the men who worked, she used to be, like, a [NON-ENGLISH], like a helping out them, you know. Like a messenger. Fell in love with her, and he helped her to escape. And we found out about it because he used to come two, three times a day, and all of a sudden she wasn't there.

And the three days later, they caught her. And they took us all out to watch her. They're going to hang her. But one of the men gave her a razor blade. So before they could hang her, she cut her wrist. And she was dying, you know. She didn't want to be alive when they hanged her.

So they didn't let her die. They took her half alive to the gas chambers. Because she wanted to defile them over, not to let them say that she is suffering, you know.

Well anyway, I was the last transport in Auschwitz. [SNEEZE] Bless you. January 28, they closed Auschwitz. And we walked for five days and nights, and then they took us for five days and five nights in the open little cars where the coals, where you work in the coal mines. And we came to Bergen-Belsen.

And there was starvation and diseases of any other kind. But 1,500 people were in one barrack, and we had no food for six weeks, no water, no soup. We were eating pieces of grass that we could find. We used to suck the snow, the dirty snow for-- the transport from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen was the most terrible death transport because they used to shoot the people-- the young 17 and 18 years old guys with the dogs were going behind us. And if somebody couldn't move fast enough, they shoot them.

You would see a woman laying without head, with half heads, you know. And I was-- my leg was already so swollen I couldn't move. And an old German soldier came over, and he said to me, why are you sitting down? You know what

will happen. You can hear the shooting. I said, look at my legs. That's were swollen like balloons because I had no shoes. I was walking with pieces of rags on my feet.

He said, try it, he says. Because maybe-- that old German already knew that's the end of the Germans, you know. He said, maybe you will have a chance, he says, to survive. But if you sit down, you know, look what happened to all the other women and men.

So a girl helped me to get up on my feet, and I crawled-- we crawled. And we used to walk to 12:00 at night, and crawling somewhere in the snow, and then walk again.

Anyway, I came to Bergen-Belsen. This was another death camp. There was the mountains of the people dead growing, and growing, and growing. I really don't know how I survived because I have been through already the typhoid fever and dysentery, so I had it behind me. I was already immune to it, you see.

But the people who didn't have it, they were dying like flies, you know. They were talking to you now. Later, they were gone.

And 1945, April 15, we were liberated. And this is another chapter before we liberated in Bergen-Belsen. But Auschwitz was the worst any human being can dream in nightmares. Took me about 15 years to get rid of my nightmares.

Every night, people were choking me and burning. And Nazis were running in me. Every night ever had nightmares. And after the war, I was trying to find anybody of my family. They were all annihilated.

My three sisters with their children and husband, my brother with his wife and child, my father, my mother, and my baby was the last one who went. And I was just-- I had nobody. And to talk about Auschwitz is something-- unless you are there, you can never even dream in the worst nightmare what it was-- what it was all about.

I guess being I was so young, maybe, you know. And after the war, when you were liberated, you went through another hell. This was something else.

But besides that, the will to live, you know. It was April, it was-- the sun was shining. The grass was green, and I was 25 years old. And I just wanted to live again. I don't know what it was.

But I don't think that anybody should ever forget that. Because if we forget this, we have no chance-- this planet has no chance to go on living. If the human race can't start loving each other and take care of each other, then there's no way of survival for none of us.

Did you ever get back your faith? You talked about--

Well, no. Right. I still don't-- I mean, when I'm sick, or when I feel very down, I say, please God help me. Please forgive me my sins. If I ever sin something or said something wrong, forgive me. But I couldn't go-- I can't go to synagogues.

I was from a very religious family, and I couldn't anymore. Because what I have been through, and what I have seen, and if God the almighty could have let this happen. So I really don't know. There must be something above us who is very-- who pulled me out from all this horrors, but somehow, I'm in such a dispute with myself, you know.

I turn to God when I'm really-- when I'm very sick. And on the other hand, I can't believe that there's something really could let happen such horror, so terrible thing to innocent people.

Do you have children?

I have a daughter. She lives in Colombia. She's married to a Christian. She chose this. I have no husband. My husband is gone.

And she's a good person. She's a good human being. She has a little boy she gave him. You know, she made a bris. You know, she will raise him in the Jewish faith.

And the thing, because I didn't believe, I couldn't take her to synagogues. I didn't bring her up in any religion because I just couldn't lie to her. I couldn't go to a synagogue and say that God almighty is good to us when I know it wasn't like that, you see? So I couldn't force myself to lie to my girl, and maybe that's why she was brought up without religion. She knows that she is Jewish, and maybe that's why going in the university, in Johns Hopkins university, she was raised with all Christian people.

And I have nothing against Christian people, you know. I mean, I can't blame everybody. I mean, I blame the whole world that it let it happen, but I can't take the young people and say, look, it's your fault. They weren't even then alive, you know?

So I'm a very tolerant person, you know. But I didn't want her to marry a Christian for the simple reason because the Christian people hurt me too much in general. But I couldn't say nothing. I had nothing to say about it.

And you can talk about it. I can write so many books about it. I wrote some articles. I work for the American Jewish Congress and World Jewish Congress, and I wrote some articles in the Yiddish language and a chapter-- seven chapters from my life.

And everybody said, Molly, why don't you write a book? And I can't. I start talking, and I told you only a little bit of my six years suffering, you know? Because if I should really go deep into it, there is no end of my agony, you know. And I would probably get very ill and land in the hospital. So I said, forget it.

But since I came here, you know, we're talking, I figured maybe this will be-- maybe this will have something someday maybe somebody will listen to it.

[INAUDIBLE]

I don't know.