

11/15/89

1 MS. FEIBELMAN: We are with Max Drimmer.

2 MR. DRIMMER: D-r-i --

3 MS. FEIBELMAN: D-r-i-m-m-e-r.

4 MR. DRIMMER: Correct.

5 MS. FEIBELMAN: And Herman Shine, S-h-i-n-e?

6 MR. SHINE: Correct.

7 MS. FEIBELMAN: And that's about it. I'm Anne  
8 Feibelman, with one "N." Let's see. Why don't we start  
9 with -- what I want to do is get the background.

10 Where were you both born? How do you know  
11 each other?

12 MR. SHINE: Well, we both were born in Berlin,  
13 and, of course, we had known each other quite a few years  
14 before when we were small children. And in 1939 when the  
15 war broke out, we became Polish Jews in the concentration  
16 camp, Sachsenhausen, close to Berlin, and we spent the next  
17 three years. Most of the prisoners, we came together with  
18 the Jews, did not survive that long, but we were young and  
19 strong and eventually we were put to work. I became a  
20 roofer in the camp. And in 1942 by order of Heinrich  
21 Himmeler -- he wanted to make Germany clean of the Jews --  
22 so we were the first one from in the concentration camp to  
23 be deported to Auschwitz.

24 MS. FEIBELMAN: This was a work camp you were in  
25 first?

1                   MR. SHINE: Concentration camp.

2                   MR. DRIMMER: We were supposed to come to a P.O.W.  
3 camp because Poland had the war with Germany. So they  
4 arrested us with a false pretense, and they brought us to  
5 Sachsenhausen. We were picked up from homes early in every  
6 morning and then collected in the schoolyard. There was  
7 about 1800 in our area. You know, Berlin was a large city.  
8 And we were brought to the schoolyard; and then, of course,  
9 the mothers and the wives of the men only, only men, were  
10 worried what's going to happen with us. So they all came  
11 to the schoolyard and they told them, the women, that we  
12 would be brought into a working camp to the East.

13                         So they asked, "Can we bring them  
14 something?" They said, "Yes. You can bring him food or  
15 blankets" because it was starting the wintertime. So the  
16 women -- everybody went home and they brought suitcases  
17 with clothes and food, and then individual men were called  
18 out when the wife or the mother came. And in my case,  
19 Drimmer, I ran forward excited. I was so excited, I ran  
20 down; and this high-ranking S.S. officer, he fell flat on  
21 his nose. And this is the worst thing you can do to an  
22 S.S. man. A Jew did it.

23                         So my mother came and brought my suitcase and a  
24 couple of packages with it, and I ran back. And then later  
25 on we were put onto open trucks, police trucks, with

1 benches on it, and we were driven to a train station; and  
2 the German give us salute on the side of the sidewalk. And  
3 they screamed "dirty Jews" and all those names. So we were  
4 brought in Sachsenhausen. That was a P.O.W. camp.

5 MR. SHINE: The Nazis didn't really know what to  
6 do with the Jews. They put us in isolation.

7 MS. FEIBELMAN: How old were you?

8 MR. SHINE: I was just not quite 17.

9 MR. DRIMMER: Eighteen.

10 MR. SHINE: I was 16, two weeks less than 17. And  
11 we were put us in isolation. We were four large barracks.  
12 They were completely closed off from the other camp, and we  
13 were there for about three months when the Nazis would come  
14 in. And once the S.S. says -- they thought maybe the  
15 outside world would complain that these people should be in  
16 an "internation" camp because they were prisoner of war.  
17 The war broke out September 31, '39.

18 And nobody cared about the Jews. In Berlin  
19 Heinrich Himmler gave the order to torture the Jews to  
20 death. And, of course, they picked the heavy ones, the  
21 older ones first. We, the youth, the younger ones, we were  
22 supposed to clean the barracks and do all the services for  
23 the barracks to keep it hygienically clean.

24 After six months, or four months, Berlin,  
25 ordered the ones who were still alive should be put to

1 work, to productive work. But there was no productive work  
2 in the wintertime for us; so we had to carry snow in the  
3 coats. We had coats had to be worn upside down, and they  
4 were loaded with snow. Just move one pile of snow from one  
5 end to the other. And, of course, the Nazis would whip  
6 them and, you know, torture all of them as bad as they  
7 could do.

8 And finally they decided, "Let's try to put  
9 the younger ones to work" because most of the older ones  
10 didn't last that long. So I became a roofer. They needed  
11 a lot of construction in the camp, and the camp itself was  
12 run by gentile prisoners. They would only stay a certain  
13 time if they were political or antisocial, they would stay  
14 some of them longer and some of them shorter, but none of  
15 the gentiles would be subject to be killed like the Jews.  
16 So I became a roofer in the camp.

17 MS. FEIBELMAN: So the people running the camp  
18 were Christian prisoners?

19 MR. SHINE: Yes. They were all political or anti-  
20 social or criminals who were running the camp outside. And  
21 inside the S.S. strictly were doing the guard duty and the  
22 killing. Of course, many prisoners were the gentiles to do  
23 the killing too just like the S.S.

24 So I became a roofer in the camp, and, of  
25 course, I had to start. I never knew. I just worked a

1 little bit on the outside as a roofer. I thought maybe if  
2 I would work way on up top, I would be more protected; but  
3 many times I was completely wrong because the S.S. would  
4 also come on the roof and thought there would be all kind  
5 of illegal activity going on. So we got plenty of  
6 punishment. So after three years in Sachsenhausen, like  
7 I said before, we were ordered to Auschwitz.

8 MS. FEIBELMAN: What kind of punishment?

9 MR. SHINE: All the S.S. walked around with whips,  
10 sticks, with steel bars. They would beat you for any  
11 reason. If you don't move or take off your hat fast  
12 enough -- you had to salute them like a military, you know.  
13 Anytime you see S.S., you had to take your hat off, stay at  
14 attention, or then they would call you back and say you  
15 didn't move your hat fast enough or you didn't pay  
16 attention fast enough; so they would hit you.

17 MS. FEIBELMAN: Were you beaten?

18 MR. SHINE: Many times. Many times. In fact, at  
19 one time while I was a roofer already, I was ordered by the  
20 higher prisoners, the gentile, to work on the S.S. canteen.  
21 There was also at the canteen where they would entertain.  
22 The higher S.S. would come from the outside.

23 And this particular day, the chief  
24 inspector general of all the concentration camps came,  
25 obergruppenfuhrer, was one of the highest. He was second

1 in command after Himmler. And he would inspect our camp,  
2 and, of course, they were notified way in advance; and, of  
3 course, the S.S. itself was shivering. They wanted to make  
4 sure everything would be just up to date.

5 So they asked the chief of the S.S.  
6 kitchen, who was also an S.S. officer, he wants the best  
7 ham served for him. And he knows he likes especial a lean  
8 one, but I had no knowledge of this, of course. But one of  
9 the higher prisoners ordered me to work at the S.S.  
10 canteen, and they had some of their gentile prisoners  
11 working as assistant cooks.

12 And he ordered me, he said, "You take off  
13 a section of a barrack." I was a roofer there. They were  
14 transporting it to a barrack. You pick one of the packages  
15 yourself, a little hanger, you know, and then you put it in  
16 the wheelbarrow. You deliver it to block 42, for instance,  
17 a number. I did what I was told. And, of course, I didn't  
18 know is a few days -- I got a piece of that slice of ham I  
19 was eating outside I would watch that no S.S. would come in  
20 and surprise them by the V.I.P.'s of the camp, the gentiles  
21 would have a party.

22 And a week later and when this inspector  
23 general had come and the chief of the kitchen and looks at  
24 the book and he says, "I want to have served ham No. 42" or  
25 24 -- I don't remember the number anymore -- and this would

1 be one which, unfortunately, I stole for them which I was  
2 ordered to, you see. And they found every ham. I could  
3 have taken any one, but I was not told to take this and  
4 this one, and anyway, they found every one except the one I  
5 took.

6 So the inspector general came, and the  
7 party when finished and all this, and a couple of days  
8 later the chief of the kitchen went to the commandant of  
9 the camp and he said, "The inspector general came, and I  
10 wanted to please him, and especially there was a ham  
11 missing and nobody of the kitchen -- it weighed  
12 approximately 25 pounds. Some of these guys who work at  
13 the barrack must have stolen this."

14 So I was caught. The roofers worked at the  
15 barrack, you see. But I couldn't say that I stole this  
16 ham. And when I came -- and I'm Jewish. I don't even eat  
17 ham, which, of course, was untrue. And I got 100 over my  
18 ass, and I was -- but I didn't talk because in the camp  
19 when you -- already, I mean, I was already in the camp by  
20 that time a year and a half -- you learned already if you  
21 talk, you are dead. If you don't talk, you have a chance  
22 to survive; but if you give away prisoners especially the  
23 V.I.P.'s the gentiles, in the camp, you would not survive  
24 the next morning. They would kill you.

25 So I got so much punishment, but they

1 ordered, the doctors from the hospital, the prisoners and I  
2 got Vaseline, but, of course, nothing helped.

3 And then I came in a special detail, and  
4 Max was working as mechanic out there in this detail where  
5 I was supposed to be killed by this S.S., by one of the  
6 most brutal ones because I lied. I stole a ham even though  
7 I never admitted it, and just through luck, and they helped  
8 me, you see, that I was saved. Otherwise, I would have  
9 come into the camp as a corpse.

10 MS. FEIBELMAN: What was your experience?

11 MR. DRIMMER: I would like to go back to the day  
12 when I was arrested. When we came by train to Rannenberg,  
13 and then we marched through the camp, which is a half hour  
14 or so, we have loaded with suitcases, packages, what the  
15 mothers and wives brought us. And the minute we came into  
16 the camp, we drop everything and march on. So we lost it  
17 right there. So we were brought into a large barrack which  
18 was the admittance for new inmates, and we were told to  
19 undress and leave everything and keep going. We were  
20 given a shower, a towel, and soap. That was the real  
21 bathroom, not like the one you had in Birkenau. The water  
22 did come and soap. And first before, we were shorn the  
23 hair. The hair was cut off from us. And we went through  
24 the bathroom, and then you keep walking, and then everybody  
25 got a bundle of clothes thrown in their hand -- a shirt, a



1 prison uniform, shoes, socks; and fitted or not fitted, it  
2 didn't matter. They just throw it at you, and you had to  
3 make the best of it. And then we were put into quarantine.  
4 There were four barracks from the new transport, and then  
5 we had to stay outside. Everybody had to go outside and be  
6 counted. That happened three times a day -- morning, noon,  
7 and evening.

8                   And as we stood outside, I saw this S.S.  
9 man, who I knocked down on the floor in Berlin, going  
10 through the rows and looking for the guy who did throw him  
11 down. And fortunately, I had no more hair in that case; so  
12 he didn't recognize me. If he would have recognized me, I  
13 would have had saved five years of suffering. And that was  
14 the end for me already the first day.

15                   Now, the barrack, the quarantine, so-  
16 called. So we were new every day four, five, six times  
17 S.S. men who came, all different, they want to see who is  
18 this. But that was not enough. Every time when they came,  
19 we had to do what they called "sports" -- beating,  
20 terrorizing, and the inmates that -- we had two inmates.  
21 The block was divided in A and B section. Normally,  
22 there's about 150 between the two sections of the barrack  
23 would fit in fairly comfortable. We were almost 400. And  
24 when the S.S. men came every day, it never failed. Several  
25 times a day.

1                   And then they ask once, "Who would like to  
2     carry the bodies to the so-called hospital?" You would get  
3     a half a pint of soup more, and a half a pint of soup was a  
4     lot there even though the soup was water. And I  
5     volunteered. We carried the bodies. We had four guys. One  
6     blanket with four guys. Each one gets one corner, and then  
7     you carried it a long way until you reached the hospital.

8     I made that trip many, many times per day. And the first  
9     time we got there, I never saw a dead body in my life. As  
10    kids we would never go to funerals. So we come into the  
11    basement and put them down slowly and wanted to take the  
12    body. Otherwise, we get a kick in the butt.

13                  And he said, "I show you how to do it. You  
14    take four corners and you just wrip it over to the corner";  
15    so it was a horrible sight. But you, in this camp, you  
16    became ice cold, colder than steel. And if you wouldn't  
17    have adapted to this, you could have never survived it.  
18    You didn't lose it, the feeling towards human being, but I  
19    stumbled and tripped over dead bodies. And, to me, it's  
20    hard to say I couldn't care less one way or the other. If  
21    I knew the person, which most of them I knew, it hurt. But  
22    I had no other choice. I couldn't express my feeling. I  
23    was lucky I was alive. Every morning I woke up I said,  
24    "Thank you."

25                  So then when Herman -- we went out to a big

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A  
1 factory where they produced brakes. They called it at the  
2 time "Klinker Barrack." And I was working -- there was  
3 tone mine far away. They brought them in by box cars or  
4 maybe half an hour by train, and we piled it until the  
5 ovens were ready to take them, the amount to form the  
6 bricks. That was my job. Later on I was moved out to the  
7 mine where I became a grease job on the cranes who they had  
8 torn out of the mines. This is when Herman came there.

9 Well, during that time, I mean the first  
10 few weeks -- when Herman said, that if somebody survived,  
11 it was just a miracle -- being a Polish citizen, there was  
12 no Polish counsel there because they were in war. Sweden  
13 took it over. They represented Poland and Germany, the  
14 Swedes; and after a few weeks, they came and made an  
15 inspection into the camp, and that's when the quarantine  
16 was lifted. The windows were nailed shut. We were not  
17 allowed to go outside, only three times a day when we were  
18 counted for.

19 At nighttime you were laying on the floor  
20 in straw sacks, and we were laying body and body; and if  
21 one turned around, all had to turn around because there was  
22 no room. So after when the Swedish commission came in and  
23 inspected, of course, they showed them nothing but the  
24 best. But for some reason they unlocked the windows, and  
25 we got some air in the barracks, and we could use the

1     bathrooms when it was needed. Otherwise, we could use it  
2     only three times a day. And I had a problem with my  
3     bladder. I was kicked into my bladder, and I had to go to  
4     the bathroom more often. I couldn't go. I did it in my  
5     shoe. I took my shoe off and did it in the shoe, and  
6     during that three times a day when we went outside to be  
7     counted, I smuggled my shoe out in order to empty it.

8                     And food -- of course, today we look heavy.  
9     When we came out of the camp I guess 50 or more pounds. We  
10    were just skin and bones. And to tell you all the  
11    incidents here, we would be sitting here for days and days.

12                    There was one incident I will never forget.  
13    A little chubby Jewish guy from Mosemaspeden, and he was  
14    very religious. And he said, "Shma Israel." And what they  
15    called the leader of the barrack was called "block  
16    elderstir," and he told the S.S. man, you know, he just  
17    said to you, "Shma Israel." It sounds in German like  
18    "shvartza schwine, black pig." The man was beaten for six  
19    solid days. I didn't know a human being could stand that.  
20    And he still didn't die. So they put him in a bucket with  
21    water and turned him upside down, and that was the end. I  
22    didn't know a person can stand that kind of a beating. He  
23    had no more skin, and he still didn't die after they  
24    drowned his head in a bucket of water. So that's some of  
25    the very few incidents.

1                   Or another guy had a big belly, and in the  
2 evening we had to go out in the bigger plaza to be counted,  
3 the whole camp, on the floor, and they picked him out,  
4 naturally. He was standing out. So they threw him on the  
5 floor and they jumped on his belly like dancing. I mean I  
6 could tell you I have never known so many ways how people  
7 can die, how people can get killed. That's what you learn  
8 in there, what you have seen in there.

9                   MS. FEIBELMAN: What else?

10                  MR. DRIMMER: Well, of course, like Herman said,  
11 in the beginning they didn't know what to do with us, and  
12 it was windy and snowing. Just to turn -- if you turned  
13 your coat around with the buttons in the back and lift it  
14 up and they give you a couple shovels of snow and you run  
15 over there. And by going there, people died because we had  
16 on the side the S.S. beating us with whips. Once the snow  
17 was on that side, then you start bringing the snow back on  
18 the other side, and that went back and forth. When there  
19 was no more snow, they did it with sand. They just had too  
20 many of us, and they just wanted to destroy the Jews.

21                  There were many Jews, many people even some gentiles, they  
22 couldn't stand it anymore. They jumped on the electric  
23 wire, and that was the end of it. If you did something  
24 bad, you had to stay on your knees for 10, 12 hours. Who  
25 could do that? And they come by and just kick you in the

1 butt, in the face, wherever they could find you. Of  
2 course, if somebody wasn't in there, if I wouldn't have  
3 been there, I could never believe a human being is able to  
4 do. You've got to be a born sadist, I think, in order to  
5 do that.

6 MR. SHINE: You see, the S.S. dreamed up so much  
7 additional punishments. Everytime something different. In  
8 fact, in the summertime they give the prisoner winter  
9 uniforms; and in the winter, they give you summer  
X10 uniforms. And the shoes, for instance, you had 32 "solder  
X11 nails" they call it. So your soles would last a long time.  
X12 If one was missing, just a benny cord on the camp you get  
13 three over the ass. But you couldn't go to the shoemaker  
14 because he didn't have any nails for you.

15 And then from time to time, of course,  
16 every week depends, a different date, they inspected your  
17 boots, and then you get the whips. Some would get as many  
18 as 20 over the ass just for the nail you can't replace, and  
19 the same for everything else. If the button was missing --  
20 we were drilled like sports, like soldiers, just to torture  
21 the people.

22 And many of them couldn't stand it. And if  
23 you don't get up fast enough, they stamp at your feet.  
24 They stamp on you, and then they kick you so bad all your  
25 inside comes out, you know. And if you can't get up

1     anymore, you are dead anyway. They just stamp you to  
2     death. And not one. Sometimes two or three Nazis work on  
3     you -- they're called the "block fuhrer" -- with the guns  
4     and everything they have they just do what they want with  
5     you, and there's no way that anybody can resist.

6                     In fact, I remember the early part in 1940,  
7     they brought a bunch of Hollandish soldiers in there.  
8     They were non-Jews. And apparently they were revolting  
9     against the S.S. They would not surrender freely, and big,  
10    tall fellows; and, God, they gave them a couple of chances  
11    to admit their wrongs before they would be brought to the  
12    barracks, and they still would resist. They were just  
13    anti-Nazis. They figured they're solders. Nothing is  
14    going to happen to them if they're going to be prisoner of  
15    war. And the Nazis took them all one after the other to  
16    the industry ward in Sachsenhausen and executed them after  
17    they gave them a tremendous beating first, just like they  
18    did with the Russians.

19                    When they brought the first Russian  
20    prisoners in, they were executed in our camp day and night,  
21    and it would be smelling so bad it that it would go all  
22    over. It would never even finish. It was just the  
23    difference between a German concentration camp and a Polish  
24    concentration camp. You see, Hitler built camps all over  
25    Poland, but the first camps he built, as soon as he came to

1 power in early '33 were built in Germany at first for the  
2 political and for the antisocial and for the criminals.  
3 And they were so in brutal those camps that they called  
4 them disciplinary camps because, of course, most of the  
5 gentiles had a chance to be released. There were very few  
6 Jews in the camps then in '33 and '34 and '35. But then  
7 when he decided to build camps in Poland all over Poland,  
8 they brought the cream of the German prisoners and the  
9 cream of the Nazis S.S., who were already used to all the  
10 tortures, and brought them to Auschwitz, to other camps.

11 In fact, the first commandant, the main  
12 commandant in Auschwitz, was our commandant at  
13 Sachsenhausen. His name was Hirsch. You see, many other  
14 S.S. leaders were even smaller block fuhrer. They came to  
15 Auschwitz and to other camps because they showed the  
16 knowledge for torturing these prisoners. And with them, of  
17 course, they brought the cream of the most brutal German  
18 prisoners, you know, the gentile prisoners were leaders of  
19 these camps in Auschwitz and in many other camps in Poland,  
20 And this is how they were. When the people eventually  
21 arrived in Auschwitz in these camps, they had already all  
22 the S.S. and the prisoners there who already for years were  
23 the torturers and killers, and it was easy to continue.

24 MR. DRIMMER: When having this job carrying bodies  
25 to the hospital, and in the middle of '40, 1940, the first



1 Russian soldiers came. And I have seen how they got rid of  
2 them. They undress, and they go to a doctor just in a  
3 phony way, and they listen to their heart, and then you  
4 step on the scale, and they measure your height, and they  
5 adjust the height stick to your head, and then back is the  
6 bullet in the neck. The first 20,000 were like that until,  
7 I guess, all of sudden it stopped. I thought maybe the  
8 Russian found out about it, maybe they reciprocated then  
9 with the Germans. Then they never came to us anymore.

10 So this camp was mainly with gentiles. It  
11 was just a small percentage -- we were maybe in the  
12 beginning, we were maybe 2000 Jews. When our transport was  
13 about 1800 from our area in Berlin; and after in 1945, if  
14 75 have survived from those 1700, that's a lot. When we  
15 came, there was still a few Jews left from -- they had the  
16 first real action they had in June 1938. They arrested the  
17 German Jews, anyone who had some kind of problems with the  
18 police -- parking tickets. Nothing really criminal. This  
19 is when they took them in.

20 Then they took in November 1938 was the  
21 second action, and this is after Kristallnacht. So when we  
22 came almost a year later, some of those when they showed  
23 immigration they could leave the country, they were  
24 released. And there were just a handful, maybe a barrack,  
25 was left from this 200 besides the few who were in since

1 1933, 1934 for political reason; and they have survived it  
2 because the political people, Communists, they cared for  
3 each other in the camp. They helped each other regardless  
4 if you're a Jew or not. It didn't matter. If you're a  
5 Communist first, you're a Communist, and then comes your  
6 religion.

7                   So then we -- after we -- the quarantine  
8 was lifted, then we mingled with the others on Sundays when  
9 I was allowed to walk around in the camp. So all I can  
10 say, like Herman said, I always said, and this sounds  
11 really funny -- the concentration camps of Poland were a  
12 sanatorium compared to the concentration camps in Germany.  
13 In Germany they beat you as long as until your last breath  
14 comes out. In Poland and where the gas chambers, you  
15 either made it, you get bypassed the gas chamber, you have  
16 a chance to survive. Or if not, you go straight into it  
17 without going through all the suffering, and your life is  
18 over. But you didn't suffer anymore.

19                   I made that expression and people say, "How  
20 can you say that?" I can say that because I've been  
21 through the beating and suffering. For instance, like  
22 Herman said, we were kept like an Army camp, we had to  
23 make. Then after the quarantine, we got beds, and we had to  
24 make our beds. We had two sticks, and the pillows had to  
25 be like a cigar box, square and neat like a cigar box. And

1 if it was not real, a little bit off, 25 over your butt.  
2 That 25 over your butt was easier to get than to find a  
3 piece of bread on the floor. I got it many times for no  
4 reasons, but they always find a reason. They always find a  
5 reason.

6 And then come the time I had once an  
7 accident. I fell off a mountain where we collected the  
8 tone. I broke my leg in '41. Luckily, I knew somebody in  
9 the hospital. I was in there six weeks, and I came out of  
10 it. So then we were in, at the end of '41, we were taking  
11 out to the factory where they made the brakes, the Klinker  
12 Barrack, and they built a little camp, and they took just  
13 maybe a couple thousand of them, the better-working people.  
14 I mean with more knowledge. And they took us out so we  
15 were living outside of Sachsenhausen. That was about a  
16 half an hour we marched every morning to the work and then  
17 back from work. Then they figured they're losing an hour  
18 to an hour and a half on working time; so they built a camp  
19 there, and we stayed out there. That was a little easier  
20 than the main camp because we were the working people, and  
21 they tried to keep us up and not to kill us there. Of  
22 course, once you got sick, you go out of the camp, and  
23 that's it.

24 So we had a little activities. We had some  
25 people who knew how to play music. They made a concert on

1 Sunday. We had boxing matches. A friend of ours was a  
2 boxing champion in Maccabbi in Berlin. And he beat  
3 everybody. Of course, and that gives us a little bit of  
4 getting away from the concentration camps, but the work was  
5 the same thing.

6                   Until then one day we were ordered to go  
7 back into the camp and into Sachsenhausen not knowing  
8 what's all about it, and this is when they started taking  
9 all the Jews away to Auschwitz. And as a matter of fact,  
10 we were outside only waiting for it, and there was some  
11 guys started a riot from us.

12                   MR. SHINE: The way it was in 1942, we were  
13 ordered to be transported to Auschwitz, but we had no idea.  
14 But early in the afternoon, all the Jewish prisoners who  
15 were left in our blocks were ordered to the bathroom, and  
16 the bathroom was surrounded by armed S.S., which is unusual  
17 because it's inside the camp. And then we were ordered to  
18 take off our belts, our handkerchiefs. Our utensils, we  
19 were permitted to have them because some prisoners were  
20 allowed to have a pocket knife and to cut their bread and  
21 so forth. And everything we had was ordered in one pile in  
22 the corner and stripped. And we had several of the Jewish  
23 prisoners, they were Communists, and they said, "These guys  
24 want to kill us now like they killed the Russians and so  
25 many other prisoners, and we don't want to die like

1 enemies. We have done nothing except that we are Jews,  
2 political prisoners; and if we should be shot, then we  
3 should be shot in front of the entire camp. Are you all  
4 with us?"

5 And we said, "Yes."

6 And he said, "When I give you the order,  
7 our prisoners," he said, "we're going." When the main gate  
8 opens up and the 18 or 20,000 thousand prisoners who work  
9 in the out, commandoes come in, maybe we can ignite a  
10 riot."

11 So the S.S. -- they are already impatient,  
12 and there was, you see, the higher S.S., the commandant,  
13 and the second commandant, they are going always on  
14 inspections to the surrounding camps, and the smaller  
15 leaders were also officers but smaller were in command of  
16 the camp. And he said, "Let's go. Let's go."

17 And then all of a sudden -- this was Jonas  
18 who came in after the war in Eastern Germany -- he said,  
19 "Let's go now."

20 So we pushed several of the S.S. outside to  
21 the main place where the prisoners are counted. And two,  
22 three of the S.S. were laying on the floor, not hurt, but  
23 just the heads. And he gave order who was sturmbannfuhrer  
24 machine gun No. 1 to fire at us, but inside the camp. And  
25 within a split second the main gate opens, and the head

1     commandant came in it because it was all time for the main  
2     appeal where all prisoners are counted.

3                     And he comes in and he says, "What's going  
4     on here?" He saw this guy on the floor. He says,  
5     "Commandant, the Jews tried to mutiny, and I ordered  
6     machine gun No. 1 to fire. And within a split second, the  
7     main gate opens and the head commandant came in because it  
8     was all the time for the main, where all the prisoners are  
9     counted.

10                    He said, "What you tell me the Jews are --  
11     a bunch of starving Jews can mutiny?" He said, "You have  
12     25 machine guns. You are covered by high-powered voltage  
13     here." He said, "You have 10,000 troops across the street  
14     for support." He said, "Get up. I don't want to see any  
15     of you until I talk to you later, out." And he ordered the  
16     main gate to open.

17                    This was the head commandant, and every  
18     prisoner without being counted, they have to run as fast  
19     they come to the barracks. That took about half, three-  
20     quarters of an hour. He said, "Build a half circle around  
21     me," just him. And we in the camp, inside the camp.

22                    And he said, "Who is the leader of this  
23     so-called mutiny? I give you 60 seconds."

24                    And he -- and then after 60 seconds, this  
25     fellow who took command, anyway, he said, "Commandant,

1       there is no leader. We all agreed."

2                       He said, "Agreed to what?" He said, "You  
3       yourself ordered because we are all skilled worker, we have  
4       done nothing wrong. We can't have a belt. We can't have  
5       handkerchief. We can't have a pocketknife. We can't have  
6       these different utensils; and if we have to surrender all  
7       these things, we know there's nothing left for us than to  
8       be shot, and we don't want to be shot like enemies."

9                       And he says, "As true as my name is  
10      Colonel" so and so, he said, "you are going on transport,  
11      he said. "I cannot tell you where you are going to the  
12      East. Provided you go only on transport," this is  
13      forgotten, he said. "Easily, I don't want to dirty my  
14      hands. I can put a note with it, and wherever you arrive  
15      you will be taken care of. But it will be forgotten  
16      provided you go decent on a transport."

17                      He gave -- ordered all our stuff back to  
18      us. We went on transport, and then, of course, we went to  
19      Auschwitz. But, of course, what happened on the way to  
20      Auschwitz is half of the prisoners died anyway just on the  
21      transport to Auschwitz because normally from Berlin to  
22      Auschwitz would have taken eight hours. It took five and a  
23      half days. We went a part of the way. Then they needed  
24      locomotive for other troops to get into the Eastern  
25      frontier and put our train on the sidetrack, and we had to

1 wait a day or two days until a new locomotive was  
2 available. And the same thing happened two or three times,  
3 and there were quite a few of the older prisoners who were  
4 left who were on medicine; and, of course, they could not  
5 survive. There were no hygienic conditions. There was  
6 nothing. So anyway, we came to Auschwitz, and then when we  
7 finally arrived there after a very short stay --

8 MR. DRIMMER: Excuse me. We were put into box  
9 cars, and the box car was locked from the day we got in,  
10 and it was not opened until the day we arrived to  
11 Auschwitz. Like Herman said, there was no sanitary system,  
12 no water, no toilets, nothing. And this is why many people  
13 died, did not survive that long, long transport, and not  
14 even, not knowing where to go. That alone can kill you,  
15 you know.

16 MR. SHINE: Now we come to Auschwitz after a short  
17 stay where they were picked. They were Eichmann, the  
18 commandant, and a bunch of other high officers.

19 MR. DRIMMER: The doctor, famous Dr. Mengele.

20 MR. SHINE: The thumb was going left or right;  
21 and, fortunately, we were picked to go right. Many of our  
22 friends who still survived went to the left side and they  
23 didn't survive there very long in Auschwitz.

\*24 So we were ordered to go to Monowitz to  
\*25 build a brand new camp, which became <sup>IG Farben</sup> Egerfarbner. There we



1 worked for two years. I was a roofer. I worked on the  
2 inside of the camp. I was by that time now the first  
3 roofer. I was in charge of all the roofing and  
4 construction to the roofs in the camp. And from time to  
5 time, we were also shipped to build other camps, supporting  
6 camps outside. And at one time in approximately early,  
7 very early 1944 I was ordered to go to Gliwice -- which is  
8 approximately 98 kilometers from Auschwitz -- to put the  
9 roofs on a new camp. There was no gate or nothing, but  
10 several hundred prisoners there who were all skilled labor  
11 built this new camp.

12 And one day I saw from the barrack we were  
13 working on, I saw three Jewish girls, three girls who wore  
14 the Star of David. And being in camp by that time almost  
15 five years, you are very fearless. So I wanted to see who  
16 these girls were because I saw they had come with a big  
17 truck in there and they lifted a barrel close to the  
18 kitchen. So I came there, and they lifted the barrel up,  
19 and they picked up the left-overs from the kitchen. And I  
20 spoke with them, especially one of them who became my wife.

21 And then I said, "Are you wearing a Star of  
22 David? Are you Jewish?" And I had never seen it before  
23 because when we came in the camp, this was not customary  
24 yet.

25 She said, "No." She was from a mixed

1 marriage. "My father's Jewish; my mother is Christian.  
2 And we have to do forced labor. That means we have to work  
3 for the Nazis pick up farm and all the leftovers from all  
4 these camps" -- you can imagine the leftovers from the  
5 camp -- and bring them to the pig farm.

6 And I asked her when she would come again.  
7 I made sure -- she was very pretty, very young -- and I  
8 asked her when she would come again. And, for instance,  
9 she came every Wednesday. And the camp wasn't ready. The  
10 gate wasn't ready. They would come inside and pick the  
11 stuff up. And when she came the next time, I made sure I  
12 worked in the area there, and I told her everything that  
13 was going on in the camp. We had all the information as  
14 old prisoners.

15 I said, "Many Jews have been gassed  
16 already. We have absolutely no chance to survive, but you  
17 are still free, and I think you have a pretty good chance  
18 to survive. I want you to tell the outside world, if  
19 possible, what has happened." And I asked her, "Where do  
20 you live in the city?"

21 She said, "Why do you ask me?"

22 I said, "Well, you know, sometime if we  
23 don't have enough work -- they use us -- like, we go to the  
24 airport and pick up special supplies for the Nazis, you  
25 know, and maybe we drive with the guard through your area

1     so I can see your house." I didn't have any thought of it.  
2     So she said -- she gave me a street, which I remembered,  
3     and fortunately, which eventually saved our lives.

4                 So now I took my job up there, and one day  
5     an inspector -- there was, you know, this inspector in the  
6     camp was established for the German railroad company, and  
7     their job was -- in this camp was a support camp to fix all  
8     the railroads to this section to the Eastern frontier.  
9     And, of course, the railroad is civilians, but they also  
10    some of them S.S. But they have nothing to do direct with  
11    the camp.

12                So one day the chief inspector comes, and  
13    he comes on on the roof and he says, "You're the first  
14    roofer. I want you to do this and this barracks, and there  
15    will be forthcoming, and I will be back in four to six  
16    weeks and give you more work, and inspect what you have  
17    done." So I said, "Yes, sir."

18                So he comes back. After six weeks of labor  
19    very little has done, and he was very mad, and I thought he  
20    was a civilian. Then he said, "How come you didn't do this  
21    job when I tell you, give you an order, just like somebody  
22    inside give you the same order?"

23                I said, "You know, with this garbage we get  
24    to eat here, you're lucky we still can stand on the  
25    roof" -- which I shouldn't have said. So he opened his

1 coat. Under the coat he has a black Nazi uniform and three  
2 stars -- he's also an S.S. officer -- and he said, "You  
3 dirty Jew," he said. "I am the same as S.S. in the camp,  
4 and if you are lying to me . . . besides that," he said, "I  
5 will tell you something. I shouldn't even talk to you like  
6 this."

7 And he picks up a paper in his pocket and  
8 he reads me six, seven different items of food which we are  
9 getting from the Reichsbahn Railroad Company because we are  
10 the skilled workers and working on -- and this is a special  
11 order that we should do it, hard work, and they are saying  
12 this because they have their own farms and they are  
13 supplying this and other things like 30 gram butter every  
14 week and all these things. And then I kind of laughed.

15 And he said, "You mean to tell me, you Jew,  
16 you don't even get this food or you are laughing at me?"

17 I said, "Officer Sturmbannfuhrer," I said  
18 to him, "I have never seen this type of food," which, of  
19 course, I shouldn't have said, "but please don't make any  
20 problem for me." But it was too late. And he went in the  
21 kitchen. And the kitchen is led, of course, by an S.S.  
22 leader who's in charge of all the kitchen of the S.S.  
23 kitchen and the prison kitchen.

24 And he asked to see where this special food  
25 is stored. And this guy, he said to him -- this is the

1 S.S. leader in the kitchen -- he said, "You show me paper."

2 He said, I don't have to show you  
3 anything. You show me your authority."

4 And he said, "You will hear more from me  
5 when I come back from Berlin."

6 I had no knowledge what was going on  
7 because, luckily, a friend of mine who was the valet to the  
8 commandant heard this whole incident and later he told me,  
9 he said, "How the heck you talk to an S.S. like this?" You  
10 know, a lot of this food that we are getting goes under the  
11 table.

12 I said, "I'm sorry I did it. It just  
13 rolled out of my mouth. I thought this man was a civilian.  
14 This is the first time I see him in uniform.

15 He said, "You know what your life is worth  
16 here? Nothing. The only chance you have is to be  
17 transferred back to the main camp. You might be safer  
18 there."

19 And this commander was a temporary  
20 commander there. He was a valet. He liked me too because  
21 I did a good job and I never had a disciplinary against me  
22 at this time. How am I going tell him I want to be  
23 transferred? And two prisoners were missing in the  
24 evening, but most of the time when prisoners are missing,  
25 they don't even try to run away. They just cannot stand it

1 anymore; so they go to an isolated spot until they get  
2 caught or they walk into the wire. So they would be back  
3 soon, but for the commandant, it's very unpleasant. He's  
4 got to report it to the higher authority that prisoners are  
5 missing, and most of the time they will be fired. They  
6 will be sent to the Eastern frontier because the one thing  
7 the Nazis hate is escape because escape, there were too  
8 many parties operating around the whole area in Poland, and  
9 this is one thing they didn't want, is prisoners to get  
10 out.

11 So now I asked this commandant, I said,  
12 "Commandant, I wish permission to be transferred back to  
13 the main camp."

14 He said, " Why do you want to be  
15 transferred back?"

16 I said, "My job is finished and all this."

17 He said, "There is no reason for you to be  
18 transferred" because he knew that we were friends with his  
19 valet. But I cannot tell him. First of all, prisoners,  
20 you are never supposed to know about gas, and if you know,  
21 you sure don't talk about it. But you sure don't talk to a  
22 Nazi S.S. about gas.

23 But I knew what I had done, and I had no  
24 choice, and I said, "Commander, I'm supposed to be gassed."

25 He said, "What?"

1                   Because what I forgot to tell you is my  
2 friend who was picking up the food in the kitchen, he did  
3 not walk in while these two S.S. had the heated exchanges.  
4 As soon as other guy left and he said, "You will hear more  
5 from me from the Berlin," this S.S. leader from the  
6 kitchen goes on the telephone and he calls Birkenau, and  
7 then Birkenau was the real commandant of this camp. He was  
8 now transferred only temporarily, and he just got that  
9 special medal from Hitler for gassing the one millionth Jew  
10 in Auschwitz. I don't remember exactly. And he got an  
11 extra star. And this is one of the most brutal ones we  
12 knew before from Sachsenhausen. His name was Mole.

13                   And my friend walks now into the kitchen  
14 while he's on the telephone, and he says, "Mole, we have a  
15 roofer. He's an oldtimer. He came from another camp and  
16 does this guy makes us trouble, this prisoner. You know,  
17 he talks to this inspector from Berlin about the food and  
18 the butter and all this stuff. You must take care of him  
19 before he get back from Berlin."

20                   And apparently, the other side said, "I'll  
21 take care of it." And my friend told me this. And now I  
22 knew I had no choice; so I turned to the commander, "Now,  
23 I'm supposed to be gassed,"

24                   He said, "Do you know about gas?" He said,  
25 "What are you talking about the gas? Do you know

1 something, I can pull my gun and shoot him."

2 But I know that I had a good number with  
3 him. I said, "Yes, sir. Who told you anything again?"

4 Now I was hoping that my friend would back  
5 me up; so the whole camp has to call him. That's the only  
6 communication you have. One calls out for the valet to the  
7 commander, and everybody has to -- actually this call, he  
8 comes up there, and him he trusted more than everyone of  
9 the camp. Of course, he prepares his food; he cleans his  
10 gun. And this friend of mine was made from a former Jewish  
11 prisoner, an Aryan, by a special law -- but this is  
12 something different.

13 You know, the commission came into the  
14 camps a year earlier or two years earlier, and they wanted  
15 to use many of those prisoners possibly for the front. So  
16 he said, "Hymie, you tell me what contracted here."

17 He said, I was in the kitchen."

18 And the man backed me up. He told him the  
19 same thing. He said, "Come with me." And this is unheard  
20 of. This S.S. Now, he is the commandant. He was only  
21 temporarily, but he was the commander of this camp. And he  
22 goes in the kitchen, and this S.S. leader reports what they  
23 are cooking. And he said -- we both saw him, and me right  
24 behind him. He's six feet something tall.

25 And he said, "Commander, we are cooking



1     this and this for the troops and this garbage for the  
2     prisoner."

3                     He said, "Shut up, and I'm not interested  
4     in what you are cooking. If anything happens to these two  
5     prisoners while I'm gone away and report to the main camp,  
6     if it's the last thing I do," he said, "I'll take you and  
7     you, Mole, with me to the Eastern frontier."

8                     I thought my heart drops down. I mean here  
9     you have S.S., real S.S. and we are two. This guy is an  
10    Aryan but still a Jewish prisoner in front, to try and  
11    protect me. And I know this cannot go good, impossible.  
12    I was only hoping was that he comes back. Lucky he came  
13    back.

14                    But I was not feeling good in this camp  
15    anymore; so the main commandant comes and makes this  
16    inspection, and I make sure I be there, and I tell him,  
17    "Commandant" -- and he said -- you know, Nazis, the higher  
18    they were, they need a lot of things for themselves, and  
19    this is where the prisoners come in. And he needed two  
20    horses to be stolen, two riding horses, but he needed a  
21    roof over those horses. And they couldn't get a drop of  
22    water in; so naturally, I had to make a roof up there and  
23    make some special material so everything worked fine. So  
24    he liked me for this.

25                    I said, "Commandant, my job is all

1 finished. I wish permission to be transferred back."

2                   So he ordered me transferred back to the  
3 main camp. I'm back in the main camp. And the week later  
4 in the morning about 10:00 o'clock, all the prisoner go to  
5 work -- Max worked in the outside in the factory, and I  
6 work in the inside. I'm the camp roofer. And when the big  
7 shots, the big S.S. goes to inspection, they leave the  
8 second in command there to run the camp. And all of a  
9 sudden my name is called, prisoner 70196, and I've got to  
10 go to the main gate. And there already I see already  
11 there's an officer with the medal dangling down. He  
12 apparently had his day off. This was Mole. And all the  
13 small guys was sticking around him, admiring him. He's an  
\* 14 officer, and he's got the Eidelmoff from Hitler, you know.  
15 And I come here and standing at attention. "This Jew, I  
16 know you, don't I? I know you already from Sachsenhausen."

17                   I said, "Yes, sir."

18                   "Didn't you give me trouble?"

19                   I said, "Yes, sir." You have to admit  
20 everything that he tells you, yes. He takes the report  
21 leader who's in charge of the camp on the side, and in a  
22 few minutes, there's a special truck there with guards, and  
23 I am driven away. And I already know I come to Birkenau.  
24 And in Birkenau I'm standing in front where they gas the  
25 people, and there are already hundreds of them standing in

1 line outside with guards there inside the gate. But in  
2 Birkenau, all the women in Birkenau, of course, this is  
3 directly adjoining practically within one kilometer of the  
4 main camp; and you have factory and shops. And the  
5 prisoners do all the things for the S.S., and the higher  
6 the S.S. are, the more access they have to it, including  
7 the women.

8                   So I'm standing there, and I know that it  
9 will not be very long because I know where I'm standing  
10 because I can put easily two and two together. And the  
11 gate opens up, and a woman in civilian clothes comes on a  
12 bicycle, a very well-dressed woman. And approximately 50  
13 feet from me her skirt got tangled in her chain and she  
14 falls over. And as a boy, I used to work with bicycles.  
15 And there were guards standing where we are right inside  
16 the camp, and I dash across the street. I don't know what  
17 made me do it, but I did. I dashed across, and I kneeled  
18 down and I unhooked her skirt, and I got this out, and she  
19 put her arm on me; and before I even get up, a gun is in my  
20 ribs.

21                   The guard from over there rushed across the  
22 street, and she says to this man in German, "You son of a  
23 bitch," she says, "I don't care about this prisoner, but do  
24 you realize you shoot this prisoner, this bullet will  
25 penetrate right through me. You bastard. What business do

1     you have? We're inside the camp here. The gate is  
2     closed. You can get ahold of this prisoner any other way.  
3     Get your commanding officer over here." Another guy comes,  
4     "Do you know who I am?"

5                     "No." I want to -- apparently they called  
6     the leader of the camp.

7                     So the guy comes up there. "Do you know  
8     me?"

9                     "Yes, madam." This is the woman of the  
10    commandant of the camp."

11                    "I want my husband."

12                    The husband comes, and you should see this  
13    commotion. And she talks to him, and she says, "This  
14    prisoner is so decent to help me. I could have been badly  
15    injured, and this man, this bastard, you saw, he wanted to  
16    shoot me, and naturally, if he shoots him, the bullet goes  
17    into me. What camp -- what barrack do you belong to?"

18                    I said, "Commandant, I don't belong to this  
19    camp." "What?"

20                    And, you know, if the Nazis hate one thing,  
21    if anybody uses authority that doesn't belong to him.

22                    "What camp?"

23                    I said, "I belong to <sup>IG Farben</sup> Egerfarbner."

24                    "How did you get here?"

25                    "I have no idea."

1                   So he asked his valet, his assistant, to  
2   call on the phone, and in the meantime, an hour went by.  
3   And the big commandant in our camp is also back, and he  
4   calls. He said, "This prisoner," he said -- "I never give  
5   any authority. Who ordered him?"

6                   "I have no idea."

7                   And, you know, they all hate Mole on top of  
8   it because he got a medal and a star, and so before I know  
9   it, I'm back in the camp by his order because somebody did  
10   something without authority he had no business to do. I'm  
11   back in the camp, and a few days later Max asked me -- Max  
12   will talk now.

13                  MR. DRIMMER: I would like to go back to one  
14   incident of mine in Sachsenhausen was out of many, many.  
15   You don't remember them all, but I think it was 1940 when  
16   they killed the German ambassador from Czechoslovakia, when  
17   they brought in thousands and thousands of Czech students.  
18   And one day Eichmann comes in; so who's to be blamed for  
19   the Jews? So the Jews had to come out in the polplatz, and  
20   Eichmann was going through the rows and counts every tenth  
21   was taken out. We didn't know what for. I was the ninth,  
22   and every tenth was shot later in the back. That was one  
23   way I escaped like many times.

24                  Also when we came to Auschwitz, we got off  
25   the truck, and we stayed maybe one or two nights in the

1 camp. I don't remember. Then in the morning we had to go  
2 outside, and then Mengele waved his famous thumb, and I was  
3 put on the other side. I don't know what judgment he used  
4 why should one go left and one should go right. Maybe one  
5 looked better for him to be able to work than the other.  
6 That's the only thing I can think of. So for some reason I  
7 was put on the other side where my friends were put; so I  
8 took a big chance. I sneaked to the back of him and ran to  
9 the other side, not knowing which side goes which way. It  
10 could have been just the opposite way; but fortunately, it  
11 was that we then went to Buna to build up the camp.

12                   And there they did not have enough  
13 Christians to be leaders of the camp; so they that they had  
14 no other choice. They put some of our Jewish people to  
15 being leader of the blocks, of foremen, of commanders. So  
16 then being in already for three years, we had a little  
17 easier just compared like the Army. The longer you're in  
18 the Army, the less dirty work you had have do. And so then  
19 I worked with my friend's commander. We did insulation  
20 pipes and glass work and things like that.

21                   But before I got to this, something else  
22 happened to me. I was in the construction commander.  
23 Egerfarbner was a complex of, give or take, five miles  
24 square. That's how big the factory was. They produced the  
25 famous gas for Auschwitz, amongst the other things --

1     tires, carbide, and war material. And they were building  
2     this industry up tremendously, and I was working on the  
3     construction where we put the steel posts up for  
4     buildings. And I was staying by the hoisting machine where  
5     we lift the big steel posts up, and I was putting metal  
6     chains around, and then I was pointing with a finger up and  
7     this way. And one time a change broke and the five-ton  
8     metal piece fell flat on my foot, on my left foot. The  
9     lucky thing that I didn't lose my foot was I was standing  
10    on sand; so the sand gave a little.

11                 But anyhow, a friend of mine who was a  
12    foreman, he carried me. There's no calling an ambulance or  
13    doctor. This happens during the day, and you cannot go  
14    inside. You can only go out in the morning and go out in  
15    the evening. That's all you can do. So he carried me on  
16    his shoulders. Not much to carry weight-wise. And I was  
17    put in a hospital. And being an old hefling already, you  
18    know just about everybody of the leaders of the hospital.

19                 So the hospital at Auschwitz had one thing  
20    put up, a law in a hospital -- no one should be sick longer  
21    than two weeks because the feeding is for nothing. After  
22    two weeks you go back to the gas chambers. So my foot was  
23    so badly injured. First of all, there was no x-ray  
24    machines -- my foot is still on the cripple side today. I  
25    broke a bone which is close to the fourth toe, and it grew

1 not back together the proper way which offsets a little  
2 bit. And you had no bandages or paper bandages, and it got  
3 infected.

4 But the main thing was every two weeks the  
5 S.S. doctor came, and he went from bed to bed. So I was in  
6 there for six weeks. Every two weeks -- they know when he  
7 comes -- my friend shifted me to another bed so they  
8 shouldn't recognize me. "I saw the guy the last time when  
9 I was there." So that's how I survived in the hospital.  
10 So then I didn't go to work right away after. My block  
\*11 elderstir -- my foreman then became the block elderstir,  
12 and he took care of me a little bit, and then I went back  
13 to work outside. That's before I didn't go back to the  
14 steel construction.

15 So while working there, I was somewhere  
16 May, June of 1942, there was a Polish guy. He was a  
17 civilian. He went to work during the day, and he went home  
18 in the evening, and I kind of got friendly with him. He  
19 brought me cigarettes and something to eat, and I don't  
20 know, we liked each other. I mean I took to anybody where  
21 I can get something. So but then before I also met a  
22 German engineer who was civilist, and he happens to come  
23 from Berlin. You hear somebody from Berlin here, your  
24 countryman; so he also was very nice.

25 He said to me, he says every two weeks he



1 goes to Berlin and he said, "Do you want to come with me?"

2 I said, "You must be kidding. How can I go  
3 with you?"

4 He said, "I take you out." Anyhow, we used  
5 to be a leaf clover - Herman, myself, and another friend,  
6 Bully Shod, who is in Australia today. He survived it  
7 too. So Bully Shod was in charge of the bathhouses in  
8 Buna. I mean the real bathhouse. He was a mechanic. He  
9 took care of the heating system and things like that. And  
10 in the evening there -- it was not like Sachsenhausen where  
11 you were afraid every time an S.S. man comes in and tries  
12 to beat you. This was a camp where they tried to keep the  
13 labor force alive as much as possible. The worst thing was  
14 if you had diarrhea, that was the end of you. Right away  
15 right up to Birkenau. Every little sickness. It was two  
16 or three times a week the truck came just like picking up  
17 garbage. They would load them up, and that's it. And when  
18 they needed new help, the main camp sent new people out.

19 So anyway we were three buddies, and in the  
20 evening, we met. And this German engineer told me -- I  
21 says, "Bully, I just had a guy, he said he's going to go to  
22 Berlin."

23 He said, "You must be kidding."

24 I said, "He wants to take me along."

25 So anyhow, Bully also had access to go

1 outside like Herman did when he needed material. So he  
2 said, "I want to meet this guy."

3 So he came out, and I introduced him to  
4 him. And this guy was a fantastic guy. And so Bully had a  
5 bride in Berlin who was a mixed marriage, and she was still  
6 there. So first he took contact up through her. One day  
7 he even brought her out to Auschwitz. He picked up a place  
8 where they could meet, and to make a long story short,  
9 Bully said, "Let me go first to Berlin, and then the next  
10 time you can come."

11 We talked like two little boys like it was  
12 such a simple matter. The only difference between  
13 Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen in escaping was this. In  
14 Sachsenhausen if one escaped -- it happened very, very  
15 rare, but it did happen -- the whole camp had to stay  
16 outside day and night until they find that person. The  
17 longest we ever stood was eight days and eight nights. I  
18 don't have to tell you how many keeled over in wintertime,  
19 and if it rained or the weather didn't matter, you had to  
20 stay there. So in Auschwitz they didn't do that for some  
21 reason. Not at least in Buna. Somebody is missing, you  
22 stay maybe a couple, three hours longer. If they didn't  
23 find him, then back into your barracks.

24 So one day we arranged it. He arranged it,  
25 and he took Bully to Berlin, and the arrangement was made I

1 would go the next time. Every two weeks he went back and  
2 forth. So he came back. I said, "How was it?"

3 "Oh, fine. Bully is in Berlin. Fine."

4 So the next two weeks he came and brought  
5 me a letter and Bully writes me, "Max, please do not come."

6 And that's the unfortunate thing I have to  
7 say now. The reason why, "Max, do not come" there, there  
8 are a lot of Jewish spys in Berlin working for the  
9 establishment to save their own skin.

10 And it was like somebody gave me a cut into  
11 my heart. I already saw myself going back there. I also  
12 knew a girl who was out of a mixed marriage, but I just  
13 knew her. I met her in 1938, and my dream came to an end  
14 there. So, but like I said, in the beginning, I believe  
15 very much in the Guy up there.

16 All of sudden a few weeks later and in the  
17 years of working with me, he comes to me and he says, "You  
18 know, Max, I overheard a conversation yesterday from two  
19 S.S. men."

20 I says, "What did you hear?"

21 He says, "Well, you guys don't know what's  
22 going on in this world" because we had no communication, no  
23 newspaper, no radio, nothing. You're living on the moon.

24 He told me that in June the Americans landed  
25 already in '44, they landed back in Europe, and they start

1 running and talking, and the Russians are coming too, and  
2 it looks to them the end going to be almost near. And they  
3 were only in the towers open up the machine guns and mow us  
4 down like grass.

5 So I said to him, "What should I do?"

6 He said, "I can take you out."

7 I said, "You're kidding." I says, "Where  
8 are you going to take me?"

9 He said, "I'm going to bring you to the  
10 partisan."

11 Now my mind start wandering with me.  
12 Partisans are Polish. Polish people hate the Jews. So I  
13 said to myself, "Well, if one goes, you know one guy can be  
14 killed easily." So I had a thought of Herman. Maybe Herman  
15 might want to take the chance because we pay any price for  
16 freedom. The word "freedom," we would give anything, even  
17 our lives. That's what we did. We are just lucky we have  
18 survived everything.

19 So I came back home, and Bully was gone,  
20 and now just the two of us were left. So I talked to  
21 Herman, "You know, this and this has happened. I got an  
22 offer today. Are you willing to come along?"

23 He stunned a little bit. He wanted to know  
24 little bit more about it. And he says, "Well, I would like  
25 to talk to Joseph."

1           MR. SHINE: First of all, as you remember, when I  
2 met my wife -- she wasn't my wife yet in the concentration  
3 camp. I asked her for the address.

4           She said she'll give me the number and  
5 street and so forth. And when -- I knew already that when  
6 the commandant ordered me to be transferred back to the  
7 main camp and she could not come in anymore because the  
8 gate was finished, and the prisoners had to do all the  
9 loading. They had to wait outside. So I made a note and  
10 dropped in the stone, and I said I would appreciate if she  
11 writes me a little note once in while, which I shouldn't  
12 have done either, but she was such a pretty girl. You  
13 don't even think. So I said, "So I don't have any false  
14 hope, why don't you say yes or no with your head right  
15 now." And so I threw a stone away, and she picked it up,  
16 and she said yes, she will write.

17           I'm back in the main gate, and Max  
18 approaches me about if I'm interested in escaping, and I  
19 said, "Max, you must be crazy. How are we going to  
20 escape?"

21           I mean we saw quite a few of them escaping,  
22 and they all come back to be tortured and hung. Even  
23 though we have a little chance of to survive, I'm not going  
24 to throw my life away unless there's a little chance. So  
25 he tells me about this guy and this guy. So I said I would

1     like to meet him.

2                     So I had the permission because I was the  
3     first roofer, and outside are all the civilian matters in  
4     the factory, and once the prisoners, including Max, go to  
5     work in the morning -- we call it the "security chain"  
6     established -- the S.S. mounts the machine gunnist, and you  
7     walking into an enclosed area from the camp directly into  
8     the factory approximately a kilometer, a kilometer and a  
9     half.

10                    And Max set up a date, and Joseph -- I meet  
\* 11     Joseph Ronner, and I said, "Joseph, are you willing to take  
12     both of us out? How can that be?"

13                    He said, "I'm going to hide you in the  
14     insulation department here. I'm going to make some room  
15     where glass was in there, and you're going to be about four  
16     or eight feet, whatever; and if everything goes well after  
17     24 to 30 hours, we're going -- I spotted -- I discovered a  
18     place already where we're going, an isolated spot, where  
19     we're going to cut the wire. The wire is not loaded at  
20     night. And then I pick a day when there's very low moon,  
21     very dark, and then I also know an area where we can walk  
22     through the forest, and there's a street which is very  
23     sheltered, very isolated. Then you walk approximately  
24     between one and two kilometers and then a carrier will pick  
25     you up, a man, approximately between one and two

1 kilometers, and then a carrier will pick you up, a machine,  
2 and you will be taken directly to the partisans."

3 I said, "That sound good. I'm for it."

4 Now I'm coming back to Max. It was in the  
5 evening. We set a day, and there were two things now.

6 No. 1, we wore in the camp the mechanics and the skilled  
7 workers or wore mechanic suits. They had red stripes. And  
8 I took our suits, took them to the tailor and had them  
9 narrowed. Not only narrowed, but cut out the red stripes.  
10 And Max would take them out when he goes to work with 15,  
11 18,000 prisoners to the factory. The chance of being  
12 searched is very small unless there is suspicion. When I  
13 go alone, I can easily be searched.

14 But I think we urgently needed a first-aid  
15 kit. And I had another friend. You know, all these  
16 friends was old prisoners who have these jobs in the prison  
17 hospital. And his name was Stefen Heimmer. In fact, after  
18 the war, he became East Germany's ambassador to Hungary.  
19 He was such a prominent political person.

20 I said, "Stefen, I need a first-aid kit."

21 He said, "Are you looking for a change of  
22 climate?"

23 I said, "Yes."

24 He said, "I'll give you the first-aid kit,  
25 but not until the day you're leaving."

1 I told him, "Max and I are going together."

2 He said, "I don't have to tell you that I  
3 don't want to see you back alive, but I will tell you a  
4 little more, and then we will talk about this." But he  
5 said, "You get the first-aid kit when you leave. You can  
6 pick it up an hour before you leave. Okay."

7 One day before our escape is planned I get  
8 an order on my barrack, the slip to appear before the camp  
9 Gestapo tomorrow morning, the political department, and  
10 this is internal security for internal-external. They are  
11 way above everybody because there are a lot of things going  
12 on from time to time especially in Egerfarbner. Prisoners  
13 would make guns, sometimes assemble them in the camp, and  
14 all kinds of things.

15 Max comes from work, and I said, "Max, I've  
16 got to go to a political tomorrow."

17 And he said, "Did you talk?" Just talking  
18 about the escape is deadly.

19 I said, "You must be crazy. Maybe you  
20 talked and then they called me."

21 He said, "Impossible."

22 I didn't even think of anything anymore.  
23 The girl I met in Gliwice -- this was already four months  
24 before -- I forgot already.

25 I come in to there and the officers says,



1 the sturmbannfuhrer, and he said -- and before I left  
2 Marion, which is my wife, the girl, she said, "Do me a  
3 favor. When you get back to the camp, there's a very close  
4 friend of ours. We think he came to Auschwitz. Why don't  
5 you find out what happened to him. And his name is Werner  
6 Pick."

7 And as soon as I came back and I asked my  
8 friend, the secretary place. Werner Pick got diarrhea.  
9 And any contagious disease, you automatically into the gas,  
10 you know.

11 So he went -- there is a letter this  
12 officer reads to me. He said, "Who is Werner Pick?"

13 I said, "It must be Werner Pick. He used  
14 to be a comrade of mine, but you can know he was  
15 transferred to another camp. This you can say. I think he  
16 was transferred to another camp."

17 So he send somebody over to collaborate  
18 this. She wrote a card that has arrived now, and it took  
19 that long until they notified me. I was so lucky because  
\* \* 20 when Marion wrote this card through Werner Pick, she found  
21 out where I was. I never knew the details until after the  
22 war when these guys also survived.

23 If he had the least suspicion, this  
24 officer, he had to put me under suspicion of possible  
25 escape, and I would have to wear a dot here, a red dot here

1 and here in the rear, and I would never be allowed anymore  
2 to go to the factory because I am under the suspicion of  
3 escape. But he didn't.

4 And then the next morning I hope everything  
5 was well; so I go pick up the first-aid kit. And in the  
6 camp, everything you can smuggle out goes into your pants  
7 in front. And I had to pick up some other things, small  
8 things too like a knife. So I go to the gate, and the  
9 morning I go about 10:00 o'clock, and I figure everybody,  
10 the big shots are all in inspection, and I figure there's  
11 only one or two in the front gate, you see. I was hoping  
12 there was only one. And they have a list of every prisoner  
13 who is allowed to go to the factory. So I come to the  
14 gate -- and I've been going out dozens of times already --  
15 permission is not granted by them.

16 So there is very small. I mean they are  
17 very small, just a block, you know. And I said, "Prisoner  
18 70196 wishes permission to go to the factory."

19 Now, I ask him for it, but he cannot give  
20 me the permission. My permission is on the sheet that's  
21 granted by the entire work detail leader, by the  
22 commandant. But to make him feel good, you ask him. And  
23 I'm standing at attention very strict, you know, and, of  
24 course, now of course I have to be extremely lucky because  
25 I'm carrying a first-aid kit and some other things which

1 can only be for escape. And he looks at the thing, and he  
2 walks toward me. And when they walk toward you and you are  
3 not allowed to go at ease until they give you the  
4 permission to do this, and I make a step back which,  
5 apparently, was to my luck he didn't realize and because I  
6 did not know -- he was so close to me that I figure he's  
7 going to tap me. They tap you a lot of times because a lot  
8 of things get smuggled out.

9 At the same time he says to me, "Are you  
10 coming back?"

11 Of course, he doesn't know, naturally not,  
12 but he never asked me anything like that, and lucky I was  
13 already ready to talk instantly. And I said to him -- and  
14 he only has one star; so I promoted him to two.

15 I said, "Ober" -- that means he has two  
16 stars -- "why wouldn't I come back?" You are so nice to  
17 us, Oberscharfuhrer, and we have get food here."

18 So he said, "You better come back on time.  
19 You guys are supposed to be counted in half an hour"  
20 before the obershtaff commanders like Max come into the  
21 camp. He said, "Take off." So I walk. And my feet  
22 weighed maybe a ton. I couldn't make headway. Sometimes  
23 they make believe they believed you, and then after you  
24 walk 500 or 1000 feet, they call you back. And then they  
25 say, "Empty your pants. Empty everything."

1                    Luckily, nothing happened. We had a date,  
2                    you know. We met there. And then we got into our -- I'll  
3                    let Max finish.

4                    MR. DRIMMER: My friend was a foreman who,  
X 5                    fortunately, survived too. He's in Delaware, Leo Brenner.  
6                    And since -- I said before, in Auschwitz, nothing has  
7                    happened to the inmates if somebody escaped staying on the  
8                    outside for hours or days; but I was afraid if I would  
9                    escape from his commando, something might have happened to  
10                    him. So knowing somebody in the hospital, I said to Leo --  
11                    he was the only one who knew about our escape -- I said,  
12                    Leo, "I'm going put you in the hospital; so I will be the  
13                    foreman at this time so nothing should happen to you."

14                    So I took him to the hospital, and I talked  
15                    to a guy and the old guard, the old buddies, they don't ask  
16                    no question because they know already. And he was put in  
17                    the hospital for three days, and I became the foreman. So  
18                    then I march over to the commander. We had about 60  
19                    people, and with Joseph I arranged this in the  
20                    factory. There's something like a workshop and like a  
21                    warehouse, and they stored all the glassware which was  
22                    used for insulating pipes. And he told us what he would do  
23                    with us. Like he will dig a hole six feet under the  
24                    ground, and we've got to go in there, and he's going to  
25                    bury us with glass wall. So we had the date.

1 moon isn't out, where it's pitch dark where nobody can see  
2 us walking on the street. So everything worked perfect,  
3 and in the evening he came; he dug us out from the hole.  
4 We changed the clothes. We had a cap. Of course, we had  
5 no hair. Nothing else with us. Bare hands. Herman had  
6 the first-aid kit. And we crawled on our stomach through  
7 the factory, through the closest -- he figured that out --  
8 to a fence where supposed to be nobody be there in the  
9 area. As we crawled on our stomach -- which was too  
10 long -- it looked like it never has an end. Maybe it isn't  
11 even that far.

12                   And all of a sudden in front of us is a guy  
13 in civilian. We ended up in front of him. And he looked  
14 at us, and we were three, and he was one. So I think he  
15 maybe got scared from us. He didn't stop us or ask us any  
16 question. So anyhow, we got to the fence. Now, the fence  
17 at Egerfarbner Industry was work, was not loaded electric.  
18 Only the camp fence was. But during the daytime when we  
19 worked, they surrounded the factory with S.S. as guards.  
20 It had no towers. Every so many feet there was an S.S. man  
21 just watching nobody can jump over the fence.

22                   So we got to the fence, and Joseph had a  
23 pair of wire snippers in his hand in his pocket, and he cut  
24 the hole big enough the three of us got through. So when  
25 we got outside, I think then we saw Joseph got scared. He

1 realized what he did. And being pitch dark, he tells us,  
2 "You know, I will go 50 feet ahead of you. I will not go  
3 with you." So then we kept on marching. Continue.

4 MR. SHINE: Well, we were walking, and all of a  
5 sudden, Joseph gets stopped, the two Air Force soldiers.  
6 But before we even came to this, we are walking. He  
7 promised us originally we're going to walk no more than  
8 between one and two kilometers, and now we walked already  
9 three. And at one time we saw a light in the back of us,  
10 an auto, a car; so we hide behind a tree. And sure enough,  
11 our commandant was in there with the guards. We were lucky  
12 he didn't discover us.

13 So we kept walking and walking, and we  
14 said, "Joseph, you told us we're going to walk  
15 one kilometer or two, and we must have walked four  
16 kilometers."

17 He said, "I'm sorry. Things have changed.  
18 You cannot be picked up by their partisans. We've got to  
19 walk about 18 kilometers.

20 "You must be crazy. How are we going to  
21 walk?"

22 He said, "Well, I do my best. I know some  
23 ways through the forest," and all this. What choice could  
24 we have? We can't go back. Once you escape, you escape.  
25 If you're away an hour or a day, it doesn't make any

1 difference. An escape is an escape.

2 So we walked, and after maybe five, six  
3 kilometers, he is stopped by two Air Force officers. And  
4 We said, "What are we going to do? "We don't have much  
5 chance to do. We're going to tell him we're coming from  
6 the work. If he doesn't believe, we just have to see if we  
7 can fight them or they will have to shoot us or whatever."  
8 Joseph hides behind, and we hide behind a tree, and we  
9 notice now more than ever before, he has two hands in his  
10 pocket. And we figure he has guns, but we don't have any.  
11 And we also figure if something goes wrong, he might shoot  
12 us too. So we reached now, and we are coming, and now  
13 instead of the two of Air Force, there is only one.

14 He points the gun at us and says, "Halt" --  
15 in German -- "Where are you coming from?" With his own  
16 words he says, "Oh, you are coming from the factory down  
17 below."

18 We said, "Yes."

19 "Go." Now, it is unbelievable. First of  
20 all, we are extremely lucky. Maybe one of them had to go  
21 to the toilet or whatever. When we saw Joseph stopped,  
22 there were two, any now there was only one. Now, maybe one  
23 thought, "Here's one guy, and here's two guys."

24 And the Air Force was not the S.S. A lot  
25 of them were not Nazis even. So he figured, "Why should I

1     bother with them? If I kill them, they still might kill  
2     me. Let them go and nothing will happen to me."

3             MR. DRIMMER: Before when we march and we saw,  
4     barely saw Joseph, and then we saw away in front of us a  
5     little light, and somebody stop Joseph. We saw him reach  
6     his hand in his pocket and produce an I.D., and he let him  
7     go. So then Herman asked, "What are we going to do?"

8             I said, "There is nothing left. We have to  
9     go because we saw Joseph continued walking. Then we come  
10    there. Like Herman said, he stopped us. He took the  
11    flashlight. He shined me up from top to bottom and Herman.  
12    And he put the word in our mouth, "Oh, are you coming from  
13    work down below?"

14            Herman said, "Yes."

15            "Go on."

16            If he would have asked us for the I.D., it  
17    would have been the end there. Of course, he did not know  
18    from escapees because he was not involved with the S.S. He  
19    belong to the Air Force. So we marching in pitch dark  
20    country lane, and the dogs are barking, those little  
21    ranches left and right, and barking. And after we left  
22    him, then we run to catch up with Joseph because he really  
23    didn't stop. Then we kissed each other. So we have gotten  
24    over the hurdle.

25            We always look. We kept looking all the



1     time -- sideways, backwards, forwards. And all of a sudden  
2     way in the back, we seen a little, tiny light. So we look  
3     more often, and we see the light is getting slowly bigger  
4     and bigger and bigger, and the light was getting closer to  
5     us, and we saw it's someone on a bicycle.

6                     And those country roads have ditches on  
7     each side to let the water, rainwater run off; so we threw  
8     ourselves in one of the ditches. And luckily, it was full  
9     of water. So we down with the head and up with the head  
10    and down and saw the guy get off his bicycle. He was a  
11    policeman, not an S.S. He took his flashlight and shined  
12    around the area. He didn't see us. He went back to his  
13    bike and went back.

14                    And then we kept marching and marching. So  
15    finally we arrived to Joseph's place. He lived in a  
16    front -- he had his mother, brother, and his sister, and  
17    they had a little country store in the front, and back of  
18    it was in the barn. And he put us on top of the barn. And  
19    I guess, you know, a barn has a big opening in the front  
20    high up where they throw the hay up there and with a big  
21    ladder in order to reach it. So when we got up the barn,  
22    Herman said right away, "Come on, let's pull in the ladder  
23    so nobody has access to it" because there was another trap  
24    door. You crawl into a small chicken coop, and then there  
25    was a trap door, and this is how we got up.

1           MR. STINE: Joseph wanted to put boards over the  
2 main opening in front so it's warmer for us, and we said,  
3 "Under no circumstances. Anything you make closing up is a  
4 suspicion. Leave it open. Leave it the way it was."

5           And I pulled up the ladder because I  
6 figured if there's a ladder right there, and me being a  
7 roofer, I'm very conscious of ladders. I figured anybody  
8 and his brother can walk up the ladder, and if it's not  
9 there, you can pick up another one a few hundred feet down  
10 the road. But right now, you don't have access.

11           So we went up there, and, of course, we are  
12 living in their barn. We are up there for almost three and  
13 a half months, and we are corresponding with Berlin, and  
14 and Joseph --

15           MR. DRIMMER: When Joseph went back the next day  
16 to work, this guy was full of adventure, I think. And we  
17 send regards to my friend Leo, who then came out of the  
18 hospital after we left, escaped. Nothing has happened to  
19 him. Joseph brought us message from him. We gave message  
20 to Joseph to Leo. And two days later Joseph brings us the  
21 message, two days after we escaped, the whole camp inmate  
22 had to assemble on the polplatz.

23           And a letter was written to everyone just  
24 to scare for people to escape, "In case of the inmates  
25 Shine and Drimmer are being caught, they will be hung up in

1 front of you." Signed Heinrich Himmler.

2 And I wish I would be able to get ahold of  
3 this copy since because Germans are so accurate. There are  
4 so many copies and documents. I just don't know where to  
5 turn to.

6 So then a few days later, every night  
7 Joseph came up to us, and sometimes he took us  
8 downstairs there. They fed us; they smoked; they brought  
9 us some cigarettes.

10 And I said, "What happened? Aren't we  
11 going to the partisan?"

12 And then he broke down, and he said, "Well,  
13 the partisans have been chased deeper into the mountains."  
14 He has no access anymore because originally, he told us  
15 he's a member of the underground, the partisans, and they  
16 worked in a camp -- in the factory officially, but they did  
17 a lot of sabotage, and he was one of them. So now we had  
18 no other choice but being up there.

19 So then one night we ask him, "Look,  
20 Joseph, you be gone all day long. You come back in the  
21 evening. God forbid something happen in the daytime. What  
22 should be do? We don't know anybody." First of all, we  
23 didn't speak Polish.

24 MR. SHINE: We were reading the German papers and  
25 listening to the German radio. And even so this was Polish

1 territory, but it was still German occupied. And the  
2 Poles, of course, tried to salvage, of course, extra food  
3 for themselves, especially when they had a chance, like the  
4 small farmers. And the Germans wanted the Poles -- they  
5 couldn't care less if they all starved to death as long as  
6 the Germans have food. And so surrender every piece of  
7 livestock they possibly have.

8 And we saw in the paper that they searched  
9 these neighborhood villages, and they found a small peck --  
X 10 for instance, the name was Katchmore -- and they executed  
11 the whole family to scare the others off of surrendering  
12 all the stuff.

13 And we said, "Joseph, this village is going  
14 to be in danger, and these villages are going be next."  
15 And we said, "In case of an emergency, where are we going?"

16 He said, "If anything ever happened, at the  
17 end of the village lives my future father-in-law."

18 And we said, "Does he know about us?"

19 And he said, "Yes." And sure enough he  
20 comes -- and first of all, a little bit before he said, "We  
21 can't get help." Now we were corresponding with Berlin.

22 MR. DIMMER: I asked him -- you know, I met -- in  
23 1938 we were youth, a Jewish youth group. Then in  
24 Chanukah, December '38, I went to a house, and a group of  
25 young people, teenagers, guys and girls; and I will never

1 forget at that time we had our crazy fad, Louis Armstrong  
2 was the god for us. His music like here the Beatles and  
3 things like that. And there was one girl came in, in the  
4 room, and we were laying on the floor. The records were  
5 playing, and there was really no more room. And one girl  
6 came in, and I had an eye on her just by coming in.

7 And I made a funny joke. I said, "I have  
8 no more room here." I said, "Come on sit down here."

9 And she's a happy-go-lucky girl. I wanted  
10 her to sit down there. Anyhow, when I came to  
11 Sachsenhausen in '39, we were allowed to write a letter  
12 once a month. And I met this girl this last year I was  
13 still in Berlin. Here and there she was living in a  
14 different district from Berlin about an hour and a half  
15 away from where I used to live. And I seen her here and  
16 there. I tried to get closer to her, but she was not  
17 interested to me. Well, that's the way it goes. But then  
18 when I was arrested, she came to the house where my mother  
19 moved in to a Jewish family and rented a room because  
20 Kristallnacht everything was destroyed -- our business, our  
21 home, our apartment. So they moved in, and she came then.  
22 She stuck her head into my mother's room. "Did she hear  
23 from Max, or how is she?"

24 And I always ask in a letter; and my mother  
25 said, "Why don't you sit down and write a few lines to

1 her?"

2                   Anyway, this girl never left my mind all  
3 those years, and I never been in her house. She was of a  
4 mixed marriage. Her father was gentile, and her mother was  
5 Jewish. And so she imprinted in my head.

6                   And so now we up in the barn with Joseph,  
7 and I popped the question. "You think I can write a letter  
8 to Berlin? Would you put it in the mailbox?"

9                   This guy was ready to do anything. He  
10 said, "Why not?"

11                   So I wrote a letter, and she immediately  
12 answered, hearing from me was nice. And the first sentence  
13 in the letter was, "Do you still have your pretty curly  
14 hair like you have?"

15                   That's what she liked about me, I guess.  
16 So anyhow, she knew a Jewish spy in Berlin who worked for  
17 the Gestapo, and he was much older than she was, but  
18 somehow he must have gotten a liking on her. He supplied  
19 her once in a while with extra food stamps, which was very  
20 scarce. Jewish people always got less than the others. If  
21 anything was going on, there was a raid against Jews. So  
22 he told her, "If you have any friends, go tell them."

23                   So there comes a day where he calls her and  
24 tells her, "Tomorrow morning, if you have anybody, there's  
25 going to be a raid tomorrow."

1                   So she goes to a house where we talked  
2   about before, Bully, his bride was living. And she always  
3   was feeding in the evening a lot of people who lived  
4   underground. And he comes up to warn her, but it was too  
5   late. The Gestapo was already there. So she rings the  
6   doorbell, and the Gestapo opens up the door, and she sees  
7   right away. She was sharp. "I'm sorry. I got the wrong  
8   apartment."

9                   They didn't believe her. They grabbed her  
10   and confiscated her handbag, and in that handbag was my  
11   letter with address.

12                  MR. SHINE: We, of course, had no knowledge what's  
13   going on in Berlin. The only thing is we were permitted in  
14   the evening at 10:00 o'clock to go downstairs and have a  
15   hot meal, and once in a while they would prepare some water  
16   for us so we can wash ourselves. And baths, we were never  
17   able to take a bath.

18                  And we wanted -- before we wanted to get  
19   some pictures for forged papers made. Joseph said if we  
20   can get some pictures made, he can get us forged papers,  
21   and possible, if you have the right document, you can  
22   travel, possible to Berlin because we know we had very  
23   unsafe there. This was a little bit before.

24                  So we got civilian suits sent from Berlin.  
25   Max put the suit on, and then we had the same figure. And

1 he went to the village, took a picture, and he told them  
2 that his sister will pick it up a few days later. I did  
3 the same thing. I said, "My brother is going to pick it  
4 up."

5 And now I'm on my way home, and -- but I  
6 was very well dressed. There's a gentleman right next to  
7 me, and he wants to get some conversation with me; and, of  
8 course, he speaks in Polish. But I don't speak Polish, not  
9 enough to make a conversation.

10 He said, "You speak German? You know  
11 German? How come you speak German in a civilian?"

12 I said, "Well, I'm a lieutenant from the  
13 Eastern frontier." I told him everything I read in the  
14 paper. "And I belong to this outfit and I live on the farm,  
15 and I live in the next village, and we are on a visit."

16 "Have a good time, comrade."

17 You know, but while this guy talks to me, I  
18 got lost in our village in our hay barn, and I circled  
19 around twice or three times. All of a sudden -- the  
20 Germans exported -- imported a lot of Russian spys,  
21 Ukrainians. They called it the "White Russians," and gave  
22 them police power. They were wearing an armband like he's  
23 assistant police and carried guns and special  
24 identification.

25 And this guy walked toward me. He didn't



1 pull his gun, but he showed me the gun, and he said,  
2 "Halt, identification."

3 And like I said before, I got several times  
4 before tested. And I was never shy on words and  
5 fortunately very fast. So I'm standing between my bike,  
6 and I my put my hand in my pocket. I said to him in  
7 German high Germans only speak. I said, "You son of a  
8 bitch," I said, "you dare, you Russian pig, you dare to ask  
9 a German officer from the Eastern frontier for papers," in  
10 German.

11 And he didn't expect, of course. And he  
12 said, "I beg your pardon, sir" -- in German.

13 He didn't expect, of course. And he said,  
14 "I beg your pardon, sir."

15 And he run away, and I didn't even know  
16 where he run to. He went so fast and everything within a  
17 split second. The funny part is we just got a letter from  
18 the younger brother, and he writes in Polish, and this is  
19 one incident he remembers. And he was just witnessing. I  
20 didn't even know that he witnessed it, but he wrote this  
X 21 letter; so he remembered my name was Manny, you know -- and  
22 he saw how I talked myself out of it.

23 Anyway, I circled around, and now I saw in  
24 front of the hay barn, of course, Max, everything was  
25 quiet. And even though the hay barn was in back of the

1 house, you can hear practically in every room there was a  
2 discussion. So I got up there, and everything was fine.

3 We go down at 10:00 o'clock and have our dinner. And we  
4 didn't receive mail from Berlin for probably a couple of  
5 weeks, and I see underneath the couch something like a  
6 letter. And here I see in German, and I pick it up, and it  
7 says in German, "Don't write anymore, Fanny."

8 Fanny was a sister of a friend of ours, a  
9 sister of Bully. Something has happened. This is where  
10 Helga, his wife, got caught.

11 MR. DRIMMER: Don't give it away.

12 MR. SHINE: Anyway, so we know something happened.

13 Now, this letter -- we said we're not going to talk to  
14 Joseph about this because we figured that there's even  
15 more; somehow we is a little bit mistrusted of him because  
16 he promised us several things and he didn't deliver. We  
17 didn't feel very insecure up there; so we didn't want to  
18 tell him about this letter on top of it.

19 So two days later there was a knock on the  
20 front door. Max is deeply asleep -- and this brother  
21 writes all about this too, you know, of course -- because  
22 the Gestapo is there with five, six civilian with uniform  
23 with two German police dogs.

24 "Where is Joseph Runner, and where are the  
25 two Jews he got out of Auschwitz?"

1                   And this was in front, of course. I have a  
2   very light sleep, and I heard every word of it. I wake up  
3   Max and I said, "Max, the Gestapo is here."

4                   And Max says, "We are not lost yet."

5                   And these people said, "You don't speak  
6   Polish," and they didn't speak German and -- in other  
7   words, they were prepared to interpret it. They don't know  
8   they have -- and this is where the kids, of course, came  
9   in, they easily could have given us away, you know. So the  
10   commissar started searching, and, of course, you know that  
11   the ladder was taken off already, and it was not there.  
12   And there was a trap door which Max closed. And now we  
13   were sitting there, of course, waiting. We each had a  
14   knife, and we know if anything goes wrong, we kill  
15   ourselves because we couldn't afford to be caught. We know  
16   what was waiting for us in the camps.

17                   The dogs, for some miracle, did not smell  
18   us. They came again and searched a little more, and they  
19   said they were posting themselves at the one way -- there  
20   was only way where the bus would come down the small  
21   streets. And as soon as the Nazis left, the mother came,  
22   in Polish, which we didn't understand. And then the little  
23   sister and the brother came back and said, "Max, you must  
24   go."

25                   And they spoke German, broken German, "You

1        must leave." They will shoot all of us. You must go."

2                        "Where are we going to go to?" we said.

3        We're going to go to this so-called father-in-law at the  
4        end. It's an emergency now. So we go there."

5                        That was already now the beginning of  
6        January, probably first, second, third of January. Heavy  
7        snow. Forty-five. So we came in there. And we spoke in  
8        Polish there, sitting five, six, eight people sitting  
9        around the stove in a small little kitchen. And we told  
10       them we're supposed to wait for Joseph. They all speak a  
11       little German because it was close to the border. Maybe  
12       some words we knew in Polish -- I don't remember anymore --  
13       but maybe not enough to make a conversation.

14                        So we sit and sit and sit. He sends his  
15       son over there. Joseph isn't there. Then he sends again.  
16       Joseph isn't back. He sends again. So then he comes back.  
17       Joseph isn't back. He doesn't understand how can he lay  
18       down. And so the old man goes over, and he comes back, and  
19       he gives us food, and now he trusts us.

20                        He said, "You know, these guys are with  
21       Joseph almost four months and he didn't tell me one word.  
22       He says, "I was a partiasan leader. I could have gotten  
23       you into the partisans months ago. Now there is no way.  
24       Every Russian offensive is coming soon, and all the  
25       partisan activities are finished, ceased. What can you

1 do?" He says, "I don't know. I've got to try to get you  
2 to another village and maybe somebody can help you."

3 And he walks with us the same night to another  
4 village, and he walks on the heavy snow, and the snow is  
5 meter deep. And I got so sick. And Max had to push me and  
6 pull me. And I got shivers. So we finally come to one of  
7 them, and the white guy says, "I'm going let these guys  
8 stay but they had better be going before two or three in  
9 morning because I have some workers and some of them are  
10 collaborators with the Germans, and they must be gone."

11 So we said -- we told him unless Joseph  
12 comes, we cannot come back. So the old man comes back, and  
13 he says -- Max says, "Where is Joseph?"

14 He said, "Joseph cannot come. The S.S.  
15 surrounded the place, and Joseph jumped out of the window,  
16 and they killed him."

17 I never believed this, but, of course, we  
18 couldn't prove it, and we couldn't go back. So we asked  
19 him where the nearest subway station was early in morning.  
20 It was about 4:00 o'clock in the morning, but at night, the  
21 night before, we stood there at night, and now the night is  
22 up there. And so Max -- I got such a shiver, and Max says,  
23 "There is no way we can go anywhere anymore. We'd better  
24 hang ourselves right here."

25 And I said, "Max, hanging ourselves means

1 we have to go up to the rafter up there and I have very --  
2 I'm a believer. I'm very -- how do you say? -- optimist.  
3 Even if it is so bleak, there is nothing to be optimistic  
4 about. And I said, "Max, first of all, we have no rope.  
5 By the time we look for the rope -- and I don't think we  
6 have the "coiach" to go up the rafter."

7 And we both laughed. They call it an  
8 "executioner's laugh." But I said, "Max, I tell you what  
9 we're going to do. If we would be lucky," I said, "we're  
10 going to go to this guy at this station. If we can get a  
11 couple tickets, we're going to go to Gliwice; and if this  
12 girl is still there, maybe they have some help." But I  
13 said, "If we cannot, we finish our life right then and  
14 there. We will jump off the building if we are lucky  
15 enough to get there."

16 Okay. We finished up and that's what we  
17 do. So we went to the station. We got two tickets. There  
18 was a German dispatcher. She gave us two tickets. I think  
19 it was 98 kilometers, and we figured 4:00 or 4:30 in the  
20 morning wintertime, generally. This is no more than 98, 97  
21 kilometers, and easy we want to be sure we be there during  
22 daylight.

23 Well, during daylight we haven't even  
24 gotten five miles. The trains were always stopped. So  
25 finally, we come to one of the largest railroad stations,

1 and I think it was Katowice, a transport point. And the  
2 trains, just when we walked up there, the trains left. And  
3 it was loaded with these special S.S., you know, wearing  
4 these sheaths -- I think you have seen the pictures -- the  
5 security service. They are above everyone. They were  
6 stopping everyone. If it was a general from the Army or  
7 Air Force, anyone, any civilian. And when they walked  
8 left, we walked right. And somehow we just got near them.  
9 Close enough. Go ahead.

10 MR. DRIMMER: And on that transfer point -- this  
11 was the main transfer station shipping the soldiers Russia,  
12 to the Russian Eastern frontier. And where they evacuate  
13 the family of the soldiers, the officers from the East back  
14 into the West. But like Herman said on the station, the  
15 special S.S., just checked anybody in civilian, and we  
16 tried to avoid them. And we looked like bums, not shaved,  
17 torn-up mechanic suits. We must have smelled like rats, I  
18 guess, or something.

19 But anyhow, here comes over the mike for  
20 the next train goes in a few minutes, and as we keep  
21 walking on the station, the platform, there's about 10 feet  
22 or less in front of us two S.S. coming towards us. And  
23 this is the time when that one asks everybody for I.D. And  
24 I think God send somebody again. Just maybe three or four  
25 feet in front of us one guy crosses our path and so -- and

1 he stopped him and asked him for his I.D. In the meantime  
2 the train rolled in, and we entered the train.

3 MR. SHINE: So now we arrive in Gliwice. Gliwice  
4 is 10:00 o'clock in the morning. We ask for the street.  
5 Of course, I asked this girl I met there what street she  
6 lives, and I remembered that street. I remember the  
7 number. And what I have to tell you is that I came the  
8 first time to this camp from Auschwitz to build the roofs,  
9 I took another roofer with me whom I taught the roofing,  
10 and he was about six and a half feet tall. And he wore  
11 extremely thick glasses. His name was Oscar, Oscar Chaim.  
12 And he came back after I escaped from Auschwitz, to make  
13 more roof there. And he talked to my wife, which I knew  
14 after the war. And I talked to him after the war. And he  
15 told her I have escaped.

16 But what I want to tell you now is we are  
17 walking down the main street from this railroad station,  
18 the street, and it is daylight now. It is 10:00 in the  
19 morning, 10:00, 10:30. And all of a sudden, Oscar in  
20 prison uniform and another prisoner and two guards, S.S.  
21 guards, and all four knew me well, coming towards us. I  
22 don't know, they must have gone on some errands because it  
23 is very rarely that prisoners walking on the street with  
24 S.S. But, you know, they need an errand. They need  
25 somebody.



1                   And I said to Max, "Oscar" -- and I thought  
2 already he would never have given us away but just seeing  
3 us so close, all he needed is a split second because the  
4 two S.S. also knew me well.

5                   He said, "You haven't changed" because it  
6 was only a few -- a few weeks ago since this thing happened  
7 up there. Anyway, lucky he gave a signal to the other  
8 prisoners to cross the street. And now we reached the  
9 street which is Anateichstrata. We go down that street,  
10 and here we see some anti-Semites put the Mogen David, the  
11 Star of David, on the walls.

12                   And I said, "They must be living here." We  
13 come into the house, and Max says, "Manny, you must be very  
14 diplomatic. I cannot be diplomatic. Think of it. Because  
15 first I must see if they're still alive because I have no  
16 idea. I mean I only remember the card she sent in the  
17 camp, and easily, she could have been picked up easily.

18                   So we come upstairs to the Shlesingers, and I  
19 ring the bell, and her older sister opened the door. And I  
20 said, "Could I please talk" -- because the only one I knew  
21 was Marion.

22                   And I said, "Could I please talk to Marion  
23 Shlesinger."

24                   And she said, "She's at work." And I knew  
25 that everything was well.

1                   So I said -- she said, "Do you want to talk  
2 to her mother?"

3                   And I said, "Yes."

4                   And her mother learned to be a secretary in  
5 a big factory during the war, but she was sick a few days.

Y 6                  So her older sister goes -- Erica goes in and says,  
7 "Mother, there are two mechanics outside" because the suits  
8 looked like mechanic suits.

9                   So the mother said, "Let them in. I think  
X 10 they're Augustine, the guy she works for sent them to find  
11 out what's wrong with me."

12                  We come in. The mother lays on the couch,  
13 and she said, "You're not mechanics. What are you doing  
14 here? How come you're coming here? How come you know  
15 my daughter?"

16                  And I couldn't tell her. I said, "Mrs.  
17 Shlesinger, "I don't know what is wrong with you."

18                  She could have had a heart condition if she  
19 knew two people escaped from Auschwitz. She could have had  
20 a heart attack and died.

21                  And she said, "How come you know my  
22 daughter?"

23                  And I said, "I worked in the area near from  
24 Auschwitz." And I didn't say I was in there.

25                  Now, she said, "You must tell me the truth

1 or leave my house right away." She said, "Please -- I  
2 don't know what is sick" -- she said, "Nothing is wrong,  
3 only what's wrong with my foot," she said.

4 I said, "I was in Gliwice, and I was the  
5 roofer. I escaped from Auschwitz. We escaped from  
6 Auschwitz in September."

7 She said, "Is the police after you?"

8 I said, "No." I mean the police was after  
9 us 24 hours before but not now.

10 And she said, "You're the roofer." And I  
11 was singing on the roof. I always used to sing the songs  
12 in the camp, and I had a good voice, you know. She knew  
13 right away who I was.

14 So the father, who used to be a lawyer, had  
15 some connections, and he arranged first, we stayed a week  
16 in their house, cleaned us, of course, sewed our jackets,  
17 and we washed, and the first time we had a bath in four  
18 months. And the lucky thing was that we never had a bath.  
19 I talked later after the war to people from the police. If  
20 we had a bath, the dogs probably would have smelled us.

21 This is why we smelled like the environment just like  
22 others do.

23 So we were hidden one week in their  
24 apartment, and you can imagine under what risk they were  
25 taking because these were half-Jews. But the father

1 wouldn't -- even the parents even never hesitated a second  
2 not to try to help us.

3 So after a week, the father knew a former  
4 gentile Communist who was released. He was also in prison,  
5 but he was released, and he was still a very known man, and  
6 he defended him in old times.

7 And he said, Mr. Zauer, I have two guys who  
8 escaped from Auschwitz.

9 He said, "Shlesinger, say no more." And  
10 he said, "I'm hiding 19 Jews from the beginning of the war.  
11 Maybe you don't know it. I have room any time for two  
12 guys like this." And this man arranged a hiding place for  
13 us in with a German multi-millionaire who gave 100,000 mark  
14 to Hitler's 50th birthday. So he got an emblem, and the  
15 Nazis left him alone. And he gave 100,000 marks to the  
16 Communists underground so that they possibly leave him  
17 alone.

\* 18 And Zouer talked to the wife, and she said,  
19 "You talk to your husband. These two guys, if you protect  
20 them in your villa and the Russians will come soon,  
21 everything you have will be in one piece. Nothing will be  
22 taken from you."

23 How wrong he was. But the man, of course,  
24 was all for it. And we were hidden, and, you know, my  
25 father-in-law -- I mean Shlesinger gave us food stamps. He

1       said, "We don't have much, but you will not starve." And  
2       we were given a little bit, but we have to split with you."  
3       And when we came there, they showed us around this -- you  
4       know, they had so much food there we were only thought of  
5       ways how we can transfer the food to them. And we were  
6       there until we were freed by the Russian army on the 27th  
7       of January 1945.

8               MR. DRIMMER: When the Russians came -- well, we  
9       had a small incident too. The woman who owned that estate,  
10      she had a house middle living there, and they brought us  
11      out by bus. They went up by bus, and we followed in a bus.  
12      I don't want to go into details. And she told her --  
13      Usefka was her name -- she said, "Those two guys" -- we  
14      looked like mechanics. And then we later came with a  
15      ruler in the hand and a hammer in the hand; so then we  
16      really looked like mechanics. "They are going to remodel  
17      the whole house."

18              But, you know, it is illegal during the  
19      war. The materials is being needed for war purposes. So  
20      in the meantime, we would take about a couple of weeks  
21      before the truck comes out. "And they will help you  
22      chopping wood and bring the water from the well, but do not  
23      let anybody come in here."

24              So when we were sitting outside in the  
25      evening, all of a sudden the doorbell rings, and she goes

\* 1 outside and says, "Usefka, you know what your boss told  
2 you."

3 So after a while, she come back in. It's a  
4 friend of the family, and he got stuck on his motorcycle,  
5 and he wants to stay overnight. And I said, "You know what  
6 your boss told you."

7 Anyhow, she went back several times -- six,  
8 seven, eight times. And the guy did not want to take a no  
9 for an answer. So they came back the last time.

10 And I said, "Who is he?" The man is an old  
11 man. He's from the Gestapo, and they are all running away.  
12 Everybody runs on their own. Nobody cares for the others,  
13 and he has a heart condition, and he does not want to  
14 leave.

15 So we said to her, "Well, Gestapo. Maybe  
16 if the Germans find us here, maybe she will be of help."

17 Anyhow, he come in, and then we walked away  
18 from the house we were staying. They had a chauffeur's  
19 quarter there; so we came in the morning like we just came,  
20 and we come in. There was two guns laying on the table,  
21 and Herman took one chair where the guns was, and I took  
22 the other chair where the other gun was. And then he  
23 started cussing off his buddies. Nobody cares for each  
24 other anymore. And he had a briefcase, and he was -- we  
25 welcomed him very much.

1                   We were out of smoke, and he had a  
2 bunch -- he brought us a fresh supply for smoke, but we  
3 never told him who he were. So one day we look out the  
4 window a couple of days later, and you see tanks moving one  
5 after another one.

6

7                   Tape 2

8                   MR. DRIMMER: -- bank books for special savings  
9 account and pictures. We just keep just about everything  
10 away, and we search back and forth, and there was no proof  
11 of being an S.S. man. That's what we thought. So all of a  
12 sudden the next day the doors are ripped open, and the  
13 first wild Mongol-type Russian soldiers come in. We were  
14 sitting in the kitchen, had lunch, and we showed them the  
15 number. They didn't know what it means. They had never  
16 seen that before. So while I was showing my number, we  
17 were at the table, and we had lunch, and there was a little  
18 jar of pickles.

19                   And he said, "The white oakey" -- in German  
20 pickles are "grokin." Oakey, grokey, I saw that as one  
21 connection. And then I wanted to give him this jar, and  
22 then he unlocked his machine gun, and he pointed on a  
23 watch. He wanted the watch. So I figured the watch is not  
24 worth to take my life. So I gave him my watch.

25                   And in the meantime, Herman took his hands

1 behind and removed his watch. And so then they left. An  
2 hour or two whatever, all of a sudden some Russian comes in  
3 again. You could see a better group of Russians. They  
4 didn't bother us. They didn't even come near to us. This  
5 was a two-story estate. What an estate. And they went  
6 downstairs and upstairs and left.

7                   And then a little while later, what  
8 happened they were looking for a house to establish their  
9 headquarters, and they picked this house. So I figured now  
10 we are safe. I figured we are going to be their servants.  
11 We're going to clean for them, shine shoes and -- but they  
12 had a beaver farm and turkeys in the back, and they were  
13 just chopping the head open and put them with feather and  
14 everything right in the oven. So I stood downstairs, and  
15 Herman went upstairs.

16                   Upstairs, in no time, the telephone wires  
17 were laid, and they had a map on the wall and they started  
18 needles put on. And they took this town and this town and  
19 this down. And all of a sudden Herman called me, "Max,  
20 Max, come upstairs."

21                   I come upstairs. The general is a Jew, and  
22 he speaks Yiddish, and I speak perfect Yiddish. So we were  
23 sitting just like now on two chairs, and there's a whole  
24 general staff was sitting around him. And he was in the  
25 middle and asked us question -- who we are, where we come



1 from, how was it. And then he always translated it back  
2 into Russian. And we saw the faces of the officers. So I  
3 will never forget this. I popped the question. I said,  
4 "Where did you come from?"

5 He says, "From the sky."

6 I shouldn't have asked the question because  
7 Russians will not tell you either, but I guess I was so  
8 overwhelmed. I said, "How long are you going to stay  
9 here?"

10 He said, "We're going to be here for a  
11 while.

12 "Why?"

13 "I'm afraid for the Germans might catch  
14 you."

15 He said, "No, No, you don't have to be  
16 afraid."

17 So we went downstairs, and he was upstairs,  
18 and after a while, Herman calls me, "Max, come upstairs."

19 So we come upstairs, sit down, and then he  
20 tells everything we tell him is a lie.

21 He was an S.S. man. They found one picture  
22 on him in S.S. uniform. So they started disbelieving us.  
23 What did they do with this old man?

24 They took him to the backyard and shot him.  
25 They don't ask no questions. Now he was skeptical that we

1     may belong to the same group. We cried. And I explain him  
2     this and that, and I told him the story, why the man is  
3     here. If he ever believed it, I don't know. But anyhow,  
4     they didn't stay long because they had to move. The  
5     Russian troops went so fast forward into Germany, they had  
6     to bring in the next troops. And I see they start taking  
7     down the telephone wires. And I said, "Where are you  
8     going?" So he tells me, "I have to bring in new troops."

9                     I said, "Please take us along."

10                    He said, "No. I cannot. You are civilian.  
11     I cannot take you long."

12                    I said, "What happened when the wild  
13     Russians come in like they did before? We have nothing in  
14     our hand. They don't know what the number."

15                    So he give us an I.D., handwritten I.D.,  
16     with his general stamp on it with the numbers because we  
17     had no pictures. So then they left. And then the Russians  
18     came, and we showed them the papers, someone turned them,  
19     turned them upside down. They couldn't read it.

20                    And I knew a little bit with one finger how  
\* 21     to play the piano; so I picked up the Russian Kadusha. And  
22     whenever they came, I played it; so we were their buddies.

23                    Anyhow, after three days later, then we  
24     were eager to find out what happened at Gliwice. So we  
25     took two bicycles. There was two bicycles, and we drove

1     into Gliwice, and Gliwice was in flame, the city. So we  
2     come to the house, and we go upstairs. There's nobody  
3     there. So we go back down and meet one person. "Where are  
4     the Shlesingers?"

5                     "They're down the basement." They're in the  
6     air raid shelters. The basement was the air raid shelter.  
7     So they didn't know what happened, and everybody was there.  
8     And the young girls, they had coals and ashes in their face  
9     because the Russians raped anybody. Age didn't matter.

10                    And we told them, "The war is already over.  
11     Come on."

12                    So we took them out of the cellars, and we  
13     went back into their apartment, and then we got friendly  
14     with some Russian officers, and we had a pretty good life  
15     there. And then we were eager to go back to Berlin to see  
16     if any of our relatives are left. But the first people who  
17     came back from Western Europe in May, the end of May; so  
18     then we found out there are trains going, but there were  
19     not trains going. They were open platform cars and open  
20     flat form cars.

21                    So we said goodbye. In the meantime we met  
22     a guy who was in charge, a Russian officer, who was in  
23     charge of the slaughterhouse, and he give me a nice job. I  
24     was -- he put in charge of the ranch, and they stole all  
25     the cattle from the Germans. They collected at my place.

1 I had six Russian soldiers under me. And  
X2 this Jewish, Papakovnik, he calls me in one day. He said,  
3 "You are the boss here. We have papers. You have a  
4 thousand cows, and since you are the boss, you have to  
5 bring them to Moscow."

6 I said, "How do you bring them?"

7 "You walk." And he said to me, "You know,  
8 once you've been in Moscow, you can never come back no  
9 more.

10 I said, "What should I do?"

11 He said, "Take a hike. He said to me, "If  
12 I wouldn't have a wife with two kids, I would go with you."  
13 And he was a high-ranking officer.

14 Anyhow, then we had -- I had to hide again  
15 for a couple of weeks. So then the first train started,  
16 and Herman and I, we took the chance, which was not easy,  
17 because on the nighttime and daytime the gangsters came and  
18 they stole things from the women and men. Anyhow, we  
19 finally made it back to Berlin, which was the beginning of  
20 June. Then we looked up Bully. We found him. He had  
21 survived; his bride had survived. They got married then.

22 And then I had the address printed in my  
23 head still from this girl. The next day we went on a bike.  
24 There was no transportation to Berlin. And I went to her  
25 house, and her father opened the door, which I never met,

1 and I asked for her. And he said, "She's in Han's place."

2 So he gave us the address. We both drove  
3 over. And I used to belong to a youth group, and we had a  
4 certain whistle. Each club had its own whistle. So then  
5 on the sidewalk, and I whistled up, and there she was in a  
6 window. She almost fell off the window, running down,  
7 hugging and kissing both -- not that her boyfriend came  
8 back. But first of all, she know what we went through and  
9 that we were survived.

10 So she asked us, "Where do you live?"

~~11~~ 11 I said, "We live in Pankovitch."

12 It was far away from the place she lived.

13 So she went with us to the city hall, and said, "These two  
14 guys just came back from the concentration camp."

15 They gave us an apartment, and we lived  
16 together, and but Marion was back in Gliwice, and in not  
17 time, he went back to Gliwice, and he picked her up. Also  
18 not such a simple trip because there was no regular  
19 transportation.

20 So she came back, and her sister came with  
21 us, and Marion moved in with the two of us. And Helga  
22 lived only a few blocks away from us, and, of course, she  
23 had a boyfriend. She didn't know I was going to come back.  
24 So anyhow, a few -- three, four months later I popped the  
25 question -- "Would you marry me?"

1                   And she said "yes."

2                   So the four of us got married at the same  
3   day, the same place, and the four of us went to America  
4   together. The four of us live five minutes apart. We've  
5   been friends for all the time, and now we -- now this  
6   concluding of the story is we have found Joseph Runner.

7                   MR. SHINE: So in June of 1989, we went to  
8   Auschwitz, and among the very important things, of course,  
9   was to try to find Joseph, if he's still alive, and some of  
10   his family. And when we came there, at first it was very,  
11   very hard, of course, seeing Auschwitz again. And all this  
12   was -- I was little bit against it. Max was more going  
13   because I didn't want to see all the old memories again.  
14   But by coincidence, we were staying in Cracow. And while  
15   we walked in Cracow over the marketplace, we met a couple  
16   of junior clerks, and they brought us to a church and made  
17   several telephone calls for us and found a higher officer  
18   during the war from a similar outfit Joseph Runner served  
19   in. And he said he hadn't head of him but he will promise  
20   us to find him for us if he's still alive.

21                   When we came back to America, within six  
22   weeks, we had a letter from this Polish man in Cracow. His  
23   name is Ludwig Cubig. He said he found the sister and the  
24   brother, and Joseph still is also alive. We made several  
25   telephone calls, and we were writing several letters, and

1 now our attention is to bring Joseph on a visit here and  
2 see that he get honored as a righteous gentile.

3 MR. DRIMMER: Another thing, in May 1946 before I  
4 worked for the American Army in kitchen and we start  
5 getting into food, and then once you have enough. So I  
6 changed my job as being a taxi driver for the American  
7 Army, and I pick -- I got orders to pick up here and there,  
8 and I picked up a man who came in from Chicago,  
9 Mr. Eiserbenger. I will never forget. And he was sitting  
10 in back. I was a plain taxi driver. And he started  
11 talking to me in English, which I did not know at all. I  
12 didn't speak English at all.

13 And he said, "Do you speak Yiddish," which  
14 I said, "Oh, yeah, that's my language."

15 So he came from New York to open up the  
16 joint, what's the highest joint, to help the Jewish people  
17 all around the world. So he opened up an office.

18 "Do you want to become a driver, a  
19 chauffeur?"

20 I said, "Of course."

21 So then I brought all my friends in to  
22 work, and they all helped us, gave us a lot of stuff for  
23 our wedding because food was scarce. And then in 1940 --  
24 we married in the 17th of February 1946. It was a chuppah.  
25 The day before we went and married in the city hall, and on

1 the 16th, and the 17th was a rabbi.

2 And then America opened the gates for us  
3 people to go to America, and everybody went to the  
4 counselor, and hundreds of people then. We met outside in  
5 the lawn. There was not enough room for inside. So then  
6 you get numbers. They called you by numbers. And all of a  
7 sudden, they roped off one part and they said, "This is for  
8 the first ship. This is enough for the first ship, and you  
9 will go in with the second ship."

10 So my in-laws were on the first ship. So  
11 anyhow, they told them, they gave them the visas and in  
12 three days. And they said, "You will get home and pack  
13 your things, and in three days you will go by train to  
14 Hamburg, Bremerhaven."

15 And they didn't send you to no doctor or  
16 nothing. And we go in two weeks. So they send us to the  
17 doctor. And I had an appointment to pick up the visas, and  
18 I come to the counsel, and I was sitting with my wife like  
19 this, and he goes to the record, and he stops, and he looks  
20 at me and looks at the paper, and then he talks to the --  
21 not the one that speaks English -- the interpreter, tell  
22 him this.

23 And he says, "You cannot go because you  
24 have tuberculosis," which I didn't know. And in the  
25 meantime, Herman got his papers to go; so he brought his



1 friends to doctors to professors and everybody told me,  
2 "Yes. There's something on the lung. It could have been a  
3 scar. You could have been born with it, many things."

4 But everything else was negative with me;  
5 so I was into a sanitorium, and Herman brought me. It was  
6 300 miles away from Berlin, and here was just newly  
7 married. And he stayed with me for a while.

8 And the doctor consulate said, "Come back  
9 in three months."

10 So I went back in three months, took a new  
11 x-ray, and he took a little ruler out. He compared the two  
12 pictures, the first and the last, and he said, "The picture  
13 today shrunk a millimeter."

14 That tells him it's active. If it would  
15 have been the same as it was, then it could have been a  
16 scar. So anyhow, I was in there nine months, and Herman  
17 did not go. They waited for us. And then I had other  
18 troubles.

19 They gave me a bakery that they took away  
20 from the Nazi, and the Nazi took it away from me again  
21 because he was classified as a small Nazi or he joined the  
22 party only in '42, and he was making Hitler's birthday  
23 cakes. So he was considered small, but I didn't want to  
24 stay in Germany anyway.

25 So finally, then I came back the third

1 time, and the doctor hugs me, greets me at the door. He  
2 says, "I was a Jewish captain." He said, "I just received  
3 my release paper this morning. I can go home to my wife  
4 and two children. I let you go too."

5 So now I had to start all over again. In  
6 the meantime my wife was pregnant, the fifth month  
7 pregnant. So we go to the doctor, and she put up a tight  
8 corset because pregnant you can go only up to the second  
9 month on the ship. They don't let you go.

10 So he talks to us. He talks to my wife and  
11 asks her, "Aren't you pregnant?"

12 She said, "No way. I'm not pregnant."

13 He didn't examine her at all, just by maybe  
14 the eyes. I don't know. Doctors have a way of just by the  
15 eyes. I don't know. He have a way of telling.

16 So she said, "Lie on the table."

17 He put his ear to her and said, "Funny, you  
18 you're not pregnant. I can hear a heart beat."

19 Anyhow, so we cannot go. So he says, "The  
20 only way you can go is fly."

21 So I went back to my boss to the Joint  
22 Distribution Committee. I told this. So anyhow, the  
23 soldiers chipped in for my wife to buy a plane ticket. So  
24 she went by plane and I went by boat.

25 So I have two sons. The first one was born

1 right two months after we got here. And while my in-laws  
2 were already in New York and waiting for the second ship,  
3 and we never came, they found out we did not come. So they  
4 were supported by the Jewish committee, and they had a case  
5 worker. They told them, they said, "This kids got off in  
6 New York. You can't stay."

7                   Everybody wanted to stay in New York. So  
8 they give me three choices -- Chicago, St. Louis, or San  
9 Francisco. So my wife had a lot of her family, a  
10 grandmother in Shanghai, and they figured one day if they  
11 might come over. This is how they picked San Francisco.  
12 So even when I picked up my visa in Berlin, the consulate  
13 said, "Where are you going to?" I said, "San Francisco."

14                   "How come you picked the nicest city?"

15                   And Herman stayed in Berlin. And in New York,  
16 he had some family. He found a job as a roofer.

17                   I asked him, "How about coming over?"

18                   I inquired about roofing, and so then a year  
19 later he came to San Francisco, and here we are ever since.

20                   MS. FEIBELMAN: Did you have any family left?

21                   MR. DRIMMER: No. I lost my parents and a few  
22 uncles and aunts. We were only two children, and my sister  
23 survived it and was in a camp in Southern France.

24                   MS. FEIBELMAN: Where is she?

25                   MR. DRIMMER: She's in San Francisco. And then I

1 have a lot of family in Israel, the one who got out just  
2 before with the last boat, so to speak. I've been there  
3 many times, in Israel.

4 MS. FEIBELMAN: And, Herman, did you have any  
5 family?

6 MR. SHINE: I had a brother here, and he's about  
7 the only one that's alive. I had a sister. She survived  
8 in China, but she went back to Berlin right after the war.  
9 She couldn't come to America. She had a lung disease. She  
10 died about 10 years ago.

11 MS. FEIBELMAN: And your parents?

12 MR. SHINE: My parents all got killed during the  
13 war.

14 MS. FEIBELMAN: Is there anything you'd like to  
15 add, either of you, about what effect the war had or how  
16 you see life?

17 MR. SHINE: Well, I think for myself, I think  
18 we're extremely fortunate. I think I'm extremely  
19 fortunate. We had such a tremendous hard experience, but  
20 basically, we could overcome it while many, many fellow  
21 inmates who wanted to survive did not come out to survive.  
22 They became very, very sick. We were fortunately, I think,  
23 we became very successful in America, and the other things  
24 which happened which probably also have to do with the  
25 whole thing we went through. But some things cannot

1 change, you know. But, basically, I think we came out  
2 lucky because many, many, like I say, they went through it  
3 and became very ill.

4 MR. DRIMMER: I'd like to add to that thing we  
5 were just born under a lucky star, and that's all it is. I  
6 don't think -- like this question was popped to me hundreds  
7 and hundreds of times -- "How did you survive, Max?"

8 There's really no answer. There were  
9 people who were younger and stronger than I am and didn't  
10 make it. There's no answer. There's no answer why one did  
11 and one didn't. It's plain luck, I think, or it was help  
12 from the Guy above.

13 MS. FEIBELMAN: Do you think there was a reason  
14 you survived?

15 MR. DRIMMER: To me, there was a reason.  
16 Everybody sets himself a goal in his life. Mine was I  
17 wanted to see mother again, and I believe in God. That was  
18 my two things I saw every day in front of me. I don't  
19 know if it helped. Maybe.

20 MS. FEIBELMAN: And did you see your mother again?

21 MR. DRIMMER: No, no. When I came back to  
22 Berlin -- you know how accurate the Germans were. They  
23 have records just about everything. The Red Cross has it.  
24 It says, "Fanny Drimmer, December 27, 1942; transport  
25 number so-and-so to the East. And that's all.

1 My father already ran away from  
2 Berlin in '38 because he was a Polish citizen, and again  
3 how accurate the Germans are, they wanted to get rid of the  
4 man; so they send him postcards to appear to the Gestapo.  
5 It went alphabetically; so we are D. First A, B, C. Then  
6 it got around between the women, that the men who went  
7 there never came back. "My husband didn't come back."

8 So here, my father got this card. I'll  
9 never forget. It was the second day of the seder. After  
10 the seder we brought my father to the train station, and he  
11 went to Poland. He had a Polish passport. So he stayed in  
12 Posen. I was with him in the end of '38, and then he went  
13 to Asher because he couldn't start anything in Posen. And  
14 we were just communicating by letters until I got away, and  
15 I never heard from him no more. I have no idea where they  
16 are.

17 And then in Auschwitz -- I guess I can  
18 speak for Herman -- our great disappointment was there were  
19 many, many monuments and placks in Auschwitz and in  
20 Birkenau and in Buna, nothing about the Jews. I would say  
21 90 percent of them, they claim four million, were gassed,  
22 they were Jews. So that was very hard for us.

23 I had two purposes to go to Auschwitz, and  
24 I wanted to go to the fence and smile, "I have made it."  
25 But I didn't get that far. I cracked up. And the second

1 reason was we wanted to find Joseph, which we were not  
2 successful then but are very happy we found him now because  
3 we owe him our life.

4 MS. FEIBELMAN: Thank you both. I have no words.

5 MR. SHINE: It's tremendous to have a project like  
6 this, and it takes people like you to do that because we  
7 are, after all, are pretty soon the last of the survivors;  
8 and if it's not done, unfortunately, like this, pretty  
9 soon things can happen again, you know.

10 MR. DRIMMER: I have my granddaughter, my  
11 grandchildren. I have two went to Beth Jacob. My  
12 granddaughter is still in Beth Jacob. I have appeared  
13 twice. She gave me the job to appear at a school. I spoke  
14 to the school, and we have been interviewed. Last week, as  
15 a matter of fact, a big article came out in the Summer  
16 Times.

17 MS. FEIBELMAN: I saw it. They gave me a Xerox  
18 copy. It was very nice.

19 MR. DRIMMER: Can you get a Xerox page from this  
20 big page? They shrink it.

21 MS. FEIBELMAN: It's cut up in little pieces.

22 MR. SHINE: If you want the original?

23 MS. FEIBELMAN: Do you have it?

24 MR. SHINE: I can get you one.

25 MR. DRIMMER: We have a machine at our temple, and

1 I tried it there. It's too big.

2 MS. FEIBELMAN: I have a question for you about  
3 you had mentioned before that somebody from KQED --

\* 4 MR. DRIMMER: Peter Guardman, his wife's  
5 bookkeeper, is Herman's nephew.

6 MR. SHINE: Right. He's a producer.

7 MR. DRIMMER: This is how we got him.

8 MR. SHINE: He's a producer at KQED. He was not  
9 sponsored by KQED. He was sponsored by national radio.  
10 He tried KQED, but they came back they didn't have the  
11 budget for it; so then he went into international  
12 broadcasting. They gave him a grant, and they came along,  
13 and, to me, it was a waste of time and money because he  
14 taped us all the time, mainly Auschwitz, but Berlin. We  
15 were in Berlin together. This wasn't important, but  
16 Auschwitz he shaved it and shaved it to about half an hour.  
17 And they told him it's too long 14, 15 minutes. And you  
18 don't get nothing out of it.

19 So I talked to him yesterday on the phone,  
20 and he told me now they are almost were ready to air it.  
21 Now we told them that we found Joseph, now they wanted to  
22 combine it.

23 Also, coming back on 60 Minutes, and for  
24 some reason they heard about it, and she called me three  
25 times a day from New York and begged me, "Please, don't



1 give it to anybody. Please don't give it to anybody"

2 And Herman popped the question about at  
3 least expenses. No. So then I got the answer the reason  
4 why no is journalism doesn't buy stories. They only  
5 produce stories. That was the answer and, "Please, don't  
6 give it to anybody."

7 So I asked then -- I called her always  
8 collect, of course. I says, "Would we go together with the  
9 crew together?"

10 She says, "No. The crew comes from London,  
11 but you should come in from Krakow together."

\* 12 Fine. The next day she calls me, "60  
13 Minutes has so much trouble, and they cannot do it."

14 But then all -- the only thing they were  
15 interested in was not about our story at all. The only  
16 thing they were interested in was the reunion between the  
17 three of us, which would have maybe been four or five  
18 minutes on 60 Minutes. But you know we have tried, maybe  
19 not hard enough.

20 MR. SHINE: Herman and I tried to get somebody to  
21 write a book because there are many stories, unfortunately,  
22 but there are some survivors, and everybody has a story.  
23 But we -- and as you probably heard, and I guess you have  
24 listened to many other stories, our story is an unusual  
25 one.

1                   First of all, we knew each other as  
2 children. We were arrested together. We stuck together  
3 for five years. We escaped together. We have survived.  
4 We married together. We came to America together. And now  
5 is the conclusion of the story we have found you. So I  
6 think -- when you want to get a book writer or somebody,  
7 maybe a firm, not for the money purpose.

8                   MS. FEIBELMAN: No. I understand.

9                   MR. SHINE: But we just didn't have the right  
10 connection.

11                  MS. FEIBELMAN: We don't have a connection, but I  
12 have an idea.

13                  MR. DRIMMER: Any idea is welcome.

14                  MS. FEIBELMAN: And that is I know that German  
15 television, the state-owned television has been very active  
16 in making World War II stories, and I can try and see if I  
17 can get a connection there.

18                  MR. DRIMMER: It would be very nice. Who are you  
19 with? Is it Berlin or Bonn or Frankfurt?

20                  MS. FEIBELMAN: As far as I know, it's Berlin, but  
21 I have never done it. I would have to find out. No  
22 promise. I'd like -- I'd love to.

23                  MR. DRIMMER: I had a contract once with Milton  
24 Berle, George Burns, you know, when they appeared in Tahoe  
25 or Las Vegas, and we had been there and played Black Jack.

1 And they happened to be there too. When they see the  
2 number, the world comes to an end. They put their head on  
3 your arm and cry. And right away we come out, we're  
4 interested of a film, and everybody was so interested. The  
5 closest we ever came, we had an appointment with Milton  
6 Berle 10, 15 years ago, and we were flying into Los  
7 Angeles, and the night before, the secretary called us. He  
8 had to be called to New York. He will reschedule the  
9 appointment. And we're still waiting for it.

10 MS. FEIBELMAN: Right. Well, let me think about  
11 what I can do. You have an unusual story.

12 MR. SHINE: It is because, let's face it, I don't  
13 think you will have anyone who escaped to see to tell it.

14 MR. DRIMMER: Escaping. We never told them. We  
15 saw one time while we were still in Buna they caught  
16 somebody and they hang him up right in front of us. While  
17 we were gone, we got the news from Joseph through Leo, my  
18 friend, and they hung three again, and they hung two again.  
19 Escaping is tenth of 100 percent maybe. There may be more  
20 have tried, but I don't think a dozen have made it like the  
21 two of us.

22 That Bully, is another one, of course. His  
23 escape was much easier except in Berlin he almost got  
24 caught from a Jewish spy, the one I mentioned. Baron was  
25 his name. But Bully had a gun in his pocket, and he shot

1 his way out, and unfortunately, he didn't kill him. He  
2 shot him in the knee, but he wasn't successful in killing  
3 him.

4 And the Russians came in. They took him  
5 away, and nobody knows what happened to him. There was  
6 enough unfortunately, but the only one to save their own  
7 skin, and many of them were sent from the Nazis anyhow.  
8 Once the Jewish population shrunk and shrunk and shrunk,  
9 they didn't need them anymore; so they sent them to  
10 Theresienstadt or Auschwitz.

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