

*Tape two, side one:*

GS: This is tape number two of an interview with Sylvia Ebner, side one. Sylvia was, you were describing the experience on the train going to Auschwitz.

SE: Yeah, so the minute we went into the train and you have to make front of everybody, you lose your feeling, human being feeling. You don't feel no more human being. There's no more shame, you don't feel shame because you have to go, you have to go, you can't help it. But we become so thirsty, it was so warm, it was so warm on the train. There was a little hole, little window like the animal train, you know the cattle train, it was wired, wired little window, and hardly any air came in, it was so many people there. People was, kids was screaming, crying, grown-up crying, what's going to be with us? What's happening? Nobody wanted to drink, eat, but everybody wanted to drink because it was so hot, and all of the sudden they pushed the all car in to a tunnel. I never saw that tunnel there but it was a tunnel when the, before the train went out from that city have to go out. It was a big tunnel, and we couldn't get, we was standing there for hours in that tunnel, the train was standing there for hours and we couldn't get no air, in the tunnel was no air, we thought they gonna kill us right there in the tunnel, you know? We thought they--that's why they pushed us, they pushed us in. I remember when we went out from the tunnel, we saw the light, the street, I mean the trees, we were so happy they didn't kill us right away. We were sure that's why they put us there, to choke. The train went from Wednesday afternoon till Saturday morning. There was only once they give us water, one pit--or bit--one *kübel* of water. You should of see how everybody was, we cannot run because people was full sitting, laying, not laying, sitting, but kids was thirsty, crying, "I'm thirsty." I was crying myself, "Mommy I'm so thirsty," and my mother said, "Honey, I can't help it, I cannot give you water." Now I am a mother, I can't imagine how she felt when she cannot give her child a glass of water, a little bit of water. I was constantly, "Mommy I'm so thirsty." "Honey, I can't help it, I can't help it, I have no water." How you gonna sleep? How you gonna sleep when you have no room to sleep. I laid down on my mother and my father, and here I was sitting and I laid across on them, and my mother and my father was sitting all night, that's the way I was sleeping, because they want me to sleep. Come Friday night, it was, that was the worst thing I ever remember back, everybody wanted to light candle, everybody bring candle, we bring candle from home yet, but you're not suppose to light candle because the German gonna see it. We were already out from Hungary, we were Czech--went through Czechoslovakia and go to Poland, but we must light candle because we don't believe, it was no such a thing not to light candle. But how they light the candle, they light it for a minute, say the *brucha* [blessing] and right away blowing sound blow it away, you know? Because they don't want, they don't want, if somebody was standing front of the window, you know? Standing front of the window the German couldn't see in, we were lighting the candle, and I never forget my, my poor mother, my poor father, when my mother light the candle, he hugged me and he said to me

[crying] just re--[crying] the face I have, this time I saw my father crying and he said to-- just remember, [unclear] [term of endearment], my child, we love you very much, and if we don't come home take care of your brother. "Where is my brother?" My brother wasn't--and I said to myself, "What he mean, we don't come home?" You know? When you're a child, you can't picture that the father don't, well, "Where would you be? Where would you be?" I was sure he gonna be with me all the time, you know? And I said to myself, "Where would my father would be? Why is he telling to me that?" Then he said to me, "I'm sure they're going to separate us." Again, I couldn't picture it, to be separated again from my father because I felt so sure when someone when my father was with me and then he said, "Remember if you gonna see on the sky." That was the first time I've heard that they advertising in the sky, but my father was a very learned man, he was finished, he was finished Business College and he always showed us his report card, it was in a drawer in the bedroom and when we don't want to learn, "I want you to bring home the same card like I bring home," always was warning us, you know? And he had, he was all A's, all A's and he was a very learned man, as a matter of fact he read too much. Many times my mother was working hard with the animals, I feel guilty for that. My mother was feeding the animals around to the store and my father was reading, reading, reading.

GS: You were saying that your father said, "Look at the sky...?"

SE: Yeah he said, "Look at the sky," and I said, he said there is sometimes advertising on the sky and that was the first time I heard that word--on the sky advertising. When I came to America and I was in Atlantic City and I saw the advertisement on the sky, then I understand what my father was meaning about advertising. And he said, "I'm gonna advertise it where I am or where is your brother, always look the sky when you see an airplane going, look up on the sky," and I never heard advertising that time, we never--but he read it. He read it from books, you know? That's the way people advertising in the sky and when the first time I went to Atlantic City and I saw in the sky the advertising the lotion and this and that, then I know what my father was meaning about advertising.

GS: Do you mean like the airplanes...

SE: Airplanes.

GS: ...carry a message...

SE: Carry. Airplane carry a message...

GS: ...on a banner?

SE: Yes, on a banner but who knows I never...

GS: Right.

SE: ...heard that before and how would I know it? Only years after I was married and I went to Atlantic City and I saw that banner was saying something, then I know what my father was meaning, and he said right, "When we come home, anybody come home..." and again I said, "Why don't we all come home?" It just couldn't go into my head, "Why we all not come home? What they going to do with us?" I wasn't thinking they gonna kill us, I never, and my father never mentioned they gonna kill us. He figured,

he gonna go separate and we gonna come home early--differently, you know, different times. We should go home to our town, that's the first station, where we should go and everybody should meet in our town, and from there we do what we do, you know?

GS: I'd like you to finish the, your recollection of the trip, it was Friday night, you...

SE: Yeah.

GS: ...lit the candles, okay?

SE: And my, it was Friday night and my father said, "Please don't forget we love you very much and we love your brother, and remember one thing, take care of each other. That's your duty to take care of your brother and your brother's duty to take care of you." I never, my brother never come back, my father never come back, my mother never come back, I was alone to come back. I was 13 ½ and finally I arrived to Hungary. I was there a year in the concen--first I was in Auschwitz.

GS: Okay, the train then pulled in to Auschwitz on Saturday morning?

SE: The train pulled in in Auschwitz Saturday morning, "Everybody out, all the packages leave in the, in the train." That's why it was so important to bring, you know?

GS: Right. And was this in June?

SE: That was, I know it's eight days before *Shveés*.<sup>2</sup>

GS: Okay.

SE: What month was it, what month was it, I don't know. I have my *Yahrzeit*.

GS: So eight days before *Shavuos*?

SE: Eight days before *Shavuos* is my *Yahrzeit* for my mother.

GS: Okay. And...

SE: So what month it was, I don't know.

GS: Okay.

SE: Something, don't ask.

GS: And you left, you left your packages in the train?

SE: All the packages, just "Everybody down, everybody down from the train," first and pulling and the one who was front of me were, he had a big, with the, there was a string you know, how you call it?

GS: A rope?

SE: A rope, rope with a string [she probably means a whip] and it was killing the people like...

GS: Was this an SS man?

SE: SS, SS, SS was standing there and fast, "*Schnell, schnell, schnell*," and they were hitting us with that, with that rope, with that, how you call that, regular, not regular rope, it was made from, made from leather, leather, and we were running, we don't know where we running, we just run, run, run out from the train, out from the train, very fast.

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<sup>2</sup>Jewish holiday of *Shavuot* in 1944 it was May 28 and 29. The first deportation from Hungary occurred on May 5, 1944.

But I was so thirsty, Gloria. I was so thirsty, nothing I was interested, just running to the - pile. "Where I am," I said to myself down from the train, tired up, bent--how you call that--packages, valises, and people I thought it's water in it, you know, like those, those, how you call that, jars, jars, braided jars, a lot of braided jars, I thought it was full with water. I was running to every jar. My mother said, "Honey there is no water there. Don't run, don't run." "But I am so thirsty, Mommy, I am so thirsty." Finally, start, "*Alles heraus, Alles heraus!*" [unclear] I mean [unclear] five, five, five and saw the men was going to the other side, you know? Men separate, women separate, and we were finally standing children and women at the line, mens was on the other side. Then my father come to me and take off my hat. You should look like your moth, like a child, then you go with mother. If I would go with my mother I would be killed right away. They said right away, elderly people wanted to go with the cars or with the big, how you call those wagons, you know wagons, up, up, up, they pushed them up, you know, elderly people they don't want to walk. They figure they have to walk who knows how far. My two aunts, my three aunts, children, babies up on the car, on the wagon, or you're walking, right away, the minute that the big cars are starting to go, they have the vacuum turned back and they were killed right on the, on the cars. Not the, there were no cars, how you call those big red rigs, how you call those big rigs? Those...

GS: Like a truck?

SE: Truck, truck, truck, "Everybody on the truck. Who cannot walk, who don't want to walk, up to the truck." And a lot of the people and a lot of the children and this and cousin, you know? She took, she went up with the, they took him, put him up right because she don't want to leave the mother, "Go with the truck, go with the truck," they went right to the truck and they pushed me away and throw me right to the, right on, I was back of my cousins. They took us, who is one in Israel now and one is here in Great Neck, Long Island and I was happy at least I have them. "Where is Mother?" Till I look around, I see them already, everybody was up on the truck, everybody was, they don't want to leave each other, they all went to the truck. That's all I see, that's the last time I saw my mother, and women on the road, we were marching to the, to the bathroom, they, not the bathroom, to wash ourselves.

GS: To shower.

SE: To shower, they took--they bring us to the shower. Everybody standing five, and five line you know, and pushed us into the shower. Right away my hair was completely down, hair from there, hair from everywhere, wherever you have hair. And you have to--you go to the washroom and when you come out, they spritz you down something, I don't know what was it; they give me a gray dress, shorts--short sleeve, one gray dress. But on the road, I said to myself, "Maybe it's not so bad here because the crazy people, they look clean, ok they shaved but maybe they shave they don't want the tick to get in but they look like they're taking them for a walk." I figured those are crazy people and even then they take care of them. In a half an hour later, I was one of the crazy ones,

I had a gray dress, I have the shaved thing and I was marching to the, to the camp, to Au-- to Birkenau, we were marching to Birkenau. We went through that, that door, you know, that big door. That time, I tell you the truth, I don't speak German a word and I don't know what that means, "*Arbeit Macht der Leben Süßs*, [labor makes life sweet].<sup>3</sup> I don't know but many girls know, speak German, you know, and my father speak German, perfect German. I'm sure when he saw that, he know what that mean and, but I was with my cousins, at least I have my two cousins with me. They throw us into a barrack, it was already at night but in the meantime, I said my mother can't see without glasses and I have his glasses with me--her glasses--I have her glasses with me because my mother read, need it for read, need it for sew and I have it, I don't know how I have it with me, I don't know why it was in my hand, I don't know, I have no idea, and I said, Oh my God and mean--everything, you have to leave here everything, everything except your shoes, except your shoes, everything leave in the washroom. I said, "Oh my God, my mother glasses, what, I must take them, my mother can't see without it." I didn't know that truck gonna take my mother to kill, I didn't know at that time, I didn't know that time. How will I, how I gonna hide it, you have nothing on you just your shoes on you, in you. You have to put on your shoes. I put it under the arm and they, and the SS find it, he give me such a bang on my back, "Your mother don't need that no more." I said, "That's my mother's." He throw it to the floor. I never forget it. He throwed the glasses on the floor, and give me a big push, a big bang on my back. Go, *geh* go, go, go, *schnell, schnell* and I saw where she throw them. I said, "Oh my, my God, how my mother gonna, she cannot even a needle to put in without that..."

GS: At this time had you seen Mengele?

SE: I see Mengele when they separate from my mother. That's the time I saw my mother before they separate me, Mengele hold my arm and debating, "What shall I do?" But I don't know why, she was, he was debating with me. I don't know it. I was only interested of the water because I was so thirsty I was interested of the water, and I felt he give me a big, you know, a big slap and I find myself next to my cousins, and my mother I saw we was, she was already in the thing. After that I see plenty Mengele, after that I see her plenty. I was, I went, then I was in that *A Lager*, that was a horrible place, that was a horrible place. We were standing from four o'clock in the morning, it was so cold, we freezing. One dress on you, no underdress, undershirt, nothing, nothing, just your shoes and your gray dress short sleeves. We were freezing, we stand five people in the line, and luckily, we were four friends until the [unclear], we didn't see the Germany coming from the other side then we stand three but we change each other, you know, because the front who was at the front and in the back you freeze. So we were, we tried to change each other to be in the middle and try to hug each other till they don't come. The, of the four, they, they, you know, they were hollering, "You are afraid from them." [unclear] It was a Jewish girl, you know? "Look at your mother," I want quiet. Jewish girl said it. "I want..."

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<sup>3</sup>*Arbeit Macht Frei* - work makes you free, was on top of gate at Auschwitz.

GS: This is the Jewish girl...

SE: This is the Jewish girl...

GS: ...who was in charge of?

SE: She was in charge for the whole block. At night when we couldn't, you couldn't sleep because you cannot sleep flat, they give you a little *Koje* [space] we call it *Koje*, six people, six people, there was no cover, there was no nothing, just a gray dress on you, and you sleep on the side, because you have no place to sleep one way or that way or this way, one turn, everybody have to turn because there was no room. One wake up, everybody--and in the beginning we were quite noisy then that girl, Aliseka, said, "What do you think? Why are you so happy? Why are you talking? Look at your mother, smell out, there is your mother goes up." And we said, "See, she is just a facist." We didn't believe it at the beginning, we don't believe it. We believe it the next day when we really smell the, the smell outside on the front of the, you never been in Auschwitz?

GS: No.

SE: Anyhow they were out there everyday, we were freezing around four o'clock then come nine, ten o'clock we were bubble up, burning, the sun was burning us and bubble up, completely bubble up, there was no medicine to put it down, there was no medicine, it went down itself. It was raining like crazy and the clothing get wet, you cannot change it, you go in after the [unclear] *cale-appell* [morning body count], you go inside or they catch you to work, or they catch you to work, what was the work, and I was such a *schlemiel* all the time. I can't believe it, I was so *schlemiel*. In the meantime but that was later on, I tell you, ok--for this time, this, I was with my cousins and my cousin, the one who's in Great Neck--she's sick now too--she was very weak, she was a pretty girl but there was a night when come two SS and a Jewish girl with her, with him, and the Jewish girl was pulling the people out and this girl was very nice because she saw my cousin was very weak and she pulled her out and we said, "We gonna go always together, we won't gonna be, they won't let us separate," so the minute they pulled her, we were sure we go to the crematorium because we know already the crematorium, we smell crematorium, we know already sick, sick you are dead, we know everything. We were hungry, so hungry there was no water, no, I'm telling you we were, it was horrible. They give us some kind of a soup and no matter how hungry we were, we cannot eat it, it was some grass and some sand in it, we couldn't eat it. It was impossible. They give us a piece of bread like that, that's the only thing what we could eat, so anyhow, this time we said we going to be together all the time and they took my cousin, her sister said, "She's my *Schwester*. She's my sister," and I said, I don't even wait, I said, "She's my cousin." And my girl we have--do you know Jungreis, do you ever read Jungreis' story, Rebbetzin Jungreis, do you ever hear from it?<sup>4</sup>

GS: Umm unne, [signified no].

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<sup>4</sup>Jungreis, Esther; The Jewish Soul on Fire; Morrow, 1982, NY.

SE: Oh, one day I have money, I buy you that paper. I have to have that paper, Rebbetzin Jungreis, in every way she saved us.

GS: How do you spell that?

SE: Jungreis. How you spell, what the heck, I don't know, Rebbetzin Jungreis.

GS: Okay, I'll get it later.

SE: I gonna give you one paper, what I have...

GS: Okay.

SE: Okay? I gonna give you one paper. On Saturday, I bring you one paper. That was a big rabbi's family and her father was a big rabbi in Tokaj, in that town and my cousin was very good friend and I was very good friend, childhood friend with this girl. She was our fort, she was our fort, so I said, we run after, she was my cousin and this girl, Piri, her name was Piri, she's my sist--I was her sister. So we don't, we don't care where we go, but we gonna go together. We go to the crematorium because my sister, my cousin was very sick, very weak, we were sure we go there. In the meantime they bring us into B Lager, not to the crematorium. We were so surprised, you know? "What, what happening?" We didn't, they didn't take us to the crematorium. We went into that barrack and they said, "We are going to work on Brzézinka," we call it Brzézinka, that you call it Canada. They call it Canada what we call it Brzézinka, you know? Tomorrow morning we gonna go to work there. We couldn't believe it and we don't know what is Brzézinka, but we arrived there it was about, they took us about, they took maybe 30 girls all together from this, and we arrived there to the Brzézinka, we have to march, walk, and we arrived there, there was food, the food what we Jews, what my, I never even know my mother have anything but people was taking with them in the package, so they take the food and there was medicine, and we can change our shoes. My shoes, already, was finished. I have a half pair, not half, it was a yel,--brown shoes, there was there, the sole was already almost finished you know, so I, we could change it, we not suppose to change it but the girls said, "You go ahead and change it," and we have, they give us a white cloth in our hat, white cloth, they took us in the shower room, they give us a white hat from a piece of sheet, they cut it off, everybody have white hat and they give blue and white to *tüip* [tüille fabric]. You know what is *tüip*? Blue and white uniform, blue shiny it was, all the Jewish people have it, womens, have it at that time, everybody, that was the style in Hungary and Europe, blue and red, shiny material and with little dots, red, no white dots. That was the style at that time in Europe, every young woman before they get married, they get this, that was go with it. Red, not red, wine colored and white *tüip* or blue colored with white *tüip*. So they divide us, wait a minute, I'm sorry, sorry, sorry that was later on, that was later on, sorry, no, no, no. No, no, no, they give us, I'm sorry forget that one, that was later on, that was later on. No, we went in and we were allowed to buy--get the white hat but the regular dress, okay? And they didn't go and check you, or if they check you, God forbid, right away they put on underwear because we were separating those packages that was near the station and they bring in with big, big wagon all the stuff what we Jewish people were carrying, all the

big packages, valises, everything was there, and clothing what we bring in, our clothing there, we took us, we cannot change the top because we have a number on it, on the gray unless we have a red mark you know? And they give us number and *Haftling*, we were *Haftlings* [prisoners] so we cannot change the top but we put up underwear and we change right away our shoes and the hat, the kerchief instead of one, we double it, triple it, you know, and then we put it on our head. We gonna go back to the camp, you know? What do you think I was sitting on the toilet, they call it toilet *latrine*. *Latrine* mean rod like this here, and you sit there on that thing when you have to go to the toilet and you sit, that's where you see right away, who is who, that was the first thing. "Who are you?" And I ask, "Where you come from?" Hungarian, you know? She said, "I am from Fershiga [phonetic] and right away I recognize my cousin, my cousin voice. She said Fershiga, I look at that, we don't recognize each other because we were all run down already but the voice I recognize, we recognize it--Sylvia, Margo, you know? [Hungarian phrase] "How they--how you come here, how you come?" She said she's under the next *Lager*, next block, about four or five block away and I was already in Brzézinka, "Oh my God," right away I took off my hat, you know, and I tell her, I just have single then, you know? And the first thing was to change her shoes. She had no shoes and I have already good shoes. Right then in the toilet I changed her shoes right, but she has small foot, that her shoes was still from home and I have always a big foot, but I don't care, I have to take it, I have to change it, okay, but what, how I gonna give her food, the minute we were in that Brzézinka, you know, we were allowed, we get half a bread, half a bread, brown bread. We cut it in pieces, we cut it in slices, because there was knife and we put a marmalade, you know, in, *schmaltz*, what anything was good we put it in, you know, anything food we put it in, we thought we didn't know we gonna meet anybody, but whoever was with me in the barrack, they all was there, they all was working there, but for our cell. But when I met her, right away you know, I went, I run into my barrack, "Wait here," and I give her and my cousin have the food there too, right away, we give her food and we give her so much she can bring to her sisters. Every night we come home, we were coming into the *Lager* maybe four weeks from that *Lager*, from Brzézinka, we come into the same *Lager* to sleep. You know, where we were, they put us first, and every night we were packing in food but this time we get smarter because people get already their stomachache, running stomach you know? So what we do, we have, there was *Tablett*, there was some kind of a tablet what stopped the running stomach, and we find there so many medicine between the packages, not everybody was so poor like we were, you know? From all the... [tape two, side one ended]



*Tape two, side two:*

GS: ...two, side two, an interview with Sylvia Ebner.

SE: You know and there in that Brzézinka, everything we have to bring in, all the big packages. It was a long barrack, was maybe ten barracks. One was separated, we, we, they bring into us, so we have to put separate, underwear, men underwear, women underwear, *tallis*, *tefillin*, and all the shoulder pads, we have to check the shoulder pads, they know it, they know the Jews gonna hide the gold and whatever they have. Even so, before we have to go to the Townhouse and bring in all the jewelry, they said, they were--bum, bum, bum, bum, bum:"Every Jew should bring all their jewelry and everything to the, to the city hous--Townhouse," whom the hell they were saying that, we were altogether four Jews, we were all around the town, but every *goy* have to hear that, "All the Jews have to bring in their jewelry," and everything. But my father outsmart them, I tell you later on, let me finish that. Okay, this place was all the clothing, everything, and we have to separate--ladies, separate men's, separate children, separate the soap, separate the medicine, the, the, the meat, the *schmaltz*--how you call the *schmaltz*--the oil things, separate. We have an elderly woman from my town also working at the same place with two of her daughter, and she find her own package, what she bring in. She find her own package, and those people wasn't poor, and they have a lot of jewelry. She find it and she said, "Kids, we find good jewelry, we don't gonna throw..." there was a valise, you have to throw it in monies, jewelries, we have to check all the bottom of the sweaters, where anything that was turned back because they know the Jews was hiding the jewelry, you know? And we have to pull it out and throw it in that valise. I never in my life saw so much jewelry, money, dollar, first time I saw dollar in my life, everything but this woman said to us, Mrs. Adler, I think her name was Adler. She said, "If we find something kids, just to put it into the ground," the barrack where we work, it was covered both sides but the ground was ground, you know? It wasn't wood or cement. It was ground. And everybody take a piece of carpet and there we were working on the carpet, Jews bring the carpet, Persian carpet and everybody was allowed to work on that, because they don't want the clothing to get dirty, so here they allow us to work on the carpet. "Lift up the carpet and push it into the ground, push it into the ground, deep into the ground," that lady said. We wouldn't think of it but this lady said, we won't think of it, you know? You should have seen later on the people, the Polish people they went and they were selling it by the bucket, the ground, they know it. They know there is jewelry in but they were smart, they take out the jewelry and they sell the ground for their friend. They take out the jewelry and the friend, they sell the ground for the, for the, because in that place everybody know we were, there was jewelry, and they no dummies. They figured they throw it in the, they *shtup* it in, you know? But they were smarter, they kept the jewelry and they sell their own friend the ground. Maybe they put some junk in it, one piece here and there, and everybody was buying the ground, because the Jews put the jewelry there. So here I was and all of

the sudden come around, every day, oh no four weeks we went into the same camp, after we sleep over already. We didn't go every day in to the camp till we working, till we went to the camp, my cousin was all right because we bring in the food, if they would find out, we stealing food, first thing would be cut off our hair, what we don't have no hair, but already growed a little bit, it was four week. Like here you know when you cut it down completely, so slowly it start to work. That would be the first thing to cut our hair. Second thing, we would never be able to go to Brzézinka, that was comparing, that was something where you can find food, steal food. My cousin was very good stealer. She was older cousin. She was very smart, and always watching the German, the German didn't see if she was already there and pulled some food out and bring it in and give it to us. But anyhow, we bring in four week the food for my cousin, and later on we put in medicine in the bread. If they would find it, I'm sure we won't go no more there to work or they would hit us, kill us. It was really, we risk our life. So my cousin give me that shoes, I don't ask how I went into that place, and we have to march, you know, one, two, three, march. What happened, we were there for two weeks, and all of the sudden the other, and every day we changed shoes, every day. Somebody come and we give it to them because shoes was finished already, we were there already six weeks and the, the mud and everything, eat it up. All of the sudden I see a girl come in that was from the second village where I lived. I saw her only once and she said to me, "Sylvie, my sister's shoes is very bad. Can we change it?" So I change the shoes from her foot and she give her shoes for her sister, and she has again a small foot. "How I gonna go in?" and it was already rotten and everything, and they know we work there and they know we have to have shoes already on us. "How am I going to make it to look like a shoes?" you know? I took the, we get jam, we get jam, you know? Marmalade...

GS: Oh, okay.

SE: Marmalade, and I smeared it in the shoes to look like, you know, like a good shoes, doesn't, shouldn't look like a used out shoes because if they would find out, they know I am already working there and I have a good shoes. I remember when I marched by in that door, *Arbeit Mache der Leben Süß*, and there were SS watching on both sides, so fast I marching when I, and I was in already. My God, a big stone went down after somebody else, I was standing it was the place there to sleep. They give us the place there to sleep, and we were--this come the blue dress. Here we get the blue dress and the other barrack, there were--crema--near the crematorium, it was so near the crematorium, not as far like that tree, no, maybe three times like that kitchen, we were so close to the crematorium. And the one barrack was the red, blu--*tüip*, the wine *tüip* and the other barrack was the blue *tüip* and I was in the blue, blue dot. Dressed up, everybody have to have blue dress and everybody in the other barrack have to have red dress, but there we weren't no more, we aren't going in no more to the, to the place. Every day while we were marching in for four days--four weeks they come the *Sonderkomando*, you know what is the *Sonderkomando*?. They were carrying a big junk of wood on their, on their shoulder, and

we know why for they carry, because we know already there was a crematory and we know this, this, this people by then they put them and they change them and you know that was the *Sonderkommando*, they call it. Anyhow, we were sleeping on the barrack and every morning we would march out to work, sorry. Every morning we march out to work, at night we come back and we sleep there, and food they give us junk, came *Yom Kippur* they give us the best of food. No, wait a minute that was *Tisha B'Av*, first was *Tisha B'Av*, yeah, when we fast, they give us the best of food, the best of food. But you think we ate? That girl said, "Don't eat girls, don't eat that," because this have bacon and milk and some *tzibele* [onion] cooked together, "So don't eat it because this is bacon and things," so definitely we didn't eat it. They couldn't believe it, and the Jewish girls was, who take care of the barrack, they threw it out, you know, they threw it out because they don't want the Germans to see we didn't eat it.

GS: Oh.

SE: You know? They threw it out because they don't want Germans to see we didn't eat it. Anyhow it was--we know some--we know already everything. All day we see there was not enough room in the crematorium, it was so fast, the [unclear] the people was coming in, they were big ditches and we saw when they throw in the people in the ditches. First, first, there was no tent front of us, there was only wire, but they, they later on, they don't want us to see, so they put the blanket, they covered all, they used all the blankets what we Jews was bringing to make a cover, like a shield us, shield us from the peop--, we should not see the crematorium. You know, that time we didn't see no more the crematorium because first of all we were not interested because we know, what is it, you know, and then they cover it down, cover it down with the things. Once we, before it was covered down, there was a man from Munkacs, he burn his own children, his own family, as he told us. "Can you imagine what I did today," he said, "I had to burn my own children." Munkacs, that was a city, that was Carpatos, that was the Carpathian people--yeah. We were working there, we were at that time we still have food because the transport, they still coming. All of the sudden I got sick. What you gonna do if you get sick there? Where you going to go? What you gonna, who want to take care of you? There was a little hum--house for, with four bed, four top and bottom. Little hospital, they call it and my cousin, my cousin know one of the forelady, who was a forelady there, who said to my cousin, "You know something, you look exactly like my sister," and she treat her, she was with the German, Jewish girl but she was, but she treat her like her sister, and when I get sick, she went, she met this girl, and she said my cousin is in the hospital, in that little hospital, please try to help her, you know, she said to that Jewish girl. So this Jewish girl went--there was a Jewish doctor in the same hospital--and this Jewish girl steal *Scharlach* serum [scarlet], you know what is *Scharlach* serum, that anybody who was in *Scharlach*, anybody who become--what is it? That time is already? Quarter past, what is it? Oh my God.

GS: It's 12:15.

SE: 12:15, okay. And anybody...

GS: Scarlet fever?

SE: Scarlet fever, I guess...

GS: Okay.

SE: I get scarlet fever. I was so sick, but I didn't know this was scarlet fever at that time. I know only one thing, I was sick, and my cousin who was friends with this, who like her sister, tell her, "My cousin is very sick. Try to do something," and she send in the Jewish doctor. The Jewish doctor was who taking care of us, and she find that the time I find it out, I don't even remember, not that time, after. I find out what was it, cause my cousin told me when we met. She find *Scharlach* [scarlet] serum, *Scharlach* serum that means if anybody is in *Scharlach* that blood changed and that blood is helping you, your husband know what it is.

GS: Okay.

SE: You have scarlet serum, just mark it down, she knows, he knows what...

GS: Scarlet serum?

SE: Scarlet serum, serum, yeah. And they give me that, and finally the fever went down on me. I was very high fever and they bring me into the big river, the big one.

GS: The big what?

SE: The big river, river, they call it river, that was other hospital...

GS: The river.

SE: The river, yeah, yeah.

GS: Okay, sorry.

SE: They bring me in from that place, and my sister, my cousin know her, she left my other cousin to come with me, and in the meantime they bring lunch, bring back to this place where we separated from the main barrack, the main camp, they bring in the lunch from there. So she offered herself, she gonna help to bring in the lunch. They come in with me, she come in with me, they bring me in horse and buggy, they put me down in the barrack. I tell you it was horrible, after that place where we were in the, I still have the blue dress with the dots and I have already pajama on me, you know, because I get there pajama on the place, but I went into that place and there was no, there was three bed like this and salt, and straw, straw but it was already mushed up and they told me up on there. I was sick and you know scarlet it goes to your bone, you cannot hold, you cannot hold a spoon, you cannot hold a spoon because you have no strength in your hand, you have in the bone, all goes to the bone, and I, and they throw me up there on that bed, and next it was a bed here like this, bed here, three bed, three up and three up this way and three up this way and we were, I was on the third tier, you know, three up and up, and just a little room between to go to each other and I see there a girl was crying. "Why you crying?" Right away I know this from her cry, she was Hungarian, "Why you crying?" "Why you crying?" I said, "I just got separated from my cousin and I know I never going to see them again." She was crying because she was just separated from her mother. She was with her

mother, she was in a, working in a weaving company, weaving, they were weaving, woving, they were woving...

GS: Weaving?

SE: Weaving.

GS: Oh weaving.

SE: Weaving, she was working with the weaving and I was working in the Brzézinka. Right away we become like a sister, we were like sisters, she was Hungarian, we were like sisters right away. She has nothing on her, honest-to-goodness, so I right away take off my bottom of the pajama because my, the top was long enough, you know, and I have the blue dress on me. We were there for six week. She has scarlet fever, I have scarlet fever and there was people from typhus. People were dying from left to right, from left to right. This one, I did bring this one, I did bring out this one the next day we will have the neighbor, this one already, but we were together, you know, and we were--eat, you have to eat what they give you, I never forget she said to me. Said, "I can't eat." "You must eat, my *lager* sister, you must eat this." Finally we eat because we must eat she said to me, she was older than me and I listen to her, you know, I eat what they give me. But next, it wasn't even a week, there was no medicine, but there was fever, they took measure your fever and there was a fever chart front of your bed, fever chart front of your bed, but I was lucky I get the fever serum, you know, my fever went down already that time. My fever went down already, if I wouldn't get that serum, my fever, it would kill me, you know? And this friend of mine, she had no more fever, she was there already a week, she said, "My fever is over already. It went down." All of the sudden, well, we were constantly talking to each other you know, nothing to do there just talking from the family in Hungary and how you eat there, what you think how you eat? You hungry, you so, we were hungry already before too, in the camp, in Auschwitz already. We use to talk, Mother made this, mother made that, chicken *paprikash* and this and that, and it was so, so delicious. Somebody's idea was let's make *manna* out of it. You know how the Jews eat, *manna*, taste like chicken. Isn't it, isn't it delicious we were talking. And one of the girls said, "Oy I'm so hungry." "How can you be hungry? Mommy just made a big plate of, dish full of chicken, we just eat it." That's the way we eat it, to keep ourself in food, believe it or not. So anyhow we were there for six of the second week. All of the sudden, I see big commotion, big commotion, the girls who are taking care of the, of that big long room was in the middle was a high thing like this, that was the heating system for winter. In the meantime, I saw many times the *Stublings* are sitting on it, you know, that was the middle of the, that was on this side, that was on this side, and this was in the middle. I saw they were excited, and I heard that, you know? I heard that Mengele, Mengele, Mengele, Mengele, you know? "What was that? Was that?" Then they said, "They come to select us. They come to select us. Make yourself..." the girl said that, "You're not sick. Don't show you're sick," but we have an under, next, next bed under me, next bed under there was a little room here. There was a woman, a French woman, a Christian woman, but her

husband was Jewish and she give birth there, a little girl. The Jewish doctor helped her to give birth, but when I arrived the baby was already born, and the baby have no clothing, nothing, and I know how to sew and the mother give some piece of things, and I made the hat and I made, you know the little hat, and I made the little shirt for her, she was naked, the baby was naked. Just covered with the blanket and the baby was crying, there was so much bed bugs, you can't sleep at night. You put down your head, you put down your head, your bed bug, you can, you can, eat you up. We don't have no blood anyhow, eat us up, so what you do, we were sitting all night, and itching, but at least it didn't itch you here. During the day they were sleeping, the bugs they don't come out light, so during the day we were trying to sleep. This baby was screaming, she was hungry, the bugs was eating, she don't have enough milk, her breasts swollen up, she don't have no milk. She was a beautiful woman, a French, beautiful Christian, but her husband was Jewish, and that Jewish doctor, and they were hollering, "They come, Mengele's coming." She was afraid, you know, they cannot hide their babies. She heard--I saw when she give the injection to kill the baby. She give the injection for that beautiful baby and cover her down, baby goes, "up, up," and that's all we hear, that's all we hear, but when the doctor came already the baby was quiet, and the woman was crying, her breast was full with milk but she was infected. She was standing next to me on this side, that Jewish woman--not Jewish, she was Christian--and this side was my girlfriend and we were lucky in the meantime, I was in Ausc, in that good camp where I was, have a chance to eat, you know? Good camp, you call a good camp.

GS: Ummm hmmm.

SE: You call a good camp near the crematorium, work near the crematorium and see the people, who are throwing in, good camp, but for food wise, it was, it was, and this, she was working in a weavery, weaving material, and she wasn't so run down either, but we have to hold our heads, the girl said, "Don't make *nebbish*, hold yourself, hold yourself straight. Show you all right," and it was when they pulled, first was this woman, they take, she wasn't skinny either, I don't know where, maybe they just think of it. The first thing they say, "You have to hold your fever chart in your hand." "You have to hold your fever chart in your hand." What the hell they look the fever chart, they don't give, even give a hospital or anything, took her fever chart away, they pass by me, pass by my girlfriend, they took the next one to her, come at night they pull them down, pull them down from the bed, they pulled them down those people, she was--this one wasn't crying no more, she wanted to die because her child died. I saw where they take her, she was [unclear] she don't want to live no more, she was crying that's why. But this girl that they took was horrible, horrible, so we went [unclear]. In the meantime, I was, I have a head of cabbage. You know what is a head of cabbage? What that mean? Lifesaver, but I know how to sew, and there was Christian *Stublings* [phonetic], workers, whom they were there in the camp but they never kill them, and they were working in the hospital, and some Jewish doctors, and some Jewish girls, and they want to have to make a pillow case and I

was a sewer, and I said, "I can sew," and they give me the head of cabbage because I sewed the pillow cases. A head of cabbage there was like here, I don't know big pile of diamonds, but we gonna, they gonna, they gonna kill us, and the cabbage is there. They--so we were running under the blanket, we were eating and watching which side, you know, my girlfriend and me, eating and finish it up, you know? There we finished it up, we don't want to leave it here because they gonna kill us anyhow, and they don't kill us, we don't have no more cabbage either. [laughter] Eat them up quick we went back and in the meantime, they were coming, Mengele, the other side where the typhus, same room, but this side was the scarlet fever this side was the typhus fever and they become so big, big, from the, how you call it?

GS: Like boils?

SE: ...Boils, like boils, probably they were there longer, but I don't know what from they got the boils, infection. They put this on there in the middle of this piece of thing without blanket, without anything, they put the people down, tie down the two feet, and operated without anything, without any...

GS: Anesthetic.

SE: Anesthetic, nothing, screaming, and I saw, we saw them, they were cutting them so and then they put it, by then they all died, they I tell you...

GS: And this Mengele was there...?

SE: Mengele did that, Mengele was experienced, experienced to take the boil out, you know, with the...

GS: Experimented.

SE: Experimenting for them. I tell you, it was just horrible. There was underneath a beautiful, there was a Czechoslovakian girl. I don't know if she was in scarlet or what she was. She died right underneath of me, underneath of me, that beautiful dark hair, that she, she wasn't too skinny, she wasn't too long in the camp. Then on this side, there was a French girl she draw, she was such a draw, where she took the paper, I don't know, and pieces of chalk, she was drawing faces and everything, they took her, they kill her too. Finally six weeks later, I was supposed to go back to my cousin because they said they bring me back to my cousin...

GS: Ummm hmmm.

SE: ...and my *lager* sister went a week before me because she was there a week before me, so I give her my top of my pajama because I gonna go back, I gonna go back to the camp and I gonna have it, you know? I have underwear, I give her my underwear because I gonna have another one, you know? I just have my shoes on me and I was sure I, they gonna take me back, and she was sure she going to go back to her mother but she still have, she cannot have nothing there. Finally she went home, she went back. I don't know where she was. Then my turn was, they washed me before everybody, they wash me, they send me to the shower before anybody, and I was supposed to wait when they brought the lunch, in the truck, they bring the lunch and I was supposed to go on that lunch, lunch

car back with the lunch together. But in the meantime, my cousin, who now is in Great Neck, Long Island, she came, she offered herself, she gonna come for the lunch, she bring in medicine, she bring in bread to the hospital to me. Full of medicine and for that bread, for that medicine, for that Christian those *Stublings*, they know it the minute somebody come from Brzézinka, “Did she bring you anything? Did she bring you anything? I give you this. I give you that.” So I get a piece of bread for it, you know? I couldn’t give it to nobody because I don’t know what kind of medicine it was. I couldn’t give it to anybody but those good for nothing, they know it, I give you this, I give you that, I get a piece of bread for it, that’s what I get for it, and the bread itself, I eat the bread what it was in the medicine, yeah, my cousin who is here now, she is so sick, poor thing. So anyhow I, I, they took me down and I was suppose to bring in the lunch. I went there, I was going there, the truck come, the truck go, they left there, they leave me there, you gonna go to the camp, back to the *lager*, not to my, where my cousin was. It was a raining, pouring, *yoy* was shivering, I was shivering, I was all wet and I have to wait there, and I said I was the [unclear] I said, “Now, this is it. I can’t take it no more. I gonna kill myself.” I said to myself, “I gonna kill myself” and no more, this I can take it no more. I just can’t take it no more. While I was thinking all of a sudden a truck stop, “Up, up, *schnell, schnell*, what-- alone, alone on the truck. “Where they gonna take me? Where they gonna take me,” I said to myself, “Where they gonna take me? Where they take me? They take me to the crematorium, probably,” I said to myself, “Where would they take me, they don’t take me to my cousin, where my cousin worked,” so that’s it, I wanna kill myself, let it be finished, that’s all, let it be finished, and I was already happy, I gonna die. I gonna, they take me to the crematorium. All of the sudden, they dropped me off one *Lager*, “In, in, in,” *schleped* me in, where they? I am in a *Lager*, I am not in the crematorium, they don’t put me to the crematorium, I’m in the *Lager*, in the barrack, and underneath of the floor, cement floor, I was all wet, nothing just a blue top dress on me, just a blue top dress on me. On the floor and I was crying, what do you think my...? [tape two, side two ended]