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**Language: English**

Irving Redel was born in Brussels, Belgium. In 1940, he was 17 and a student in the lycée in Brussels. His grandmother lived in Brussels, and also some of his uncles and cousins. His father wanted to leave Belgium, but his relatives felt secure and preferred to stay. They were all killed in camps.

His family left Belgium on May 13, 1940, by car. The car belonged to a refugee from Liege and his wife, who left Belgium with them. Irving's family paid the expenses of the trip while the man from Liege provided the car. It took them four days to reach the French border, north of Lille. They crossed the border on May 17. The car broke 100 km way from Paris and they had to continue by train.

Irving's family stayed in Paris for an unspecified time. They needed a permit to leave Paris but, even if they did not have it, they decided to leave and took a train to Toulouse.

In Toulouse, they got transit visas for Portugal and some letters from the Mexican consulate. They had to go to Perpignan to get transit visas for Spain. Irving met a Spanish man in a hotel in Perpignan. This man was the grandson of the Spanish chancellor and helped Irving's family to get transit visas for Spain. In Perpignan, Irving also saw one of his uncle, who had been taken to a detention camp but managed to leave France in 1943.

On June 23, 1940, Irving, his family, and some friends left Perpignan by bus. They went to the French-Spanish border, and continued into Barcelona. They stayed three days in Barcelona, took a train to Madrid and, after three days, took another train to Portugal.

Irving and his family stayed in Portugal almost three months. During that time, his father tried to get visas to leave Portugal. He managed to get visas to Hong Kong and transit visas for Mexico.

Irving's family got tickets to a ship that was leaving for the US first and then Mexico, the Quanza. They were not allowed to land in New York nor in Veracruz, Mexico, even if they had transit visas. His mother got sick in the ship. After many days in the ship, going from port to port, Irving's family were finally allowed to land in the US.

In the US, Irving was drafted in the army. He was in the army four months and went back to Europe during the war as a communication expert.