

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:04,220

2
00:00:04,220 --> 00:00:06,320
It's only in retrospect
now that June

3
00:00:06,320 --> 00:00:08,000
is talking about
it a little, but I

4
00:00:08,000 --> 00:00:11,810
do remember when I was in
Poland that every once in a

5
00:00:11,810 --> 00:00:16,190
while we would take this long,
seemed like a long walk to me,

6
00:00:16,190 --> 00:00:19,910
and we'd sift through these
mounds of ashes looking.

7
00:00:19,910 --> 00:00:21,780
She told me I should
be looking for gold.

8
00:00:21,780 --> 00:00:25,010

9
00:00:25,010 --> 00:00:28,580
And I couldn't stand doing it.

10
00:00:28,580 --> 00:00:31,520
These were the crematory
ashes then, possibly.

11
00:00:31,520 --> 00:00:34,595
It was just the
worst, the worst.

12

00:00:34,595 --> 00:00:38,867

13

00:00:38,867 --> 00:00:39,930

It was horrible.

14

00:00:39,930 --> 00:00:43,550

15

00:00:43,550 --> 00:00:48,020

And in the town where she
lived, right across the street,

16

00:00:48,020 --> 00:00:51,620

her apartment faced this
kind of village square--

17

00:00:51,620 --> 00:00:54,570

18

00:00:54,570 --> 00:00:57,550

I don't know, everybody
is to the right of me--

19

00:00:57,550 --> 00:01:01,270

but to the right down the road
was where the Russian soldiers

20

00:01:01,270 --> 00:01:02,740

who are housed.

21

00:01:02,740 --> 00:01:06,100

And I recall that
she would sometimes

22

00:01:06,100 --> 00:01:10,833

send me there with things to--

23

00:01:10,833 --> 00:01:11,500

They would get--

24

00:01:11,500 --> 00:01:12,460

Trade or-?

25

00:01:12,460 --> 00:01:13,280

I don't know what.

26

00:01:13,280 --> 00:01:16,750

Was always wrapped up and
she would make me go there.

27

00:01:16,750 --> 00:01:19,540

And I hated going there
because I was terrified

28

00:01:19,540 --> 00:01:20,890

of these Russian soldiers.

29

00:01:20,890 --> 00:01:24,490

Although they were very nice,
but I was scared of soldiers.

30

00:01:24,490 --> 00:01:27,370

It was a soldier and my
recollection of soldiers

31

00:01:27,370 --> 00:01:31,870

was not something I wanted,
somebody I wanted to deal with.

32

00:01:31,870 --> 00:01:33,100

Not after Auschwitz.

33

00:01:33,100 --> 00:01:39,790

So it was very scary for me,
but she would make me go.

34

00:01:39,790 --> 00:01:43,460

I have no idea what
transpired here.

35

00:01:43,460 --> 00:01:46,020

36

00:01:46,020 --> 00:01:51,780
I do want to say one thing
about the Slotkin family.

37
00:01:51,780 --> 00:01:56,430
That it's amazing to me
now that I'm a parent

38
00:01:56,430 --> 00:02:03,780
and have children that they had
the willingness and the charity

39
00:02:03,780 --> 00:02:08,550
to extend themselves to
a war orphan like Irene.

40
00:02:08,550 --> 00:02:12,730
And then not knowing at
all what I'd be like,

41
00:02:12,730 --> 00:02:15,660
certainly a
questionable background.

42
00:02:15,660 --> 00:02:18,150
And to spend these
huge amounts of funds

43
00:02:18,150 --> 00:02:21,420
to send somebody to Europe to
get me, to bring me over here

44
00:02:21,420 --> 00:02:25,590
and to adopt me
at the age of 12.

45
00:02:25,590 --> 00:02:30,990
I'm not sure I could do it
knowing where I came from,

46
00:02:30,990 --> 00:02:32,740
I just don't know.

47

00:02:32,740 --> 00:02:37,620
I really have to say that these
are the most marvelous people

48
00:02:37,620 --> 00:02:40,090
to be able to do such a thing.

49
00:02:40,090 --> 00:02:43,870
And I think there are other
stories like that, too.

50
00:02:43,870 --> 00:02:50,730
I think the Jewish community
really went out at that time

51
00:02:50,730 --> 00:02:54,750
once they knew what was going
on really into the open.

52
00:02:54,750 --> 00:02:56,740
And it's things like this.

53
00:02:56,740 --> 00:03:00,930
And I think this
should be known.

54
00:03:00,930 --> 00:03:03,940
I think the atrocities of
what happened should be known,

55
00:03:03,940 --> 00:03:05,880
but I think some of
the good things that

56
00:03:05,880 --> 00:03:08,670
came of it should
also be publicized.

57
00:03:08,670 --> 00:03:11,580

58
00:03:11,580 --> 00:03:14,340
When did you learn what

became of your mother?

59

00:03:14,340 --> 00:03:16,950

60

00:03:16,950 --> 00:03:19,650

Did you seek out the
information to confirm

61

00:03:19,650 --> 00:03:20,890

what happened to her?

62

00:03:20,890 --> 00:03:24,450

Well it was confirmed in 1985
when we went to this museum

63

00:03:24,450 --> 00:03:26,770

and give l'chaim in Israel.

64

00:03:26,770 --> 00:03:32,972

But I think I knew right then
and there when it happened.

65

00:03:32,972 --> 00:03:33,930

What about your father?

66

00:03:33,930 --> 00:03:37,320

Did you ever find out
where he was sent?

67

00:03:37,320 --> 00:03:39,330

Was that ever attainable?

68

00:03:39,330 --> 00:03:41,160

It was found out.

69

00:03:41,160 --> 00:03:45,060

Yes, sometime in
December 1941 he

70

00:03:45,060 --> 00:03:50,460

was taken into Auschwitz

because the records came back.

71

00:03:50,460 --> 00:03:57,087

One record that we have of
his demise says December 1941.

72

00:03:57,087 --> 00:03:59,420

And he might have been one
of the earliest prisoners who

73

00:03:59,420 --> 00:04:01,090

actually helped build Birkenau.

74

00:04:01,090 --> 00:04:03,890

That was when it
was being built.

75

00:04:03,890 --> 00:04:07,160

They sent in political
prisoners at that time

76

00:04:07,160 --> 00:04:09,620

and he fit that bill.

77

00:04:09,620 --> 00:04:11,960

Because of his
import-export background?

78

00:04:11,960 --> 00:04:15,890

And therefore the
accusation of spy activity.

79

00:04:15,890 --> 00:04:19,459

It seems that he was first sent
to the Petschkuv prison, which

80

00:04:19,459 --> 00:04:21,829

was actually the
Petschkuv palace

81

00:04:21,829 --> 00:04:27,740

and the Nazis turned it
into an interrogation prison

82
00:04:27,740 --> 00:04:30,140
where no one ever returned.

83
00:04:30,140 --> 00:04:33,440
We learned about this
from other people

84
00:04:33,440 --> 00:04:35,090
who lived in
Czechoslovakia at the time

85
00:04:35,090 --> 00:04:37,280
and we met them in 1985.

86
00:04:37,280 --> 00:04:39,410
I do remember going
with our mother

87
00:04:39,410 --> 00:04:44,300
to a place with packages.

88
00:04:44,300 --> 00:04:45,980
Maybe you went to visit.

89
00:04:45,980 --> 00:04:47,280
I think so.

90
00:04:47,280 --> 00:04:51,060
I don't remember ever
visiting but seeing him.

91
00:04:51,060 --> 00:04:56,120
But I do remember going
to this very sound,

92
00:04:56,120 --> 00:04:58,565
fortress-like structure
bringing packages.

93
00:04:58,565 --> 00:05:02,330

94
00:05:02,330 --> 00:05:04,190
There's a marker
outside the Petschkuv

95
00:05:04,190 --> 00:05:07,020
now with the names of all the
people who went through there.

96
00:05:07,020 --> 00:05:10,430
So it's possible their
dad's name is on it.

97
00:05:10,430 --> 00:05:11,850
What was his name?

98
00:05:11,850 --> 00:05:12,760
Herbert Guttman.

99
00:05:12,760 --> 00:05:17,980

100
00:05:17,980 --> 00:05:19,600
There are some
documented stories

101
00:05:19,600 --> 00:05:23,890
from some of the other twins
about, at least for the boys,

102
00:05:23,890 --> 00:05:27,032
being taken to a
field to play soccer.

103
00:05:27,032 --> 00:05:28,240
Do you have any recollection?

104
00:05:28,240 --> 00:05:31,422
Obviously, I wasn't big enough
to be picked on either team.

105
00:05:31,422 --> 00:05:34,598

106
00:05:34,598 --> 00:05:35,640
I would do well playing--

107
00:05:35,640 --> 00:05:35,915
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

108
00:05:35,915 --> 00:05:38,710
--courtyard where they did
play in between two buildings.

109
00:05:38,710 --> 00:05:44,126
I played soccer after the war
in Czechoslovakia a little bit.

110
00:05:44,126 --> 00:05:48,030
It's the national pastime
like baseball is here.

111
00:05:48,030 --> 00:05:53,570
One of the older twins
talk to us in 1985

112
00:05:53,570 --> 00:05:57,710
and you just mentioned
that Rene was shepherded

113
00:05:57,710 --> 00:06:02,450
by this communist
[GERMAN] that each person

114
00:06:02,450 --> 00:06:04,760
kind of in the pecking
order this twin had

115
00:06:04,760 --> 00:06:06,470
to take care of that
twin or this person

116
00:06:06,470 --> 00:06:07,760
had to take care of that twin.

117

00:06:07,760 --> 00:06:11,330
And since Rene and Pepe, Peter
Greenfield, were the youngest

118

00:06:11,330 --> 00:06:13,400
they were given an adult male.

119

00:06:13,400 --> 00:06:16,880
And this fellow was
named Otto and he

120

00:06:16,880 --> 00:06:20,150
was the one who kind of kept
Rene away from the wires

121

00:06:20,150 --> 00:06:21,350
and kind of taught them--

122

00:06:21,350 --> 00:06:23,490
My mother, Mrs. Slotkin.

123

00:06:23,490 --> 00:06:23,990
Come on in.

124

00:06:23,990 --> 00:06:27,290
Come on in.

125

00:06:27,290 --> 00:06:28,610
How are you?

126

00:06:28,610 --> 00:06:31,820
We were just talking about
you in glowing terms.

127

00:06:31,820 --> 00:06:33,310
Look at this.

128

00:06:33,310 --> 00:06:34,234
Look at this.

129

00:06:34,234 --> 00:06:35,620

Oh, my goodness.

130
00:06:35,620 --> 00:06:38,070
It's gorgeous It's unbelievable.

131
00:06:38,070 --> 00:06:39,030
A beautiful skirt.

132
00:06:39,030 --> 00:06:41,452
Well, I hope we get
married soon, so

133
00:06:41,452 --> 00:06:45,690
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

134
00:06:45,690 --> 00:06:48,660
This is a gentleman from the
Holocaust museum in Washington,

135
00:06:48,660 --> 00:06:52,650
and he's making Irene and Rene
part of the permanent archives

136
00:06:52,650 --> 00:06:54,180
and exhibit.

137
00:06:54,180 --> 00:06:55,620
And you're part of it too now.

138
00:06:55,620 --> 00:06:57,240
I don't want to be quoted.

139
00:06:57,240 --> 00:06:59,370
I want to forget about it.

140
00:06:59,370 --> 00:07:00,960
I can't go through
that every time.

141
00:07:00,960 --> 00:07:01,850
Yes, it takes time.

142

00:07:01,850 --> 00:07:03,090

I know what you told me.

143

00:07:03,090 --> 00:07:06,070

This is years and years and

I still can't get over it.

144

00:07:06,070 --> 00:07:07,470

Well, it was a horrible thing.

145

00:07:07,470 --> 00:07:08,640

But you did your share.

146

00:07:08,640 --> 00:07:09,930

Yeah.

147

00:07:09,930 --> 00:07:11,300

I'm going to get a chair.

148

00:07:11,300 --> 00:07:12,770

I get through enough

149

00:07:12,770 --> 00:07:15,690

Yeah Mom, sit down.

150

00:07:15,690 --> 00:07:17,070

How are you feeling?

151

00:07:17,070 --> 00:07:19,470

Well, I'm tired.

152

00:07:19,470 --> 00:07:21,100

Probably because

you're cleaning, huh?

153

00:07:21,100 --> 00:07:24,450

Because I'm cleaning

for Passover and I'm--

154

00:07:24,450 --> 00:07:27,120

155

00:07:27,120 --> 00:07:30,340

There's a bunch of tools
for Ellie, electric tools.

156

00:07:30,340 --> 00:07:32,022

I have a bag for her in the car.

157

00:07:32,022 --> 00:07:33,260

Go get them.

158

00:07:33,260 --> 00:07:34,820

They're in back seat.

159

00:07:34,820 --> 00:07:37,350

And also candy.

160

00:07:37,350 --> 00:07:38,900

Oh.

161

00:07:38,900 --> 00:07:42,076