

OK, you can start anytime.

Today is November 19, 1991. My name is Ellen Szakal I'm an interviewer with the Holocaust Oral History Project of San Francisco. This evening, we are talking with Esther Kozlowski. And assisting in the interview is Jill Nierman, and working the camera is Laurie Sasna.

Welcome again, Esther. This is your third interview. And I'd like you to begin where you left off for your last interview.

Thank you, Ellen. I'll try my best. So I think we left off when I crossed the battlefield with my child. I approached a well where people were gathering. And I wanted to give my child some water to drink because he was all muddy his. Face was muddy and sweaty.

I didn't know. I wanted to give him the water, but I was very frightened that he might catch a cold or something, catch his death when we were already liberated. I had a little robe-- a pink robe on it. And I dampened the corner of my skirt from the robe. And I gave him to suck, and I washed his face with that same corner.

And we picked ourselves up, and we started to walk because someone-- I asked about Mrs. Opalinska, that took care of us. And she wasn't anyplace to see him. Finally, someone mentioned that she had been shot through her leg-- her upper thigh. And I started searching for her. I couldn't find her.

Finally, I found her, and I wanted to take her to a doctor. And I asked a cook that was cooking dinner or something where I can find a doctor, knowing that I must find her and see how she is-- how Mrs. Opalinska is. And he told me that they will be-- this and this direction there is an ambulance and a dispensary.

And I found Mrs. Opalinski, and I took her there. And they took out the bullet and took care of her leg. And later on, we returned to that cook, and he gave us soup-- a [POLISH]. That is a cabbage soup with all different vegetables.

And we ate, and I asked him if-- because he looked like-- I don't know. I just had a feeling that he is Jewish. And the only word I knew is yevery That means "Jewish" in Russian. So I ask him, yevery? And he said, da, da. And I stuttered, and I said, I am also.

Well, that was the first time, after the war, that I acknowledged that I am Jewish. And I asked him-- I was surprised-- would you know, is still in between those three doctors that I just had Mrs. Opalinski in my aunt, would you know of some Jewish doctors between them? And he said, yes, two of them are Jewish.

They asked us to come back-- those three doctors. And we went back, and there was one with the name of [UZBEK]. And a very, very beautiful man. He took me in. And I wanted to tell somebody that I am alive and I survived. And I said to him that-- I couldn't speak to him

But where they stayed-- where they were staying in a nice house from-- a Polish man and [UZBEK]. I said, I would like to speak to that doctor privately because I have a bad heart, and my heart is very palpitating. Do you speak Russian? He said, yes, he speaks Russian. Could you arrange with one of those doctors that I can speak with?

And I knew that [UZBEK] is Jewish even though he was from Uzbekistan. The other one I didn't know, and I didn't know that he is Jewish. But the one I know that was Russian-- and I was afraid to speak to him.

Well, he took me into a room. And I told him that I have heart palpitations, and I feel very bad, if you could give me some drops or something. And he said, yes. He examined my heart, and he said he will give me some medication. And I said to him, Doctor, yevery. He told me, yes, he is, in Russian. And I realized that I understood.

And so I said to him, I'm also Jewish. I am, but in Polish, as much as I could. And he didn't speak Jewish because I do speak Jewish. But he didn't speak it, just Russian.

And he said that the other doctor is also Jewish. And he said the child is mine, and he said, doesn't believe it. He doesn't believe that I am Jewish. And then I said to him you see, why don't you take off his panties and you will see?

Because in Russia, they don't circumcise-- they didn't circumcise under the Bolsheviks. They didn't, unless it was maybe an older person. And in Europe, in Poland, they don't circumcise children like in the United States or England. They only circumcise the male children. And so that was the bigger giveaway for the Jewish people if someone managed to escape-- A cousin of my husband-- anyway-- just perish that way.

Anyway, he was so elated. He said, you're going to stay-- you're going to stay here with us. And he brought the other Jewish man-- the Jewish doctor. The doctor took off his coat-- it was getting dark and cold-- and wrapped my son-- the other doctor. I don't remember his name.

But this one I remember, [UZBEK], because it was such an unusual one. But the doctor told me that he is from Kamianets-Podilskyi. And he told me not to cry, in Yiddish. And I think it was-- after the war, the first time that I allowed myself to cry. And they gave us a room. They brought us straw and bed just down in the same house.

I felt very bad because I thought that the Russians-- you want to eat, you have to work for it. But they didn't sit down to any meal not to have us with them-- all three of us. He put in my tea-- cup of tea, he put maybe I don't know how much sugar because I was so worn out and so emaciated. And the child was terrified, and everything was just in a shamble.

The war was still going on-- the battle. They put on the katyushas for the forest where the Germans were, in the direction. And the forest was just one fire. And the battle-- when it ended, the people they brought back from the battlefields-- the injured ones-- it was pitiful. It was terrifying. And they had a dispensary.

But we still crawled into the bunkers. And I don't remember exactly how long they stayed. But I want to mention that I was liberated 10 kilometers from Treblinka on the River Bug. And it was the 4th of September, 1944.

But the trouble-- it was autumn, and it started to look for somebody. The village where we were living before was just completely destroyed. The crops were burnt. It was September, and there were many, many crops in the field. The only anything that remained was in the ground, where the potatoes and-- what else? Potatoes and beets. And the cattle and-- whatever was to be taken, the Germans took with them.

And I was barefoot. And we had a torn cover. And we were sitting in a chata chalet, without the roof, and just a little stove that we could cook those potatoes. But the Russians, before they left, gave me a pair of shoes-- a soldier's shoes that I just couldn't practically wear.

And when I escaped from that village, I left everything behind. But Mrs. Opalinska-- I called her Aunt Frances, Franja. She crawled back and brought me some stuff that-- the Russians took my shoes and whatever was salvaged. Well, I had my father's wedding band in that package, but that was taken. And everything that represented some kind of value was gone.

And the child had to be-- during the day, he was wrapped in a torn comforter-- a cotton comforter and sitting-- because we didn't more to dress him. To have a roof over our heads, we slept in-- I find the right word for it. When you take off from the field, the grain-- it's with the straw. So we slept in that barn in the straw. And in the morning, my feet were freezing to the ground, and I was running to the chalet that we can cook and warm up something to eat.

And finally, I didn't want to be a parasite to them, so I was digging potatoes for people. And every day I brought home a full basket of potatoes. And at least we had potatoes and the red beets we cooked for a borscht.

And as the Russians pushed forward, we heard-- yes, I beg your pardon-- I heard that, in the little city near us, Poreba, I'm talking, that some Jews returned-- a shoemaker, and some other-- a few of them returned. And they got the house. And finally, I went to see them because I didn't know, really-- I knew that winter is approaching. Winter is approaching. And we were naked and barefoot and without any means of living.

So I went to those few Jews, one name I think I do remember, a Mr. Kukulka or something-- something or other. But I don't remember, and I couldn't swear 100% this was his real name or whatever name it was.

But they told me that in Lublin-- and that was far, quite the way. You know where Majdanek is? That's were Lublin is. And that Lublin-- it's a big city. And Lublin-- there's organized Jewish committee.

So I was anxious to get to that and to get some way to start living again or-- I don't know. I wasn't in the full knowledge how the army proceeded and if they took the Vistula, if they took more, further, if they took Warsaw. I wasn't in the picture. I didn't know. We didn't have a newspaper. Only by grapevine.

And so I decided that I will go. I will go to Lublin myself and find out how everything is going on. Well, the acceleration of the knowledge that I am free just overcame everything-- that I can show my dark hair and my dark eyes.

And it just-- you lived with it. You lived with the air you breathe. And you didn't need much. And I was strong. I was still very young.

And so the traveling to Lublin-- that's a different story. I traveled on knocked-down airplanes and open track cars. And I walked miles and miles and miles. I really don't remember how I got to Lublin, but I got there.

And in Lublin, I asked, can someone-- in Lublin, I asked where the Jews concentrate. And they advised me where the committee is. And I went up there. And after standing a whole day in line-- because so many Russian Jews were returning from Russia, and there were some survivors from Poland, too, standing in line. And it was something horrifying.

But how I got and what I wore for the journey-- because it was probably already October or something-- September or October. Maybe it was later. I don't remember.

I know only that the secretary from the-- he was a secretary, a man-- a very nice man in the town of Poreba, and he was an acquaintance of the lady where we stayed. I didn't tell him I'm Jewish. I told him only that I would like to get to Lublin, and maybe I can get to Warsaw from Lublin to Krakow, you see, because Przemysl, Krakow.

Anyway, he said he will lend me a coat. What I did-- I had the shoes-- the soldier's shoes. I stuffed them with straw because they were big. They gave me the smallest one, but-- I stuffed them with straw. And I had a sweater that I knitted during the war in Warsaw.

I cut out the sleeves, and I sewed the one side, and I put them on as stockings. And I had one dress that was heavy. It was my pregnancy dress when I carried my son. And it was a Navy blue woolen dress. So I had it remade during the war from the pregnancy dress.

And I put this on and the shoes. And he gave me a warm jacket and, of course, a bandanna, and I let myself go. And I walked more than I-- but the circumstances-- you have no idea. I hope, never-- none of us ever knows what was going on.

And I ran after the trains. And the Russian people-- the Russian soldiers-- there were many Russian girls, soldiers. And they dragged me out. And oh, God, that was such a relief. And they were very good. I cannot say about the government-- what the government is and what it was. But the private people-- the Russian people are very good-hearted. I didn't have bad experiences with the Russian people-- even the soldiers or the lady soldiers.

And even the state, in that Udrzynek after the liberation, there were-- all those soldiers and officers brought for me just something-- a [POLISH], something good to eat. They went for liver, especially for us-- the officers, and the sugar and bread. They loaded us with bread before they left, before they marched out of that town, town of Udrzynek.

Anyway, I came and I stayed. And finally, when I reached the committee, and I started speaking that I am in a town that is all bombed out and I am with a small child and the lady that took care of me, and I need some help. And they said,

you better return where you came from because we have-- we are so overloaded.

They gave me a place to sleep that's called Rothschild's home. And I went there-- they gave me a card a little piece of paper for some food. I had something to eat there. And it's very hard for me to bring up those-- I was practically a beggar. And they gave me some-- a little card the committee gave me for clothes.

And they said they cannot house me. They have no place. There is such an overflow of people that they-- it's something awful. They have no housing. They have no this. They have not that.

And after I had something to eat, I still didn't give up. And I decided I go back to the committee and maybe, just maybe someone from Russia, maybe a friend or a former friend or an acquaintance of someone-- maybe someone is returning. And I went up, and they sent me away anyway, again.

I said, do you register people? Do you have names? They didn't have the time for that. They register, but they don't have the opportunity to make lists. They cannot help me in that way. I will be better off without-- in that hut without the roof than here, because they don't have where to lodge me. And especially with a child and another lady.

So I sat down this-- there was snow already, I remember. The stairs are so dirty. I just remember that. I don't know why I do remember that.

I sat down those dirty stairs, and I was asking myself, how do I return to that woman that saved my life and my child's life empty-handed, and to my child empty. What am I going to do?

And I'm sitting, and I'm watching a group of people. And they stay in a little group. And all of a sudden, it hit me that this is an aunt of my husband. Actually, her husband-- her husband was an uncle to my husband, my late husband.

So I walked over and I said, Anya, do you recognize me? She said, who are you? I said, don't you recognize-- she said, I'm sorry. I don't know who you are. I said, but I'm [POLISH] wife. So she-- they called him Fulek. And she-- where is fulek Where is Fulek? We called him Fulek. [POLISH].

And I said she's not anymore. I just have the child where is your family? How did you get there? How are you here? What?

So she took me home to Lezajsk. They survived-- the whole family. The uncle of my husband, Joseph Mandelman-- see, it's not funny. It's like miracles when I was-- always, during the war, where I was on the edge, just like I have to go into the ocean or I have to jump into a crevice. Something was happening. Something-- where did she come from?

The whole family survived through a priest. A priest was hiding them. And the uncle of my husband lost a leg in the war with the Germans. They were very, very prominent family in that town where my husband was born. Very wealthy people, very prominent people.

And she said, we are living now in Lezajsk. Because, when we were liberated, I don't know-- I don't remember how they got to Lezajsk. The town was all but bombed out, completely, because I traveled later during that time, where they used to live. He was also in the lumber business-- had a lumber mill.

She said, you're going home with me, and that was a blessing in disguise. I went with her. And that uncle couldn't imagine that I'm alive. You just couldn't imagine. But I am.

She gave me her coat because I knew I have to give away-- give back the jacket. And she said, you're coming with the child and the lady to us. They gave me some money. And I said, my God, what am I going to do with that few zloty? What am I going to do? That's nothing. For a journey with a child-- I can be hungry. I can be cold. But he will catch his death, and he's naked.

So I took the few zloty they gave me, and I went back to Lublin. What occurred to me just-- I bought saccharin for that

few zloty, and I bought tobacco. And I bought a thread and needles-- yeah, for all that money. And I went back, and I sold those to the peasant ladies. And twice afterward, I bought from them butter and bacon and flour and eggs, and I traveled with that to Lublin.

You understand that? You have no idea under what circumstances I traveled-- on broken airplanes and carts, different-- well, I got there. I sold that. I, again, bought-- twice after that-- three times altogether, I exchange the goods.

The third time, I bought for my grandson-- for my son-- I didn't see it, but I would have taken in anyway-- a pair of boots, little boots. One was with fur, and one didn't have any fur inside. I bought him a little jacket-- the vest, a fur-lined-- a sheepskin, but without sleeves. I bought them there.

And I said, now, the question's solved. I can take my child. For the lady, I don't remember what I bought, but I had those shoes that the Russian soldiers gave me. And I had that coat that my aunt lend it to me. OK.

Then we were preparing to travel back to Lezajsk. After that, I decided we are going because it was getting terribly sloppy and terribly windy and the raining and snowing. And was horrible to travel. And I knew that it's not going to get better.

Through the mountain and everything, I carried him-- my son, and Mrs. Opalinski-- Francesca-- carried him. And somehow, we came to a forest-- to a forest-- men that watched the forest. And we asked him if we can stay tonight somewhere, if he would lodge us to bed down for the night.

And he's opened-- I don't know what it was-- maybe for storage or something. And he said, you can sleep here. OK, we bedded down. But I wished we all would stay awake the whole night, in the rain and stuff because the straw-- he said, oh, it's fresh straw. And I was so apprehensive.

And we just-- after that night, we just crawled with lice. All through the war, I didn't have lice, and my son didn't have lice. And those lice just loved me. They were crawling over me. They were sucking my blood. It was horrifying.

I used to take off all my clothes, and I couldn't get rid of it. How can you get rid of if you don't take a bath or if you don't have water and you don't have anything to wash yourself. But the most of it I suffered.

And we got to Lublin. From Lublin, we were already at home because it took-- I don't remember, an hour or two hours to get to Lezajsk.

And we came at night, and we knocked at the door. And I said, we are not coming in because we are full of lice. Would you boil for us some water? And where can we take-- and there was-- next to that house where we stayed, there was a stable. So I said, can you heat up some water? Maybe you have some kind of a dish or something that I can--

First of all, the baby-- I have to bathe him. They're full of lice. They threw us out some clothes and brought out a-- not a bathtub. That was in a tub that you wash clothes in. When you rub the wooden tubs.

And they heated up water. And first of all, I bathed the child, and I dressed him whatever. I cannot put him back on this his clothes because it's full of lice. It was all over.

And later, Mrs. Opalinski bathed. We gave them the child into the house. And she went. And later, I bathed. And I took all that clothes, and I dumped it into the water-- mind you, at night, and I hung it up in the frost. And I dumped it out. Made it wet.

I'm crawling right now when I remember that, so help me, God. It was something that I have never, never, in my entire life experienced what I experienced at that time. And I was so beaten up that, after the war, for several years, I had spots on my back and my whole body from those lice.

And of course, I washed all the clothes and boiled it. And they received us with open arms. I cannot complain. And the

Russian people-- the Russian soldiers used to cook in their Kitchens. They had a huge, large room. And they were those very primitive carts they built up. And we slept-- I slept with my grandson. And Mrs. Opalinski slept on the one.

And they had-- they had three children, but grown-- not grown up. The older was a boy-- Abraham-- and two girls-- sweet little beautiful girls. And they fed us, and later on, the Russians fed us. know they cooked in their kitchen. And they tried to feed us. They fed us with mostly millet, I remember, with bacon. And they pulled the fat on it, and they wanted to fatten us up.

And later on, I was thinking, what I'm going to sit here? What am I going to do? What am I going to do? The Vistula is frozen and cannot go buy-- we don't have a newspaper. We don't know.

But one thing I want to mention-- that I wanted to get a card-- a provisation card. So I went to the offices. Now, how do you call-- gmina. I forgot what the gmina is. To register-- I went to the city hall to register. And I registered on my Gentile name.

You see, I still had my Gentile papers. So I registered says, Helena Krawczyk and Mieczyslaw Krawczyk and Frances Opalinska. So we registered. And they said, couldn't you find a better place to live, only with Jews?

And I said, it's very crowded here in the city. And I couldn't find-- and they took us in, so I am grateful. And I tell you what happened later.

In the meantime, I decided-- the uncle couldn't move, and three-- now four children-- Opalinska was much older than I. So I decided, with the aunt, that we will buy some stuff in Lublin and take it-- or buy in that city, some stuff, and sell it, make some money because we have to move.

They have to move out of there, and I have to move out with the child for what? Maybe someone survived. Maybe someone-- maybe someone. So I have to move.

So what did we do? We went to Lublin. She was the buyer. I was the seller. I put out-- in the frost, in the snow, I put up a little table with all kinds of junk, and people were buying.

And even salami I was selling. Bread I was selling. And needles and thread and whatever you can think you could put your hands on to sell-- people were hungry, and people didn't have much.

So finally, I decided I leave Mrs. Opalinski and the child with them, and I am pushing toward Sedzisz³w, toward my parents' farm. And I was going-- I tell you, I was stopping-- I bought several little bottles of vodka and showing-- the truck drivers-- the Russian truck driver.

I don't know how the devil was I that sheltered woman, that sheltered girl-- how was I capable to do and have some kind of concepts like that to survive? How did I manage that? I would show them the bottle of vodka. They stopped and were taking me. And I walked. Wasn't afraid to walk either.

And mind you, I come to Busku-Zdr³j. Yes, I went through the town of my husband-- where he was born and raised, Stopnica. It was just leveled to the ground. It's a beautiful, beautiful home of my father-in-law. And it was all bombed out, and everything was robbed out. I had to go like from stones to stone, jump over them.

And later on, I hitched again to Busku-Zdr³j. That was a famous resort in Poland. My mother used to go for her baths there. And I with my mother several times went there.

I came, and I asked people-- Poles-- if there is a Jewish committee, if there are some Jews in town, and if they know anybody. And I found out that two of my sister's girls returned, and they lived there, right there in Busku. Nobody knew about it.

And I found them. The first thing they ask-- they ask about her, their brother. And of course, my brother-- my husband

perished. And being with them, I didn't even have the time to take off my clothes and wash. They gave me food, and they were-- I don't know. There was some kind of-- a few people I didn't have the time to find out how this came about.

And the brother of mine-- of that aunt from Lezajsk comes and he says, I was chasing you all the way from Lezajsk. Your brother is here in Lezajsk. He waits for you. Your younger brother-- your youngest brother Aron is waiting for you in Lezajsk at my sister's house, at--

Where you just left.

Where I left. Now, that was several days since I left because this wasn't a jump from Lezajsk to Busku-Zdr³j. It was maybe a week until I got there. But anyway-- so I don't wait for anything. I say goodbye to the girls, and I go with him back. I go back to see Aron, my youngest brother, that's the only one that still is living.

And I'm going back to Lezajsk. And after several days of traveling, I came. And my brother is standing in front of the house. A truck drives up. And he's standing, and it's snow until knees. And I jump off the truck, and I fell to my knees. And I grab his leg. And we both cried like a babies.

And he traveled all over Poland. He knew that I survived because I sent him a letter from Udrzynek. Not from Lezajsk but still from the-- I was hoping that they all survived-- my older brother that got killed, Joseph, and his wife and Frida-- I show you Frida. She was like that. She's older than my son, maybe a couple of years. That's all. She has already a grandchild-- a grandchild in Australia, in Melbourne.

And he told me how my brother was killed. By miracle, he survived-- miracle of miracles. They took out about 60 Poles from the church, and Joseph was killed as a Gentile, not as a Jew. And he's buried together with other 60 Poles-- the Ukrainians. Three days, the irony of ironies, he got killed not as a Jew but as a Pole. He's buried in a mass grave on a Gentile. Cemetery-- a Catholic or Gentile cemetery there that.

My brother-- the youngest one-- wanted to get out the remains. But he went to a Bishop, and the Bishop did not allow. He said, let them sleep in peace. We will disturb the others. It's a mass grave, and they just dumped the bodies. The bodies-- they were all killed, the Poles, all of them. And between my brother and another engineer, were killed by bullets. Dumped them. It tears apart everything. The whole body was torn.

My sister was a very sick woman. She was mentally ill-- Frida's mother. She couldn't say goodbye to him. She wanted to kiss him and say goodbye to him. And she didn't find a place. She didn't have a place. So she took off her-- his shoes and kissed his feet before she collected the remains, the little pieces. She didn't know what parts of his body were, and then put it in a blanket. And that's how they buried them.

But at least we know that he is buried. If we ever will see it-- I won't go ever to Poland again. But maybe the daughter-- I don't know her grandchildren-- or her children-- I have no idea. But that's the way it is. And I have a picture of him, of Joseph.

And so we started to plan to go to Sedzisz³w, back to the farm, to my parents' farm-- Aron and I and the baby. The baby was overjoyed, and he brought me a bottle of butter. Aron would boil up some butter and put it in a bottle and he kissed-- that he has bottle. He kissed the bottle. Mieszko that he has the bottle, that Uncle Aron-- Adolf, Dolek.

He was as a Gentile still living, too. He didn't acknowledge himself that he's a Jew. He had a very important-- you know, that they gave him in that town, Baligr³d that was by Sanok-- they gave him a very-- in Sanok. Excuse me. Sanok was a County, I think. Yeah.

And they gave him a very good position, and he worked. But when they received my letter-- I wrote a letter to Baligr³d by Sanok. When they received the letter, he couldn't sleep. He couldn't eat. And he decided he's going to chase me. He's going to look for me.

So he left the work and left my sister-in-law because he took care of her and of Frida. And he was chasing all over

town-- all over Poland from where the letter came. And they told me-- because the sister of Mrs. Opalinski-- Stacha. You remember, maybe I mentioned it, that they traveled together to the baby. And she told them that I went to Lezajsk, and that's how he found us.

So we started to plan for our return to Sedzisz³w. We found out-- and I remember that we went-- we had to cross the Vistula. The Vistula I was frozen. And maybe from the snow or something-- I don't know. All of a sudden, I stopped seeing. I couldn't see. And I sat down on the snow, and I'm there on the ice, and I was crying. I said, I can't see. Went completely blind.

And of course, my brother was very much upset. And of course, we traveled again with-- but somehow, I regained my sight. And we crossed the Vistula and came to Busko. They bedded us down at two of my sister-in-laws.

And we went to Kielce, and, from Kielce, we went to Jedrzej³w. And in Jedrzej³w, in Kielce, we couldn't-- I don't remember, but there was some kind of a group of Jews. But we wanted to-- as fast as possible, to get back to Sedzisz³w, because we thought maybe someone survived. Maybe someone returned. And that will be the place that everybody would return.

And we came back. And I didn't go to the farm right away because we had a treuhander that treated us very-- lower than I don't know. And we didn't want to go. We went first to Miss Kodjaszewski. And that was the druggist-- the lady druggist.

And she told us that it's peaceful and that we can-- later on, I went to my girlfriends that I went to grammar school with-- that we sat, for many years, on the same, everywhere, bus and trains. You know she used to come to my holidays for my holidays to celebrate. And I used to go to-- for her holidays, [POLISH].

And the parents saw-- and she saw us, she just took us in. She was already married. And she was married, also, to one of the boys that went together with us to school, [POLISH]. But she lived with her parents. And they told us that many Poles got killed.

And we stayed there. And the next day, I went to the city hall to get back the farm. I didn't want to go illegally. And I didn't want to just-- and he went with us. I don't know the names-- how you call [POLISH] It's all this. I know just the expressions in Polish.

And he took us-- the two men took us. My brother left-- the child had left there. Took us to the farm. And when we were walking up the hill-- because our house-- the living quarters were on a hill. And the stables and the barns and everything was-- the front was the house, and there was the garden, a big garden. And you walked up into the court, so to speak. And there was the well here and the stables and the barn and the granary.

And we were walking up the hills. And the lady-- the treuhander, that-- they took the farm from us-- they were, how do you say? They were coat changers? When the Germans came in, they were forced out. When the German left, they declared themselves Poles again. That's what I found out later.

And we were walking up, Aron, and I, and the two men from the city hall, so to speak. And she runs out, just with open arms. He beat up her husband, beat up my father and didn't let us out of the house. We had to pay for our own milk. And he took over the farm. He marked the barrels with the grains that-- maybe my father because we weren't that smart. We were not thieves. So he marked the barrels with threat the thread-- how far the grain is reaching.

And I just went back a couple of steps, and I just froze. And I said, we cannot be friends. I'm sorry. We cannot be friends. We just want our farm back. And here are the legal things. And those men came with us. And please pack up and, as soon as possible, get out.

And the men were there. And I said, you can take whatever is yours, and we even give you a pair of-- because the tunnel was torn down, and they had to go somewhere. I don't know. He was a murderer. Her husband was a murderer he killed somebody. Yeah. He beat up my husband. He brought them from-- I don't want to go back.

And so we took over the farm. I gave them horses and a wagon to pack the things and take it through the tunnel. And we stayed in the house. And the house was occupied. He was renting it out because it was a huge house. And he lived, just, in two rooms and the kitchen.

The kitchen-- I don't know what they looked for. They looked for some treasures or something. The kitchen-- the floor was all torn out and dug up. It was like a-- but there was another kitchen, so we stayed in that other kitchen. That was all.

And the rest of the house-- they rented out. And I didn't come to throw people out. They paid their rent to them. And later on--

And we stayed, and we were not that many. And Aron was thinking of going back because-- to his job. And he said, now they know the Poles because there were killing. Not far from us, in the town that I was born, in Wodzislaw. There were 10 people that came back-- young, beautiful people from the concentration camps, and the Poles killed them. There was-- the boyfriend of my niece was killed. Nobody knew where the remains disappeared.

And later on, the pogrom in Kielce. To this day, I don't know who did it-- if the Poles or the Russians or the Germans were in there. But we took over the farm, and I brought-- there were many dogs on our farm, and not one survived. They all died. They all died from loneliness and from heartache.

There were two-- two dogs that walked the -- they were on on chains. They weren't there, and they were house dogs. There were Misha and Bobek and Frida, and not one survived. Little dogs, beautiful dogs. Misha was just a darling. My father brought her brother in her pocket like a little yellow ball.

And Mieszko only had a-- one toy, and it was a little teddy bear. And in Polish, a teddy bear is called a mis. "Mis." A bear is a mis. And he saw that, and he hardly spoke, but he called her Misha.

And there was none of them left. So I bought him a goat, a white little goat. And in the bedroom of that apartment where I stayed, in the house. It was two rooms and a kitchen. There was a mirror in the bedroom. The goat was walking in, and I bought her a red ribbon and a little bell. And he was so happy. It was his pet, his first pet, this first toy.

And how did I survive? I started to smuggle. From Sedzisz³w to Krakow, I used to drag on my back some butter and flour, and I used to sell. And again, I was doing business. There were no Jews. A few Jews came back, and they didn't settle in Sedzisz³w. They went to Jedrzej³w. They went to Czestochowa.

They, were looking for-- I was hoping that every train that passed-- and because--

Yeah, you couldn't travel through the tunnel. So they just took the trains till the tunnel. And I thought I will farm the farm. And there were potatoes. There was very little left. One cow and one couple of horses.

He got rid of everything. Probably made money from it. And just grains were left. And I thought, I will farm it. But I had to have money. So I did what I did. It was crazy.

And another thing, I was going over the peasants. Some people brought me the beautiful things-- linens and clothing that we stored with them. And one gentleman, that I had three fur coats with. And when my husband was still-- and the labor camp, he sent me my first coat that I sold in Warsaw. And I knew that I have two coats-- two fur coats that--

And when I returned to Sedzisz³w, Mr. Pawelski, he was very friendly with my father. My father, he didn't have horses, but he-- was a very wealthy man. He had machineries before and all kinds of hardware and machinery. And he had a beautiful house and a beautiful garden.

And I stored with him many things. And so did my sister. And all of us stored with him, what's more valuable. And when I sent from Warsaw-- Mrs. Opalinska could get me a coat, a fur coat that I wanted to sell for bread. He didn't give

it to her.

But later, when we came back to Sedzisz³w and-- everybody knew, of course, that I showed up with my brother and child. And it spread like wildfire. They send me a beautiful basket of breads-- all kinds of breads-- and honey and apples. And I was very tempted. Winter fruit. To keep it, but I sent it back. I didn't want it.

I wrote him a letter, and I swore on every possible thing to send me a fur coat because I need it for money for-- I want to sell it because I need for bread. And he didn't give it to her. And she had a personal letter from me telling him that my father-- in the name of my father-- that gave him a pair of horses every Sunday to go to church. I beg of him to release one coat and give it to that lady. He didn't. Didn't send a penny. If he would at least send something, nothing.

But later on, when I returned, they sent me all kinds of goodies. And I showed up one day, and I said, I don't want anything. As a matter of fact, he was paralyzed. He was sitting and looking-- I didn't even walk up to him and greeted him. Nothing. I just said, I came for my things, and I hope you'll release them now.

And there was a daughter, an old maid, and the mother, and they gave me my suitcases and the fur coat. And finally, as I said, one day, I see my brother, Karol, that passed away not this October, a year ago-- October 8. It was a year ago. Walking up with his children, up the hill, and my sister-in-law. You can imagine.

And later, an aunt came back, and that was the wife of an uncle-- my youngest uncle from my mother's side. She came back. He didn't. She came back. But she didn't stay the us. She survived also as a Gentile.

And in Warsaw-- I don't know. She lived with a German officer. He saved her life. If he knew that she was Jewish, I have no idea. And she lost two beautiful children. But I don't want to judge. Supposedly, she left two beautiful, gorgeous kids-- a blonde girl as-- I don't know. I cannot describe her, with the two blond-- how do you say?

Ponytails?

Pardon?

Ponytails?

Braids.

Braids. And he-- Danielle was black like a gypsy, and she blond. And she left those kids in the fields, and she went into hiding. And she lived through the war.

But can you judge somebody? I cannot say anything. I cannot say anything about the woman. And she came back. And I welcomed her, too.

And she stayed with me for a while. She was sick. I don't know what bothered her. And she started me, and she gave me some money. She had money. I don't know from where.

And she started me on smuggling. And that's what I said-- I made a living from that. And my brother and my sister-in-law went back to the upper part of Silesia and tried to get something back. He was in the lumber business, too. And they settled in-- in a cousin of mine, a very wealthy man, Manila, in their house. It was a beautiful house. A home in Katowice. And they lived there.

And one day, he came and he said, I'm not leaving you here after Kielce and after those 10 people in Wodzislaw. What do you want, after you lived through the war? We are taking this minute. He came in the morning, and I had to be ready. We left everything-- all those things that I said I was crazy to undertake something like that. They harnessed a couple of horses-- and the horses. And he took me-- one of our field laborers was on the premises. As a matter of fact, I saved his life her life.

We returned in February, about the 28th, and she got very sick. She had, not a miscarriage-- but she carried the baby. She was pregnant. She carried the baby outside the womb. How do you call that-- freakish? And she was in terrific pain, and at midnight. And I knew there is a big dispensary in one of the houses-- all these Russian doctors.

And I went knocking on the door in the middle-- during the curfew-- during the night. And they took her right away to the hospital in another building, and they operated on her. Yeah. And she was alive, and I left. Yeah, she was living.

But as I said, they were very, very grateful. Very nice people. I think that he has part of our farm because they divided, I don't know, in parcels after the Russians took over. And my brother just insisted this minute that I packed, and I lost beautiful things that I got back from people and left them behind-- lots of china, lots of porcelain, three pairs of candelabras-- silver. They were beautiful. She hid it, and she gave it back to me.

His name was also Joseph. Her name was Genja. And I returned to Katowice with them, stayed awhile, and I got back my apartment. My apartment there was Volksdeutsche living. And the same house where I lived in Katowice on Dabr³wki, my sister was living upstairs-- before the war, of course. And he was living in my apartment. There was furniture that was left. And I got back my sister's apartment. I went to the state Silesia. And I went back to the offices, and they gave it back to me.

And I went to the owner of the house, and I paid the rent. And we lived there until my sister-in-law, Frida's mother, came. And what shall I say? Legally, I had to work in Katowice, and so I got the job with the English lumber company-- Stanley or something, I remember. And I worked for them during the week. And I was a cashier.

And weekends, I was smuggling. You name it, I smuggled. Yeah, cigarettes from Krakow to Katowice and Breslau, selling that. And clothes from the Germans that remained, that-- they were selling their clothes-- I took to Krakow. I sold there.

And that's how I lived because I was making 500 zloty-- 500 zloty a month. It was nothing. I was paying 150 zloty for the apartment.

And first of all, I bought, for Mrs. Opalinska shoes and a beautiful coat that the black fox and skirts. And she liked to drink, so I bought her vodka. And she smoked, and I bought her tobacco.

And one beautiful day that I went to Krakow on business, on a weekend, and my sister-in-laws-- that is Frida's mother-- her mother survived. She survived as a Gentile working for a priest-- Mrs. [? Sobolewska. ?] But she died later on. I wasn't in Poland anymore when she passed away.

And I stayed with her. When I went to Krakow on business, I stayed with her. She was a beautiful lady, just gorgeous. And mind you, in that time, a lady, Jewish lady, rode a horse. They had a very big farm-- maybe 60 horses, 60 cows or more. They lived in a beautiful palace-- my sister in law. Her name from home was [? Stanford. ?] And she married my brother. Joseph's wife.

And I stayed with her. And one day-- and I was doing business, and I couldn't get what I needed. And believe it or not-- there were no synagogues. And one day, I was so down that I went in to the church. There's a beautiful church in Krakow. And I prayed. I said, what difference does it make where I pray? To help me, whatever it is that can help me, because I wanted to go back to the baby and to my work.

And I came home, and Mrs. [? Sobolewska ?] had a letter from me-- for me from my brother to return immediately because Mrs. Opalinska stole everything from me. She locked up the baby on the second floor with the balcony for summer. And she put the baby to bed, to sleep-- mind you, risking her life all these years-- not all the years-- since about 1943-- Christmas 1943 and the worst times, helping me, and leaving-- locking up a baby, alone, put them to sleep. And she just packed everything.

Even friends of mine that-- I don't understand the mentality of some Polish people. I don't. The most important thing that hurts me-- hurts me so much that she even-- I got back a pair of bergsteigers. Does anyone know? Those ski shoes, I

got back. They were made from camel skin, inside. A beautiful pair of shoes. She took them.

She took the child's little suits that I got for him. I tried to dress her the first and seen that she doesn't work out because, from our lumber-- the lumber yard, the watch-- watchman-- the night watchman came to me. He was in very, very, very bad-- oh.

So I took even his wife to wash the clothes in our wash because we didn't have machines in Poland at that time. Now, maybe they have it. But at that particular time, there were no washers-- no dishwashers, no washing machines.

So she-- I used to take her out. And now she took the child and locked him up. And my brother went over to see how the child is doing. So he's knocking and knocking. And finally, the child asked who it is. And he said this is Uncle Karol. And so he said, where is Mrs. Opalinski? So he said, oh, she went to the doctor. And she left the keys with the neighbor. She locked up the child alone-- a five-year-old boy.

And so he knocked on the other door, and there was nobody there. My brother said, Mieszko you take a chair from the kitchen and drag it, because the baby was just a baby. How can he open a door from a chain, a chained door? So the baby looked in. In the door was a little window that I put a little curtain.

And he looked, and he looked. And my brother directed him how to open the door, and he opened it. And he came in, and he looked, so he thought he's fainting. There were no telephones or anything. So he looked. And as everything was clear now. Even my girlfriend left a valise with silverware. She took that. A big, huge suitcase with blankets with everything-- she took that, too. Their stuff.

I was later ashamed to explain that I don't have it. And she was a distant relative. She lives in Australia, too. How she survived-- also as a Gentile she lost her husband. With a little girl, she survived-- Frida's age.

Anyway, and the child was in convulsions. He was on bed, and he was shaking. Auntie Opalinska and Auntie Frances-- where is she? And he cried and he wants-- and my brother explained it to her, look, you are crying after she took everything from your mother. She stole everything.

And I had already a couple hundred dollars stashed away for the winter, for cold, for everything. And I had it. And then I had a little case, and I locked it in the drawer. From a bureau, I locked this. The bureau drawer was opened with a poker, properly.

This little iron case-- she lifted the lid with a knife or whatever. And she, little by little, pulled out-- but the most of, it I had papers there-- very important paper. And maybe someday-- maybe the Poles will return something, if not to me. I won't be alive. Maybe to my son.

But everything was gone. Even a marriage agreement, like a prenuptial agreement was taken out. Yeah, everything was taken out. And my brother said to Mieszko why are you crying? So he said, that big, ugly frog-- she stole everything from my mommy, and she ran away. Yeah. And that's it.

And later on, I was still doing business in Katowice. And finally, my sister-in-law, through that friend of ours, that [PERSONAL NAME] that I said she took her stuff with her-- she lived in Breslau after the war. But her little girl and her brother survived. So she took Helen-- Frida's mother to Breslau.

And later, my sister-in-law Helen came and she said, pack up. What are you going to sit here? And. Let's go to Breslau Ramon is her brother, Helen's brother. And I'm offered-- I'm working for the city, but I'm offered a ration store-- a ration stone and you a bakery. If you want to run it with me, we'll be partners.

And so I went to Breslau. I went to Breslau with the child and lived for a while with her you know. And later, I got my own apartment. And later, my brother came back-- the doctor that just passed away in February. And he came back. He marched from Stalingrad with the Polish army to Berlin. And he came to live with me. And later, his wife came back from Stalingrad, Aneczka.

What was his name?

His name? And he wasn't under own name. He was under a different name, Czerny. He took his wife's name, and her first name was Aneczka. And we were like cousins, because it was dangerous-- I wasn't registered as a Jew. I was registered still, at the police and every place, as Helena Krawczyk.

And the people were sending my son to church with my maid because I got my maid from home. She was with us since she was watching the geese-- one of the maids that my parents had. And I went to Sedzisz³w just for a few hours to bring him back. I wanted to have her with the child because I was so busy I couldn't be with the child much.

And later on, when Anichka came, I left the maid with her, and Anichka would take care of the house. And I was still in business. And later, on I decided I leave Poland because-- I don't know if I mentioned it. That house in Lezyce, where we lived-- where my brother picked me out and where I lived with my uncle--

I left first, and I went with my Aron to Sedzisz³w. And later on, I went to Katowice. And later on, I went to Breslau.

And I made acquaintances with many people because it was an open business, and they came-- the, Germans as well as the Poles and the Jews-- came for their rations.

That's what's most amazing.

OK, go ahead.

Go ahead.

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt.

That's quite all right. In Breslau, all of a sudden, they called me to the police. And I had a friend that-- he ran a movie for the government, a married man with a child. But I didn't know that he is not-- that he's Jewish. He was so pale and so blond and so-- absolutely no characteristics.

And they called me up from the police. They came for me, to come, and, at that particular hour, to register there, at the police. And I said, OK, but I'm busy, and I cannot leave the business, and so on.

I'll be there whenever you want me. If you could make it tomorrow morning, I have Helen here, and she was Leokadija, Lodja. She wasn't Helen. Her real name was, Helen, but her Gentile name. She also registered still Gentile because we were very frightened of the Poles.

And I asked for-- that Adam-- to come and see me. I sent for him-- somebody for my maid or something. And he came over. And I said, I have something to talk over with you and you-- can we-- he was much older, very distinguished gentleman. And he was from Poznan.

And I have something to discuss with you that is very vital and very crucial, and I don't know what to do-- what to do about it. And the police-- and I sat with them and told them. And I said, you see? I'm registered. I'm not Gentile. I'm Jewish.

And he said, well, I knew, and I'm not Gentile either. I have a Gentile wife, and she saved my life. But I'm Jewish. And don't you worry about me. He started to talk Yiddish. Don't worry about it. I'll go with you.

And we went to the police. And what came out-- that, in that house where I lived in Lezajsk, the Poles murdered maybe 30 Jews. They shot the grandfather with the little grandchild that lived through the war. And they surrounded that house. I don't know. There were many bands-- bn ands.

It will take probably another 100 years to even out the hatred and anti-Semitism in Poland. Now there are only five-- I don't want to go into politics, but there are 5,000 dying out Jews, and there is still anti-Semitism. You wouldn't believe it, but it's true. Yes. Yeah.

Well, you know about Auschwitz and the Carmelite sisters and so on, and about, what is his name, that Bishop. They said that it's not true. The Jews didn't perish. I don't know where they are, but-- the 6 million. But nevertheless, that's the story.

And I was very frightened. He went with me. And I said, I left the 28th of-- before-- February 28, I arrived in Sedzisz³w, and you can check. I was registered in Sedzisz³w, and we have dairy farm. And I'm sorry, but I don't know anything about it.

They were tracing me. Because of the Gentile papers, they were tracing me for Lezajsk-- from Lezajsk to Breslau. Can you imagine? And that man vouched for me. He said, I know the lady since childhood.

That wasn't the end of it. That wasn't the end of it. I was running that business. And my sister-- that Helen that is so very ill, mentally-- she has manic depression. Julius' mother, Frida's mother. She started to be ill a lot. And I was running, practically by myself, the business.

Later, her brother came, and he helped me out. And later, my brother gave us a three-wheel car-- a little truck, so we had help from everywhere. But it was a thriving business because whatever I didn't handout, the government left me for a certain amount of money, sell privately

Because I was on their payroll, and I was working for the government, so to speak. So they left me-- I had a barrel of herring to hand out to people. So if there were some left, they sold them to, me and I could sell them at my own price.

And beside that, I was selling, illegally, my stuff. Let's put it this way. Where would I left them, with a child and a woman and a brother that made peanuts as a doctor? He was working in the military hospital. And if I wouldn't put his soles on his boots, he would probably walk barefoot. He was very negligent about this.

Then later, Anichka came. She is not alive. He is not alive. Anyway, she had the yellow fever. How do you call it?

Yellow fever.

Yeah. And she had this horrible, horrible attack. But she conceived-- after 16 years being married, she conceived in my house. Yeah. And she brought him two beautiful children-- just gorgeous. And Jana lives in Prague. She's a journalist And Peter's a doctor. He was in the same hospital that his father worked.

Now, what else do you want to know? All my life? My whole story?

What brother is this-- not his Gentile name, but his birth name? His Jewish name?

Yehoshua. We call him Juric.

Can you say your siblings' names in order, of all of them?

Mojzesz, Marcin, Anna-- that's my sister that perished. Karol. There were three girls between us. Wait a minute. Maybe I will know. One died in childbirth. And this is all before I.

A girl. One died from scarlet fever, and her name was Felicia. But I don't know who she followed or who she proceeded. I don't know because I was born later.

And later on was Jurek and Joseph. And in between Joseph and I was somebody else. And in between I and Aron was somebody else, and her name I remember-- Sophie. And that's it. How many do you have? Seven? Am I correct? You

have seven?

You wrote them down.

Anna perished in Majdanek or in Chelmno with my sister-- older sister-in-law.

Seven, yes. Two, three, four, five, six, seven.

Three dead, 10 children my mother bore. And she was just 57 when she went to the ovens. And my father was 60. Yeah, when they went to the oven. Yeah.

You want to know something else? How I came to the States? How I lived in Germany? I don't know what you want. Is that so important?

How long did you stay in Breslau? And what happened after that?

In Breslau just one year. I decided-- because the people were starting to talk, and you hear this one killed, this one killed, this one loss. And I knew that I cannot give my child a proper upbringing under the circumstances and live a double life. It's not for a child.

And my youngest brother was illegally smuggling Jews out of Poland-- the Bricha, the illegal organization. So he talked me in to, and I left with them. He had a wife, also, a Polish girl-- she died. I have a picture of her.

And we went to Germany. We went-- it's easier said than done. We went through the Czech borders, and we wound up in Vienna. And from Vienna, they shipped us to Salzburg. And in Salzburg, we stayed in Kasernes. And we cooked outside, and we went to the opera-- the first opera my son saw, in Salzburg.

And from there, we stayed-- we were shipped to Germany, to Landshut. That was in 1946. From Salzburg, they shipped us to Landshut. And we stayed in a quarantine-- quarantine, three weeks. It was already snowing, and frost was on the-- how do you say it? A zelt, a namiot? How do you say it? Was from hockey.

Ice?

Tents. We were saying in tents. There were about 3,000 people. That wasn't with what to wash. I used to warm up the snow in a rag and wash my baby's face. My baby was a boy already. And the snow was on the tents.

And we slept in fur coats. In the meantime, I got back the fur coats-- two fur coats and one I made over. I covered it with something and from a [? rabbi, ?] got out of [? rabbi-- ?] It's my two grandsons. For Mieszko I bought the sheepskin. I covered those with cloth. I gave it to tailors, and they made him a nice coat. And we bought hats. How I carried all that, I have no idea. I was strong like an ox, after the war.

And you should have seen the appetite my child had. He always liked liver-- chopped liver or liver sandwiches. That was his favorite. Apparently, he needed. And we left, and he came in that Landshut in those tents. Finally, they shipped us to DP camps.

And we came to Wasseraifingen bei Aalen in 1946. Yeah, 1946. It was already deep into autumn. The climate in Wartenberg was a little bit milder than up in Landshut and Bayern.

They gave us a room. And the director was very keen on me. But I didn't think he is Jewish, so I didn't want to have anything with him, to have with a Frenchman. Very sweet man, and he loved my son. And [? Palustre ?] was his name.

And I stayed three years in that particular DP camp. I got very sick. I was very, very ill. I started with my thyroid. I have thyroid problem. And it was very serious. I lost so much weight.

And finally, then, my brother came from-- at that time, my brother was already-- he left first, Karol. He left first, and he was in Belgium. He left in London, before the war in August. He left a great deal of money. He took out, from Poland, a great deal of money. He was a very wealthy man in Poland before the war, and located in England.

And his brother-in-law helped himself because they thought that they all died, that we all perished. And he helped himself to the money. And when the mother-- they were saved in Belgium-- the mother, the father, and the brother and his wife and two children, I think. They were all saved in Belgium.

And when the mother heard that Rena that my sister-in-law-- Karol's wife and Karol and the kids are alive, she had a heart attack and died. Yeah, she took it so-- she was so shocked and just passed away. And my brother-- as much as he did wonderful business after the war in Poland, he just couldn't find a place. And he promised him he's going to Israel. And in 1948, they left for Israel. And I had a very, very hard life the few years. And now, he passed away-- October, a year ago. But very. Wealthy

And his son, the younger one, Rubin runs the business. And [? Fredzio ?] is in Australia, his older son-- you know that I was hiding him for nine months. And he lives in Australia, but he lost his wife. Yeah, a beautiful, gorgeous woman. 44 years old. Left two children behind-- a grown son, and Nadia, a little girl-- now 15. She's 15 now.

And my brother took it very, very hard. He said to me, over the phone, that his crown was taken off. He said, Maria was the most beautiful woman I have ever met. Not physically. Physically she was beautiful, too. Maybe I have a picture of her. I'll show you.

But inside, she was just the most precious thing you can ever-- and she was a survivor, too. She was from Romania. Yeah, she was a survivor. Her nanny saved her life.

Her name was Maria?

Maria.

A Jewish girl?

A Jewish girl. Her father was an engineer. The mother was taking care of the bookkeeping of Fred's business. Fred is very wealthy. He is a jeweler. Did I mention that?

They send him to England to Rena's brother to study designing-- jewelry designing. She had a sister in Australia-- my sister-in-law had-- the middle sister, actually, because Rena's the younger. She was in Australia.

So she sent him. She had the jewelry. She had a husband-- second husband. Her first husband was my cousin. Maybe I mentioned that? Maybe I should. That's very important that you know what the Poles did to us.

The whole family-- my uncle-- Abram [? Darznik, ?] his wife and several cousins of mine-- male cousins. And there was Karol, her husband. He was a first cousin. My mother and his father were sister and brother.

And there was-- no, Karol, Shmuel, Kalmek, and there was Zelda, Maria, also a cousin of mine. Did I mention Shmuel? Three brothers, I think, and two sisters and a brother-in-law. And the old couples-- you my uncle. Yeah.

And Frances, that passed away in Los Angeles-- she was living in Los Angeles. My sister-in-law was coming to her. She was staying with her.

She was in hiding in Krakow with her former maid, with her daughter Bronja-- 12-year-old beautiful girl, but very Semitic because Karol was very Semitic looking-- a dark complexion, black hair, black eyes. And the girl was just a picture of-- a beauty.

And this maid was living on a floor higher than the Gestapo-- than the Gestapo lived. And one day, the Gestapo got

drunk and came over, up. So they hid Bronja in a-- I'm going off track, but it's very important that I give you the circumstances. So they hid the girl in a wardrobe-- the European wardrobe, between the clothes.

And it had such an impact on Frances, on the mother, that she said she almost-- she will-- they thought that that family in the bunker in Kazimierza Wielka, that is safe. And she once had a different-- Marisza, a maid before this one, that was hiding her. So she was traveling back and forth, commuting, and she took Bronja to that bunker.

In 1944, they properly followed her, that Marisza, the maid. They followed, and they discovered that there are Jews hiding in that bunker. And they took them all out and killed them in the most unmerciful way. I heard that Bronja was-- her eyes was taken out. Her tongue was cut. She was a very well-developed child and the breast-- they cut off her breasts. Have you heard anything like that?

But this is the honest truth. I wasn't there, but I'm repeating it like it was told to me. And the mother was very, very ill-- very, very ill after that. And all of them perished that way. All, the whole family. Only one daughter that in Bergen-Belsen survived, and she is in Israel. Of the whole family, she was taken to Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen and so on and so on.

She married. She remarried. She has a son. I don't know if she's still alive. But the husband passed away. He was doing research in Rehovot on animals, her husband.

But that's the story. You never know. But I know that because it was the relations. But what others did, I have no idea-- what other people did. But there were great cruelties. Thank you, excuse me. Great cruelties. I know that the Poles killed with pitchforks. They killed people, our people. So long as they had money--

The Poles did the killing of Bronja?

The Poles did many killings.

Was this after the war, after liberation?

During the war, after the liquidations. They were hiding Jewish people. And when they didn't have the money with what to pay, they killed them. Many saved and many killed.

But my-- I take my hat off to Mr. Janek that helped us all in a great way. And he was a Gentile. And I also have great respect for Capitan [? Szanzinski ?] that helped me find a place. When I came to Warsaw, I was with his family. But I told you that I was arrested. And they couldn't believe that I returned.

And he found me a place. But I lost touch with them. Yeah, the son was coming out sometimes to Ursus, where I was hiding, and brought me-- they called it [POLISH], like tissue paper-- the print, the news from the front, the news what's going on, and about it. You know that I was in Warsaw when the ghetto was bombed and the ghetto was burning and the fights were on, between the Jews.

I'm very, very curious because I had an acquaintance, a doctor, that married a friend of mine from the town that my husband was-- my first husband. And his name was-- I couldn't find him. He wrote the book. And I wonder if he and the library-- if they ever-- about the concentration camps that he was.

And he was in the Warsaw-- Warsaw ghetto. He was a fighter, and he was one of the last that they-- Stabholz, Thaddeus Stabholz. He wrote a book, The Seven Hells, and he survived and married-- and not an acquaintance of mine, but the marriage I hear wasn't very good. Yeah, Thaddeus Stabholz.

His father has his own hospital in Warsaw. I don't remember the first name. But I met her, and she introduced me-- took me to her place. I met him, and he wrote a book about Treblinka and Auschwitz and all this. And I had that book, and I lend it to someone. No one gave it back to me.

This is called The Seventh Hell?

It's The Seven Hells. In Polish, you want to know how it is, the title in Polish? Siedem Piekel. Shall I spell it for you?

If you like.

S-I-E-D-E-M. Piekel, P-I-E-K-E-L.

And how do you spell Thaddeus's--

Thaddeus?

His last name?

His last name? Stabholz? In Polish, I can tell you how it's supposed to be spelled in Polish or in German. In Polish, it was spelled S-Z-T-A-B-H-O-L-Z, Stabholz. You want the first name, too?

OK.

Thaddeus. T-A-D-E-U-S-Z. It's reading differently. And the spelling is different.

I would love to find this book. I once met, at a widowers' a widowers' outreach program-- a widow-- a very nice lady-- Shirley-- a very nice lady, beautiful lady. But Shirley-- I forgot her last name. And she had two visitors from New York, and they knew Dr. Stabholz.

And I asked them to find out where he is, if they can get in touch with him because he didn't live in New York. He lived someplace else. And I never heard from them. I should have written to the American Medical Association about if they have someone with that name registered. But I was always so busy. I couldn't do anything else but work, work, work.

And besides that, I think a cousin of mine is also a doctor. He was from-- 25 miles from. He graduated in Paris. I know that they got him into the army. And as soon as I heard that he was alive and he was in New York, Brighton Park-- I don't know. I wrote once, and they couldn't tell me.

We're going to stop now.