

Summary of
interview with
Albeck, Lonia

00:00:00 Maiden name was Lona Gold Born in Warsaw,
March 2, 1918.

00:00:30 FATHER's name was Joseph; mother's name was mothers
name was Eva. Natalia in Polish. Her maiden name was
Zorenge (ph)

00:01:00 Father was a manufacturer of leather goods. Had a
retail store in Warsaw.

00:01:30 My mother ran the business side, buying and selling.

00:02:00 The manufacturing was closed on Saturday, but the store
was open. Had a kosher home, but not religipus.

00:02:30 Went to synagogue on holidays. I went to a Hebrew high
school. I had two brothers and two sisters.

00:03:00 I was the middle one. There was a sister, a brother,
than me, then a brother and another sister.

00:03:30 Gives names. All Polish.

00:04:00 We lived in a Jewish section. Went to school with
Jewish children.

00:04:30 Met some non-Jews.

00:05:00 Of the people who worked for us, 99 per cent were
Jewish. We owned some apartment houses, I think we had
one Jew.

00:05:30 We lived comfortably in our house. We had about six
rooms.

00:06:00 It was a busy house, everybody bringing in friends.
Our oarents were working, so we could do what we wanted
with the maid and the cook.

00:06:30 The girks brought their friends because they wanted to
meet boys. It was a very friendly house because we
could do as we pleased.

00:07:00 I was criticized by the principal because I didn't like
to get dressed up.

00:07:30 My older sister was a snob. Always well-dressed,
never spoke to the workers. I was the opposite to her.

00:08;00 we played volleyball, went skating in the winter.
Went on tours in the summer.

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- 00:08:30 We didn;t experience any anti-semitism.
- 00:09:00 I didn't notice anything. When i met a person. and didn't see any difference between Jews and non-Jews,
- 00:09:30 Polish was spkmen in the household. Sometimes Yiddish was spoken by the parents.
- 00:10:00 First experience was when they put us into the ghetto. People had been coming and told us, but we didn't believe them.
- 00:10:30 I had no bad experience until then. When they closed the gate, Polish people helped me - brought food and risked their lives.
- 00:11:00 This was 1939. We didn't have to move because our house was in the Jewish section.
- 00:11:30 My mother had already died. When I finished school I had to help with the administration of our property and the running of our household.
- 00:12:00 My sister was still in college and didn't want to help. My brother was in medical school. No one helped.
- 00:12:30 Gives age difference among siblings.
- 00:13:00 When the war broke out, the oldest sister was studying pharmacy, the older brother was studying medicine in France. The younger brother was taken in the army.
- 00:13:30 They put walls wround us. We couldn't come in or out without a special pass.
- 00:14:00 The manufacture was in the ghetto, the stores not. But they quickly came in with trucks and took everything.
- 00:14:30 My father tried to colect what was owed to him. But they confiscated the books.
- 00:15:00 Didn't try to seel things because for everything you did there was a death penalty. It wasn;t worth it.
- 00:15:30 We lived in an apartment house in the business district.
- 00:16:00 There was a committee that assigned people to space. We had to share what we had.
- 00:16:30 We had to share the kitchen. We had friends in our apartment.

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- 00:17:00 Some families were moved in that were terrible and we were able to get them out. But there was a family in every room.
- 00:17:30 We had modern cnveniences - f;ush toilets. Not central heating or air conditioning, of course.
- 00:18:00 Lived on Nanefky St. (ph). It was the main street of the Jewish business district.
- 00:18:30 We had money. There were ways in the beginning. One gate was Jewish, another Polish, so we were able to meet people.
- 00:19:00 And conduct some business. I was caught once and arrested.
- 00:19:30 I wanted to get rid of the evidence, so I dropped it. Some lady was so politce and came over the gendarmes and said that I had dropped it.
- 00:20:00 I denied it. They had no evidence against me because I had nothing in my hands, and I had hidden the money.
- 00:20:30 To go through the gate was different, you had to open everything. So if you wanted to get something out, you had to do it inside the gate.
- 00:21:00 Non-Jews who worked in the ghetto had to have special passes and had to be chacked in and out.
- 00:21:30 My younger sister had to go in and out, and she helped by carrying things past the gate.
- 00:22:00 My sister was able to geet false papers becaUSE SHE did not look Jewish.
- 00:22:30 She had chutzpah to pass back and forth. She wore her hair in braids, but someone from school could have recognized her.
- 00:23:00 She stayed with customers and friends. Many kids did that if they could.
- 00:23:30 In the beginning, there was still one store that I cluld oepn each day. Then I spent my time trying to get food.
- 00:24:00 The cook and maid left us, and we had no help.
- 00:24:30 None of us knew how to cook. The first meal I made was potato soup, nobody would eat it.

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- 00:25:00 My father put his spoon in and it stuck. I asked people and they told me you have to put water in it.
- 00:25:30 Its not like here you get a book and read. We just had to learn.
- 00:26:00 There was much hunger. Dead bodies in the street. People jumped the walls to get food. All blackmarket.
- 00:26:30 In the beginning, we knew some people and we re able to get some food.
- 00:27:00 People were killing dogs and cats. It was meat. The Jewish Communit Board was corrupt.
- 00:27:30 They were thinking that whaever they did, they would stay alive. So they didn't care what happened. They were dealiug with the Germans. Maybe they thought the right way. Because others got killed,
- 00:28:00 We knew they weren't treating us right but maybe they thought they were doing the right thing.
- Q: At home, what did you think was going to happen?
- 00:28:30 We thought we would be occupied for a short time because Poland had been occupied so many times.
- 00:29:00 We heard about people being selected for concentration camps. But we did not believe it. We thought it would not happen to us.
- 00:29:30 When Jews came in from other areas, they were hungry, they were frightened, and they didn't say anything. Whatever they knew, they kept to themselves.
- 00:30:00 Some of the people had family in Warsaw, so they managed But for the others, there was not much to share.
- 00;30:30 Some of the people couldn't cope, and didn't wait for they Germans to kill them.
- 00:31:00 Physicians from different parts of the country couldn't take for one day this type of living.
- 00:31:30 If you knew someone who was running a shop for the Germans, you might be able to get in and work and eat. I was lucky, I had a girlfriend
- 00:32:00 who's father was running such a shop, and I was able to get my sister, my father, my mother in there.
- 00:32:30 I was lucky, we were three sisters and three girl friends. I received special treatment.

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- 00:33:00 We were working like horses so when we got home all we wanted was to lie down. We were working with dirty material to make sweaters for the soldiers.
- 00:33:30 We had to learn to do the repairs. After two weeks I got a promotion and became an overseer.
- 00:34:00 There was a canteen for the Germans and a friend ran it- maybe she slept with a general, but she got food so we got a little extra.
- 00:34:30 Started working in '42. In April she was taken to a concentration camp, so it was before that.
- 00:35:00 In the winter it was cold. You wore whatever you had. In the manufacture it was warm from the machines.
- 00:35:00 She was married in '42 (Long pause - she seems very depressed here.)
- 00:35:30 We were going out together for three years. We were married in the ghetto,
- 00:36:00 They were married in June '42 and had their own apartment "until they took us away."
- 00:36:30 Some relative had run away and I was given the apartment. At this time, we were making leather.
- 00:37:00 When it's raw, it smells, so we had to hide it. It was all illegal. We took the raw leather and made it ready for pocketbooks.
- 00:37:30 It was raw leather and we treated it to make it different colors. It was illegal but it was easier than something else.
- 00:38:00 We got leather through contacts on the other side. My husband was involved, my younger brother.
- 00:38:30 We had a room in a building without an entrance so no one knew. We were caught several times, me and my younger sister.
- 00:39:00 We went around with the leather under our clothing. When they caught us, they took away the leather. that was all.
- 00:39:30 (technical break)
- 00:40:00 The synagogues were still in operation. The children were learning to pray, in the beginning.

- 00:40:30 Where I was living, there were all the little synagogues where the students were coming in to pray.
- 00:41:00 We had Red Cross courses and how to care for the old people. The shelters were nothing, just basements.
- 00:41:30 Our apartment was hit and there was a fire.
- 00:42:00 I didn't want to go to the shelter, I was looking for my diamond. but I found it and went down. It was my mother's diamond - but later the Germans took it anyway.
- 00:42:30 Regular school was closed. It was too hard - the Germans were too strict.
- 00:43:00 Everyone was trying to earn a living. It was all illegal. And they were making selections every few minutes.
- 00:43:30 The first time I saw it was when they got my father. He was walking on the street and they got him. I heard about it and I went and told the Germans
- 00:44:00 That I would work for them so they put me to work cleaning fish. The same day I got a typhus injection and my arm was bothering me, but they didn't want to know about it.
- 00:44:30 I didn't know how to do it and when I cut into the fish I got a scale in my eye and I couldn't see. Fortunately my brother-in-law was a doctor and when I got home, he
- 00:45:00 Washed it out and took me to an eye doctor. I had to stay in a darkened room for four weeks and they didn't expect that I would see.
- 00:45:30 But when they took off the bandages, I could see. That was in '39.
- 00:46:00 The selections began right away, for whatever they had to do. It was not like later, working in some kind of factory.
- 00:46:30 There were people who didn't work at all.
- 00:47:00 (It is difficult to follow the sense of what she is saying.)
- 00:47:30 We were very carefully checked so we didn't have any chance to do anything.
- 00:48:00 My brother was involved in an organization to fight the Germans. He heard about it through friends.
- 00:48:30 We didn't have much ammunition. We had to buy it from the Poles. They took a risk and they had to earn a living too.

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- 00:50:00 Where I lived, we could see the trains. We didn't want to believe there were deportations.
- 00:50:30 We were by ourselves. We had one room closed off. Everybody was hiding.
- 00:51:00 I got caught. The others, my father, brother-in-law, they were hiding. They took us fast, just had a chance to get something to wear.
- 00:51:30 I was talking loud so that no one else would come out of their room.
- 00:52:00 Somehow, I don't know why, they let us go and we were able to come back.
- 00:52:30 It was a will to survive. I noticed that when people said they were married, they were separated. So I said to my husband, "I don't know you and you don't know me."
- 00:53:00 I saw my father and tried to get him on the same side as me, but they hit me. My husband and I were put on the same side because we didn't have the same name.
- 00:53:30 I was going by my maiden name. After that, we just tried to survive. They were not going everyday in the same place.
- 00:54:00 They would take you for work or to the train. People believed what they were telling us.
- 00:54:30 They promised everything, food, a place to live. People were allowed to take their belongings, their children. When you want to believe, you believe.
- 00:55:00 My sister was mostly on the other side. Whenever she could bring something, food or money, she would come.
- 00:55:30 In 1942, I was working with my father, I slept home and came early in the morning.
- 00:56:00 I was working with the letter. Going out to smuggle. Cooking the meals.
- 00:56:30 For a while, I was taking care of the two children of a relative. Then I got sick.
- 00:57:00 The boy was five or six. He was put in a home for children without parents.
- 00:57:30 Q: You mentioned you had a shot for typhus. You had medical care?
- A: My brother-in-law was a doctor, and I knew a lot of doctors. None of them finished their medical school in Poland.

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00:58:00 They got stuck when they came home. The same thing when I went blind. You could get medical care if you knew somebody.

00:58:30 Q: So the selections were going on?
A: All the time. If someone was drunk or crazy. There were no rules.

00:59:00 I was picked up one day when I was working.

00:59:30 We didn't know anything. In the evening we were late because in the casino the Germans were drinking and singing.

01:00:00 There was food, and because we were friends of the manager, we could go in.

01:00:30 They took us workers to the platz. We were going and going, we didn't know where. No food, no water. People were dying.

01:01:00 One day, I saw a sign M , so we knew we were there. One day they stopped to let off the people who were dead.

01:01:30 Our wagon went to . They put us into uniforms and wooden shoes. In ghetto, we were wearing the Jewish star.

01:02:00 In this camp we just wore numbers. The barracks were filled - we had to climb up.

01:02:30 Lucky if you were at the top, you could raise yourself up. Otherwise, you just lie flat. No ladders. Straw mats. Packed in like sardines.

01:03:00 She was "selected" the 24th of April, 1943. She doesn't know how long she was on the train. For me, it was forever.

01:03:30 The train would stop from time to time. The cattle cars. She didn't know where her family was.

01:04:00 I was asking people if they knew. I tried to have contact with other camps.

01:04:30 Couldn't find out anything. I knew my brother was in the other ghetto. He used to come over to see me once in a while and I would hide him if they were looking for him.

01:05:00 END IF TAPE X

TAPE II

00:00:00 I was trying to survive. I asked people maybe they knew something. I was trying to have contacts with other camps.

00:00:30 It was not legal, but I was trying to find out something. My brother was in the other ghetto. A few times he came to see me at night. AND I would hide him.

00:01:00 I hid him when they were looking for him. I couldn't get out. But he used the sewers.

00:01:30 My older sister was also in the other ghetto. Someone just told me

00:02:00 That they saw him (her husband) in a transport someplace.

00:02:30 I even looked in Israel - some people I knew in ghetto were there but they didn't know what happened.

00:03:00 I saw my father taken away from me. He was in the same selection place as me.

00:03:30 Also my father-in-law and two sisters-in-law.

00:04:00 I saw . He was not a Jew, he was converted. They wanted to save him but he refused.

00:04:30 He went. I saw my little cousin go. (crying)

00:05:00 Q: Do you remember what the first day in the camp was like?

A: Cold. One bathroom. You had to go about four o'clock in the night.

00:05:30 Thousands of people and one bathroom. There was no privacy.

00:06:00 We tried not to work in the work room, but to get out of the camp.

00:06:30 Some of the guards were Jewish. They worked for the Germans because they thought they would survive.

00:07:00 Fixing clothes, socks and seaters.

00:07:30 That is what the camp was for, to repair clothing. There were men and women, but no children.

00:08:00 My sister sent someboy, he was Volksdeutsch.

00:08:30 They were making false papers in the organization. One of those involved was my old boy friend.

00:09:00 He was in hiding. His wife got the papers and she got then to me. Somehow I was able to get out to the fields to work.

00:09:30 A lot of people were helping me to get work outside.

00:10:00 I escaped and they were waiting for me with clothes and papers. One who escaped was caught and boiled in a frying pan so no one should try it again.

00:10:30 We went to Lublin where we had to wait all night for a train. I lay down on a table and tried to hide myself.

00:11:00 One German came over and asked me what I was doing there. He recognized me.

00:11:30 It was a German with whom she had dealings before.

00:12:00 I told the Polish guy not to know me or recognize me. The German said he didn't know what camp I had run away from, but be on somebody else's hands and go.

00:12:30 Everybody was carrying things but I didn't have anything, So I grabbed something from a woman and she yelled, but I got on the train.

00:13:00 I had bought an apartment before just in case something happened, but the Polish woman had rented it to several people, figuring I would not be able to use it.

00:13:30 It was in another section of Warsaw where I would not ordinarily travel.

00:14:00 It was crowded, and they brought another woman in

00:14:30 I don't know how I escaped - luck or stupidity.

00:15:00 I ran into the woods. He was waiting for me, the guy my sister sent. I would not have known the way.

00:15:30 My hair was cut short. You could see that I was from a camp. That's why I hid my head, in Lublin.

00:16:00 The women on the train were all peasant women, wearing babushkas, so I put something on my head.

00:16:30 My sister made arrangements for me - I would go sometimes twice a night, wherever I had to go.

00:17:00 I don't remember how long I was in the camp. But it was another six months before my husband could get out.

- 00:17:30 Before I escaped, I made the man promise me that he would come back to my husband. That meant he had to work on papers again.
- 00:18:00 By coincidence, I was in another place. a woman who was a dressmaker, and had a 17-year old son.
- 00:18:30 Below there was a print shop, and there was a hiding place just in case.
- 00:19:00 One day, someone came in, I could hear them talking.
- 00:19:30 I recognized the voice of a high school friend, very wealthy, who also was on false papers. So I took a chance and put a note through the door.
- 00:20:00 She told the woman hiding me that she knew she had someone hiding and that she wanted to talk to her.
- 00:20:30 The guy who was protecting her made papers for me. In the end, he killed her for her money.
- 00:21:00 My husband was brought out by the same man as me. For many days he was out of his mind from the shock.
- 00:21:30 It was several months, we couldn't take him out and we couldn't get a doctor.
- 00:22:00 One day, several gendarmes came in, and the woman didn't have time to warn us.
- 00:22:30 We didn't have time to make it to the hiding place - my sister was with me then, too.
- 00:23:00 But they didn't see us - I don't know how.
- 00:23:00 I was afraid the Polish woman would throw us out. But she said to wait until tomorrow and we would see then.
- 00:23:30 The same night, there was bombing and a fire in the building, and we had to get out.
- 00:24:00 So where there should have been four people, all of a sudden there were seven. Then next day, we had to go somewhere else.
- 00:24:30 (long pause) We couldn't do anything, just read. At night we could wash.
- 00:25:00 The same guy who rescued us, we had an arrangement and he was changing money for us.
- 00:25:30 When my sister was with me, two of her friends were caught with false papers.
- 00:26:00 They were looking for her - her picture was in the newspaper.

- 00:26:30 After that, her sister stayed with other friends.
- 00:27:00 This friend, she had a Jewish boy friend and he was caught and killed.
- 00:27:30 After the bombing, my husband and I went from place to place. like mysister.
- 00:28:00 (long pause) There was a time we had no place to stay, so we stayed for weeks at burned houses in the ghetto.
- 00:28:30 During the night, someone had to go out to steal food. We stayed in sewers, different places.
- 00:29:00 The boys were rough, they would kill Germans. Once, the Germans found us hiding and wanted us to come out, but we wouldn't and they came down.
- 00:29:30 They were killed with a knife. Not my husband, the other people we were with, they were the lowest of the low, I had never met such people.
- 00:30:00 Once, a bomb was dropped in the sewer, there was fire, but they were always good to me, they were taking me out.
- 00:30:30 They carried me to safety. Once we were shot at, and two friends next to me were killed.
- 00:31:00 They trusted me. Bunkers had been built and when we came back we looked for food there.
- 00:31:30 What we found, they gave me to divide. Even though I had e
my sister and husband, they trusted me to divide.
- 00:32:00 There was no place we could go but the ghetto.
- 00:32:30 This was the winter of '44. The ghetto had been destroyed. It was a skeleton.
- 00:33:00 We didn;t go out during the day, only at night, to look for food. I didn't go because I was so sick I couldn't walk.
- 00:33:30 I had terrible pain in my teeth. I was going out of my mind from the pain.
- 00:34:00 The Germans knew there were people there. They could see the flashlights at night.
- 00:34:30 I never knew what the sewers looked like before then. We stayed in the ghetto until the Russians came.
- 00:35:00 I don't know what the date was when the Russians came, but I remember the day. I was with two brothers, who had used my apartment once.

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00:35:30 One of the brothers came back from the Polish side with bread and said we could go now. But people were afraid. Some people died from the bread because their stomachs couldn't take it.

00:36:00 I couldn't eat. We didn't believe him. After a while he persuaded us to come out.

00:36:30 Q: Did you stay with the same people during the time in the ghetto?

A: No. Some left, some died. Others we met, people I had known before.

00:37:00 I didn't know they were hiding, they didn't know I was hiding. When you are five brothers and sisters, you know a lot of people.

00:37:30 One survived and died in a plane crash later. Another is a doctor in Israel.

00:38:00 My sister was with me, except when she was on the Polish side. It seemed that whenever she was with me, something happened to her companions on the other side.

00:38:30 One woman, I gave my jewelry to keep. She was friends with another friend who helped her. She gave him away. She said the Germans took my jewelry.

00:39:00 She said the only thing she had left was my wedding ring and that of my husband.

00:39:30 My sister was skeptical.

00:40:00 When I was working, I carried it across to the other side between my legs.

00:40:30 (long pause)

00:41:00 I couldn't go where people knew me - our apartment buildings.

00:41:30 The superintendents knew me.

00:44:00 It was dangerous to move, it was dangerous to stay. People who helped paid for it with their lives.

00:44:30 It was a constant strain. That's why I have five by-passes. (Wipes away tears)

00:45:00 I had many close calls in the ghetto.

00:45:30 We didn't have wood for fires for heat in the ghetto. Just what we could find in the basements.

00:46:00 We had frozen arms, legs. Frostbitten. We didn't care anymore.

00:46:30 Q: But you wanted to live?

A: No. (crying) We didn't want to give the Germans the satisfaction. We were ready to kill ourselves.

00:47:00 I always carried a little pill with me.

00:47:30 When they killed the German they stole the gun. They were wild.

00:48:00 (long pause)

Q: You knew, when you went to the camp what was in store for you?

A: O yes.

00:48:30 In my camp, there were 20,000 people and none survived. No one wanted to ask questions.

00:49:00 There were two camps, Treblinka and

00:49:30 I had false papers like my sister, but too many people knew me from the business and the apartments.

00:50:00 Q: When you heard the Russians had come in, what did you do?

A: The first thing was to go to my house.

00:50:30 And see if someone survived from my family. One of our houses was burned down. Another was still staying.

00:51:00 So I took an apartment there.

00:51:30 This part of Warsaw was freed earlier, and people had no place to stay so they were staying with me.

00:52:00 People in the building sued me because I took an apartment in my own house. You had to work to stay in Warsaw.

00:52:30 Nobody had anything to wear.

00:53:00 This man was stealing from us.

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00:53:30 We had one pair of shoes between three of us. If one went out, the others had to stay home.

00:54:00 I had to sleep with a gun. The others in the apartment didn't expect me to survive and didn't want me, the Poles that is.

00:54:30 One day, my sister and her friend were out and I was walking near our place. An officer with soldiers stopped me

00:55:00 and asked me about the garage. He wanted to take it for his men. He was Polish but he was in the Russian army.

00:55:30 I said nothing doing. Then my husband came along and they started hugging each other. They were both from the same town.

00:56:00 So he stayed and his girl friend, a maid, a real shiksa, she turned up, she had survived and had no place to stay.

00:56:30 So she stayed with me.

00:57:00 But I left after a while.

Q: But the Poles knew what the Jews had gone through.

A: ~~Amxxk~~ So what. They went through a lot too,

00:57:30 They learn from the day they're born that Jews are bad. They didn't care as long as they survived.

00:58:00 The Germans took from the house and the Poles took.

00:58:30 They always blamed the Jews. The Jews were rich. Other Jews continued to live in Warsaw.

00:59:00 They're old and sick, and they have pensions.

00:59:30 I went to Lodz. I had relatives in the United States. I hoped to get papers to get to the U.S. I sent them a telegram that I had survived.

01:00:00 I was waiting for the papers to get out. And I was pregnant.

01:00:30 Then we went to Czechoslovakia, all illegal. We had no money or anything.

01:01:00 Then we went to Germany because it was easier to get out, to Israel or the United States.

01:01:30 There was no future in Poland. I just wanted to get out. We didn't stay in a DP camp.

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01:02:00 We stayed in a small town where my husband had a cousin who survived.

01:02:30 Joe was born in February 1946. We had gone through the snow to Germany, illegally. I had false papers.

01:03:00 I was afraid when we crossed the border, they were checking the pictures.

01:03:30 It was cold; the walls were shaking the way I was coughing. No medication, nothing. Had a lot of health problems after the war.

01:04:00 My husband was in better health than I was.

00:04:30 END OF TAPE II

TAPE III

00:00:00 After a while I didn't want to go anywhere. It meant standing in line.

00:00:30 It was a matter of going wherever we could go first.

00:01:00 We waited for three years for the papers.

00:01:30 I was sick and Joe was sick. My husband was trying to do whatever he could. My sister went to Frankfurt-en-Main.

00:02:00 I don't know what she was studying. She was bold enough to decide for herself.

00:02:30 My husband and I both spoke German.

00:03:00 We had to buy food on the black market.

00:03:30 My husband was going to school. In Poland it was a shame to be anything but a doctor or lawyer. But he was learning pocketbook making.

00:04:00 He was sponsored by ORT. He worked part-time in the office of Joint (Distribution Committee) There were a lot of Jews in Munich at the time.

~~00:04:30~~

00:04:30 I was the only one with a child there. So my house was a center, everyone came there.

00:05:00 There were a lot of unmarried people so we formed a center for them.

00:05:30 The German government gave us an apartment. That meant we had to share with the Nazis. We had to share the kitchen.

00:06:00 They were forced to share. They didn't like it. He had worked on the railroad and been a bog Nazi. His son was still a prisoner in Russia.

00:06:30 She was worse. He didn't talk much. They were nice to Joe. They read to him, held him on their lap.

00:07:00 And I was having a maid.

00:07:30 We paid very little. Its wasn't like over here.

00:08:00 I got CARE packages from the United States and for cigarettes you could get anything. With a piece of material, you could get a dress made for nothing.

00:08:30 Food was a problem but not for us because we got everything on the black market. The women in the store knew I had a small child and would give me things after hours.

00:09:00 Q: After the war, you knew that your sister survived, but you didn't know anything about anyone else?

A: mmmm

00:09:30 My sister met a fellow in Frankfurt, and he decided to go to Australia, so she followed him there and they got married there.

00:10:00 Thee Germans were sorry that we survived, but it was all masked. They kept to themselves.

00:10:30 The storekeepers knew that the Jews had money on cigarettes, so they were very nice to us.

00:11:00 We had to wait for our papers because first they went to Warsaw, and then had to find us. Meanwhile a lot of people got their numbers before us.

00:11:30 There was a lot of red tape. I didn't want to stay in a special camp, the conditions were bad, so I paid someone to sign my name every day.

00:12:00 I showed up the last day when I had to go with the transport. I left on March 10.

00:12:30 I arrived here March 24, 1949.

00:13:00 It was very difficult living among the Germans but it was the only way to get out.

00:13:30 That is where the DP camps were, that is where the consulates were. It was the only place to leave from.

00:14:00 Different places in Germany

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- 00:14:30 Some people stayed in Germany till now. Some went to Israel and didn't like it and went back to Germany.
- 00:15:00 An aunt was a widow, and she took me in. The big rich people didn't have room for me. I was so unhappy I was wishing I was back in the concentration camp.
- 00:15:30 It was like a prison. She was eccentric. She never had a child. He was ill.
- 00:16:00 In the middle of the night she would start to run the sewing machine and wake him up. She would not give me a key so I could go out. It was Passover and she hadn't cleaned the house in 50 years.
- 00:16:30 I cried my eyes out. I wouldn't take anything from the other relatives.
- 00:17:00 One aunt had keys made so I could go in and out.
- 00:17:30 A cousin who once had lived with us offered me an apartment.
- 00:18:00 It was a one-bedroom apartment , but it was something.
- 00:18:30 The first night I went crazy - there was a train running underneath. I thought I was in a concentration camp.
- 00:19:00 An aunt who had a maid to do the work in her house, cleaned the apartment before I moved in.
- 00:19:30 He was my uncle, so she was related only by marriage. It was nice. But the apartment was very tiny.
- 00:20:00 My uncle made me the superintendent of the apartment to collect there, People came to complain about everything.
- 00:20:30 My uncle had a key and would come in and take a nap. I couldn't complain. I was crying and my husband warned me not to say anything.
- 00:21:00 Before I moved in, I was criticized because I ordered a phone when I didn't have any furniture.
- 00:21:30 In Germany I had a phone. Here, without the language I needed a phone. In my home, we had a phone in every room. I didn't know any other way.
- 00:22:00 After a while a cousin, born here, moved in downstairs and she understood, she read about people who survived.
- 00:22:30 The relatives never asked me about what happened. They were all here. They didn't want to know.

- 00:23:00 They knew that my mother had been sending them money before. Now they were afraid the refugees would ask to be set up in business or something
- 00:23:30 They couldn't understand my attitude.
- 00:24:00 The aunt who had been so good to me, she had expensive things and offered me furniture, but I wouldn't take it. They couldn't understand that.
- 00:24:30 HIAS paid for our transportation and I got some money back so I returned the money to HIAS. My family couldn't understand that.
- 00:25:00 HIAS was willing to pay for furniture, but I wouldn't take it. What I really needed was to get my husband established, and that was never offered to me.
- 00:25:30 The rest I didn't care about. My husband was working making pocket books. An uncle gave him a job.
- 00:26:00 After a while. I saw there was no future in it - Puerto Ricans were doing the same work. My uncle was furious,
- 00:26:30 My uncle came to me and asked me to get my husband to go back. But it was a long distance to travel and there was no future. Husbands go back but people don't go back.
- 00:27:00 Once when I was sick, he came over and he knew we had no money so he left a hundred dollars in a book. Two weeks later I found it.
- 00:27:30 He learned about a different kind of work, framing, and it paid better.
- 00:28:00 Then we moved to Manhattan, in a bigger apartment.
- 00:28:30 We decided it wasn't good for Joe to be alone, so we had another child - eight years after Joe.
- 00:29:00 That would be '54. My husband continued to work, we bought a car.
- 00:29:30 I had friends from Germany. We lived on Riverside Drive and there were a lot of people - first marriages, second marriages, and we met in the park.
- 00:30:00 In Brooklyn I had friends too, because I was the super for the building, and when an apartment became vacant, I would give it to someone like me who needed it.

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00:30:30 Joey played with American children and I met the parents that way. But they never asked me about the war.

00:31:00 Q: How did you tell your children?

A: I never told them about it.

00:31:30 I only talked about it with my friends. The other people thought I was different, because I was European.

00:32:00

It was difficult - so many things to learn, not just the language

00:32:30 Q: How do you think your experiences affected your view of life of people?

A: Very much so. You're suspicious. You don't trust people. I got hurt too much.

00:33:00 Long pause. I despaired.

00:33:30 I felt I survived just for punishment.

00:34:00 For many years I didn't want any German money. They my husband, had to force me to take it.

00:34:30 It was very painful. I stopped many times. They treat you like dirt.

00:35:00 The German Jews, the commission, they tell you you are lying.

00:35:30 They give you maybe twenty-five percent. Some people knew how to work it. But if you were honest, it was very hard.

00:36:00 They couldn't pay me for what they did to me. So if they give you a few dollars, it's just blood. You take it because it's coming to you. You don't enjoy it.

00:36:30 You want to throw it in their face and tell them to stick it - you know where. If the Israeli government wants you to take it because they need it and you have to go along.

00:37:00 You do things not because you think it's right but because you have to do it. I think the Jews in America are not realistic - they think it will never happen here.

00:37:30 (difficult to understand)

00:38:00 Everything could happen again. because they can't stand a Jew make money.

- 00:38:30 The Jews are more educated, they have more. Hitler was able to do it, Mussolini was able. Especially if things are bad and people don't have money.
- 00:39:00 In Germany, Poland, Jews didn't know they were Jews.
- 00:39:30 They were more German than Jewish. First they were German, then Jewish. When people would ask me are you Jewish, I would say I was Polish.
- 00:40:00 But the Polish people didn't feel that way. Here, when the Cubans or Puerto Ricans come, they take away the jobs.
- 00:40:30 The Cubans, they will work for less, and longer hours. The Americans are furious. They criticize Carter for letting them in.
- 00:41:00 Q: Do you believe in God?
A: Not anymore. How could I? I did. (long pause)
- 00:41:30 (Long pause. Wipes her eyes.)
- 00:42:00 (Pause continues.)
- 00:42:30 (Pause continues.) I just wonder how much more I can take.
- 00:43:00 Q" What would you tell your children or grandchildren about the world?
A: You cannot tell them how to live. I would want them to live every day because you don't know what will be.
- 00:43:30 I see it every day. Like my sister wanted me to come over there to visit. The next day I get a phone call, she's gone.
- 00:44:00 She struggled so. Now when she could relax and enjoy a little -
- 00:44:30 And we have to say, thank God she didn't suffer.
- 00:45:00 And my husband, he can't take any pleasure. He needs a wife. (her sister's husband?)
- 00:45:30 Her husband passed away in 1974 (Albeck)
- 00:46:00 (Pause, tears.)
- 00:46:30 Q: Is there anything else?
A: Anything you want to ask me. We could talk for years.

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00:47:00 (Long pause) I go through life like through a cemetery.

00:47:30 I think Jews should go to Israel for their protection.
People will respect them in their own land.

00:48:00 They have done well since they have Israel. America
is a good place so long as you can make a living.

00:48:30 They have to keep Israel strong. No one knows what will
be. Not everyone can go live in Israel.

00:49:00 Israel could not take all the people, give them an
education. We have to help.

00:49:30 No place is perfect.

00:50:00 Q: Is there anything else?
A: Whatever you want to do.

00:50:30 So many things go through my mind. (Long pause.)
I'm not looking for justice.

00:51:00 I have no answer. (Long pause) I don't know what I
did wrong.
Q: to survive?

00:51:30 A: No. For the punishment

00:52:00 Q: Why do you think you survived?
A: I don't have the answer. For the punishment.
Let's say I was chosen

00:52:30 Every car accident, plane accident, somebody survives.
you don't know why.

00:53:00 You think and think and I don't know

END OF TAPE III