

She said, you know, they came to the house with shovels. They were digging. I says, digging for what? For the body. For my body? No, they were digging for transmitters that they thought maybe she is a spy and has some equipment. She gives news or something.

They had one big case while I was there. I heard about it. There was one-- was it a minister or was it a consul who had connection with the German? And the German would give some spy work to the Russians. And they shot them on the ship. It was a German. I heard that later on. But I forgot the name.

And they sent that Botschaft-- or what he was minister or something. They sent him out of Japan. Either they send him to China or to Germany. That I don't know.

And then before it came to the trial, I had to see the prosecutor. Prosecutor, is that the word?

Mm, hmm.

And I told him I took my heart in my hand. And I said, listen, I only signed that I'm a spy because I was told that I will be transferred from this prison, Kenpeitai, to another, better prison. He says, yes, but you signed it. You signed it. I says, they beat me so hard. That's why I signed it. I couldn't take it anymore. Yeah, but you signed it.

Then they had a big trial. I was taken to a room. It was kind of a trial room, big place. A lot of people were sitting around in there. I said-- I had cuffs on, handcuffs. And I didn't know what they were talking.

Was this trial while you were in prison?

Yeah. In Gumiachi, not Kenpeitai. And there was one little desk there. And the judges, or whatever they were, sat there. And they said something. First, I had to get up and then I could sit down. And I didn't know what they were talking about.

And then when they were finished talking there, this one who was sitting on that extra little desk, he came over. And he says, I'm your interpreter. The thing is you are sentenced because you are a foreigner for six-- for doing spy work six years in prison. I thought, oh, my God, six years. And they took me back to my cell.

I think I told that the International Red Cross worker. I told him, I says, I was sentenced to six years in prison, and I haven't done any spy work. Yeah, I had to go through so much. I don't know.

How did you get the help of the Red Cross to-- how did you elicit the help of the Red Cross after you were liberated or free?

The American Red Cross?

Mm, hmm.

My girlfriend, a French girl, she worked there as a secretary. She used to work for banks in Yokohama. She was born in Japan. And she was a secretary. When the banks closed, she had to do something else. And she worked for the Red Cross as secretary.

And she asked if they could employ me because I had to go through so much. And she got the job for me. So I had to introduce myself, and they took me, first, to the doughnut factory, and then the field director's office, and then to the club director's office. Yeah, I think I told you all.

How did you get the Red Cross to give you the testimony that you read about your imprisonment and torture? How did you elicit the help of the Red Cross to get you medical help and to--

That wasn't the Red Cross that helped.

Oh. So how did you get the--

That was the War Crimes Commission, United States War Crime Commission.

Explain more how you got directed to--

Captain Gross was his name. He heard about my case, I don't know from whom. And he said, we are going after the war crimes people here in Japan. And your case, I'm going to hand this over to the CIC, to get a hold of the people who mistreated you. That was Captain Gross, yeah. But later he was transferred to Germany to Nuremberg to help there. He was a lawyer from New York he told me.

And you said you were hospitalized for a while. After your imprisonment, were you hospitalized?

No, I had no money to be hospitalized. And they were going to send me on the hospital ship to America right away. And I thought that would be wonderful. But they had so many American citizens who were mistreated while being prisoner of wars, you know, that they had no place for so-called German.

And then they tried to-- CIC took me to Tokyo. They drove me over there. And they talked. And each time they said, well, do you have any papers, passport? And I always had that German passport with no "J" inside. So I didn't want to explain everything. And they said, no, our American citizen come first. So in your case, you would have to go to the Japanese hospital. But if you have no money, nobody takes you. I had no income because I lost my job, see?

So the Catholic nuns-- was it the Catholic nuns that gave you some medicine? Did they take care of you after you--

It was the brothers.

The brothers?

Mm, hmm.

And where did you stay during that time period where you could-- when you were trying to regain your health? How did you survive?

There was a family. Heydrich was their name. She was Hungarian and Jewish. And he was a German. Later he told me, he says, you know, I'm a communist. I says, you are? Yeah.

And he said, you know the family Erp. Yeah, I says, they invited me sometimes over for dinner because I lived in a room where I couldn't cook. I just had to fix something for myself. Sometimes whenever I gave a lesson, a French lesson, to some lady and another lady, then they would ask me if I'd like to have something to eat. And I said, yeah, if you have something, sure. So sometimes they gave me something to eat and sometimes not.

But that family invited me. And they said, come on over for dinner. My wife is a good cook. There were four Erps. And in the end when everything was over, and I was out of prison, they said, did you know I was communist? I said, you are? I didn't know. They said they ask me if I know any communists. But nobody would tell me, friends of mine, you know, where I had so-called hospitality that they would say, listen, I'm a communist. You are not a Nazi and I'm a communist. Nobody said anything. So they told me that after the war was over. Strange.

And they were nice people. I don't know what happened to them. They went back to Germany I think. You lose all the contact then, you know.

So I got my meals in the mess hall, in the American mess hall. And I thought, gee, is that possible to get a good food now? Every day while you work for the American Red Cross. So then slowly I recovered.

And I don't want to be remembered. My son said, Mom, write everything down for me, please. But I couldn't do it yet because it's still kind of-- it's like a wound that doesn't heal. You know? It's in your inside.

So did you want some more?

Mm, hmm. Your friends, Mr. [? Boelke, ?] Hugo Frank, you, I guess, Mr. Meyers, you said that somebody knew that there was a list of people. Can you tell me more about this list? Do you think being half-Jewish or anything had anything to do with the Gestapo wanting you and your friends arrested by the Japanese?

Yeah, this Mr. Furster, he-- I think he went with his wife and children to Germany. Yeah, he wrote me from Germany. And he said he found out that there was a list given, handed over to the Japanese authorities. And on the list were names given from the ones who were Jewish or half-Jewish or disliked-- disliked by the National Socialistic Regiment something, Yeah.

And that list was handed over to the Japanese. And they just took, and arrested and arrested of people. And when the war was over, Mr. Pestolozzi told me that Mr. Meisinger, they got a hold of him. The "Bloodhound" from Warsaw they called him.

But he was imprisoned in Tokyo I think. They had a big prison compound. And it was his job to visit the prisoners that Mr. Pestolozzi did. And that guy was just crying like a child, help me, help me. And they were going to ship him right over to Warsaw.

And later, I heard that on the ship he committed suicide. So they couldn't get a hold of that man. Because he's the one that did seemingly all the atrocities in Warsaw. And for that reason they gave him a big job to Japan, head of the Gestapo.

And he's the man that you think made up the list to give to the Japanese to have-- Yeah--

--you and your friends arrested.

I was on the list, yeah.

In Japan at this time, I guess, it was people like you who are either half-Jewish or married to a non-Jew, all the other Jews had left already for Shanghai. So do you think it was the Nazi-- the Gestapo guy who was trying to get rid of any of the Jews that were left?

Yeah, yeah. Because my mother came to Japan-- came here to America in 1948. And I met some very nice people. After I got married, we moved to Reno because I took couldn't take the climate in Stockton. My husband says, well, we move to another place, see if I can find a job in Reno. We moved to Reno with the baby together. The baby came.

And I met a very nice family. They were also from Germany, Jewish people. And they said, Margaret, you have to file a claim against the German government. And my husband says, don't do that. Don't bother with it. Forget about it.

I says, I cannot forget. Maybe I should do that. So they really gave me hope to file a claim. And I says, if something comes out all right, it's fine. But if not, it's fine too.

So I wrote to-- how did I get that lawyer? Oh, through my mother. My mother had filed a claim because she lived all those years during the war with the Nazis over there. But she was lucky enough she got out of Berlin in time. And she moved to a town where nobody knew her. So she was in hiding all the time.

And she lived in the southern part of Germany. But luckily she survived. My sister too. My sister got married down there someplace, yeah.

But how that Mr. Furster found out I don't know. But he found out somehow that there was a list, which was given to the Japanese. Only certain people were picked out and thrown in jail.

How do you think the Gestapo knew that you were half-Jewish being that you had this German passport that had no J on it?

Oh, yeah, that's what I was going to say. They came to my mother's and parents-- father was still alive-- and they said, they didn't want to talk to her. They wanted to see Herr Liebeskindt. So they pushed my mother aside. And father came in the room.

And they said, where is your daughter Margaret? And he said, she went to Japan. And they said, [SPEAKING GERMAN]. That means our fang arm's reach far away.

And when I had to give under oath what happened to me to the German restitution people, my mother had to tell them that too. So that shows you that the whole thing came from the Nazi side, yeah.

You don't think the Japanese would have arrested you if it wasn't for the Nazis--

Yeah--

Telling them to?

I think so, yeah. But you see the war turned bad for them, and the Nazis too. So they thought why not? What do we lose?

But I heard they never pay a dime to what their people did to the prisoners, the torturing and all. Or loss of life. They never gave a dime. They said, this is all German side. The Germans did that. There was order from the Nazis.

So anyhow, so now I get a little restitution money. But my girlfriend never filed a claim, the one that lives here. I said, you should have filed it. They killed your husband.

Alice Frank, was that--

She says, well, she didn't know. And she didn't want to get in trouble with the Japanese because she was born Japanese. And I still lived over there. And she didn't file a claim. She just didn't do it.

My claim went for about 20 years. You wouldn't believe it. It went from court to court in Germany because they couldn't figure out in my passport. They said she traveled here. She traveled there. She went to Switzerland. She went to Italy. She went to Czechoslovakia.

I like to travel. And I was sport-- I used to go skiing and took off-- I had two weeks vacation from Electrola. And then I said, can I take two more weeks off without pay? I like to go skiing in wintertime. They said, sure, it's all right. So I went to different places for skiing, and I had a good time.

That kept me in good health. Maybe that's how I could take all what I had to go through. I don't know.

And how come I had a passport without J? And I couldn't tell them. But it was a tricky thing I did. I can tell you now.

They didn't want to pay but. Finally, they-- I had a good lawyer then. They finally-- and they had enough documents, you know. And all my friends had to say what they knew about me. That it was just more or less beaten out of me to sign a confession.

Once they came with a long samurai sword. And they said, so you're the spy? We're going to chop your head off right here. And I said, well, but I like to write a few words to my mother that I haven't done any spy work so that she knows.

And I wrote a paper, on a piece of paper. That was just another way of torture you kind of insight, you know.

They went through my papers and my photo. They threw the photo down where my mother was with me on her arm. And they said, the Jewess. And they spit on the picture. Certain things just gets you inside. You cannot forget.

Was that the Japanese spitting on the--

Mm, hmm.

This is when they arrested you?

No, when I was in the torturing room.

In the torturing room.

During your whole period in Japan, did you have any correspondence going on with your mother or your family?

Not one word. The last postcard I got from my mother was in-- I think it was December '41, when the war broke out, 1941, that father passed on. He died, my father, in Berlin.

Of bad health?

Yeah, bad health. He had a stroke before. And then maybe they killed him even there. I don't know. She had to take him to the hospital then.

And there was one-- my mother said before you go to America, I take you to my cousin there in the old people's home in Berlin. I forgot where it was, what street. What was their name? Tuchin Uma. I think it was Tuchin and her husband. And I said goodbye to them. Yeah, nice couple. And they wished me good luck.

And after the war was over, mother came here. I says, what happened to Tuchin? What happened to the two sisters in Berlin? I forgot the name. [? Torpchen ?] they call them, two twin sisters, relatives for mother, second cousins, yeah. And she said, they were taken out of the old people's home in Berlin, Tuchin Uma and her husband. And they were sent to concentration camp in Buchenwald, I think. Took them out of the old people's home.

And Tuchin survived. Mother met her when the committee helped her to go to Switzerland to get back on her feet before coming to the United States, mother. And there was Tuchin, and she survived that Buchenwald camp. But her husband died on typhoid.

And she was saved after the war was over and sent to Lugano. There were several survivors from Buchenwald. Yeah, they were sent to Switzerland. But now [? Tuchin ?] died too. Her husband went to Shanghai. And the other son went to, I think, England. Horst [? Unger ?] was his name.

But they're all gone. They're not around anymore. Only I'm still around. I wonder for how long. But my grandmother in New York, she lived up to 103 years, long life, yeah. And she never forgave her daughter, I have to tell you that, that she married a non-Jew.

Can you tell us how you got to America after you--

And she didn't want to have anything to do with us children because we were not Jewish. She must have been very Orthodox. I met her once, yeah, years ago. Our grandmother, Toni.

The Quaker went to her. The Quaker had connection from Japan with the United States, you know. So to help me to get out of Japan, to continue my trip, they went to my grandmother in New York. She lived in New York in a hotel. And Grandmother said she has no grandchildren.

So the Quaker said, well, what's going on here? So I told them, well, my mother is Jewish. And that makes me half-Jewish. So for that reason, she never forgave her daughter on account of her religion. They couldn't understand.

Quaker are all right. But they're a little strange in certain things, you know. That's either their belief or their constitution or what, I don't know. They couldn't understand it. They thought maybe I tell him a flip or something. But that's the way it was, unfortunately. She lived here for many, many years in America. Yeah.

America should have done much more for all the Jews. And the half-Jews and the quarter Jews and whatever. And they didn't.

You're young. You don't know. That's the sad part. Could have helped many, many, many Jews. And they didn't do it. That's the black spot in American history.

But don't bring that in the paper, in the whatever you do, in the book. That's just what I say to you. You hear me?

Yeah.

I'm glad to be here, glad that I finally was able to make it. And that's all I have to say. I always respect the Jewish faith very much, even I wasn't brought up with it strictly. But I like the Jewish people. I like the faith, everything they do, everything. Sorry for all of the inhumane things they had to go through.

I go to the Holocaust once in a while. They used to send me little notes. And I saw a film some time ago. And they said, they are happy to see us coming. Even have some refreshments after. And we can get acquainted.

But after I saw the film, I had to leave. I couldn't stay. I couldn't even stay for refreshments or get acquainted. I don't even-- it was such a terrible thing.

Many a times, I don't know, when I went to the senior center, people look at me and say, you're not Jewish. And I says, why do you say that? You haven't said a Jewish word. I said, do I have to say a Jewish word to be Jewish?

That's a trouble when you're a Mischling. Well, I don't want to say, listen, explain everything. Why should I? Is it necessary. I am what I am. It's the inside that counts, isn't it? Well, do you have any more?

Can you tell us how you got to America after your years in Japan? What happened after you worked for the Red Cross and had your jobs? And--

I met in the Red Cross club an officer. And I told him my case, how I stranded kind of in Japan. And he said he's going back to the United States if he can do some for me. I said, I wish she would. But I have relatives from father's side in California. And could you do me a favor and look them up and tell them what I had told you? What a hard time I had being here in this place, country. Maybe they would make out an affidavit of support that I can enter the United States.

So he did me the favor. And he went to see that cousin of mine. He is a first cousin in San Mateo. No, he was a secretary for the Pacific Milling Company here in San Francisco. And I gave him the address.

When my father wrote to them years ago that I would like to go to the United States if they could help me make an affidavit of support, they said, no, because it's kind of a responsibility to bring somebody in. And they don't know if I wouldn't become a public charge, or blah, blah, blah. They wouldn't do it.

But I had the address. And I took it with me from my father. So I sent that officer to look up that-- his name was Oskar Liebeskindt from father's side, a relative. And he went to see him.

And he said, well, sure, he will do anything he can to make an affidavit of support. He asked his sisters. He has one, two, three sisters here. But then their husbands all said, no, a German here-- and they didn't want to have anything to do

with Germany. And they don't know me. So they thought it's too much of a risk.

But that one cousin, he made an affidavit. So I brought that in Yokohama to the consul in Yokohama, a man consul. And he said that is not enough, that affidavit. I says, why not? Because he has two daughters and a wife to support. So you would have to bring another affidavit.

So he asked his wife if she could make an affidavit. And that was not enough because she just was giving lessons in piano and singing. So she had her old father living with them. And she asked her father, and that father of her. So I had to have three affidavits just to come here into the United States.

So I stayed with my relatives for a while over in San Anselmo. They had a little house in San Anselmo. My cousin was a veteran of World War I for the United States Army, born here in this country. And they had a little house there.

And soon I met my husband here in San Francisco. After about a month or so being in this country, I met my husband, yeah. Santos. And then he says, why do you have to stay in San Anselmo? I said, well, what do you do here? I says, well, I'm new. I'm a new American, I said.

What do you do? I says, I do babysitting. Babysitting, he says. For whom do you babysit? I said, well, this is a job. They do that over here. I heard.

My cousin's daughters, they were teenagers then. They went to high school both of them. They did that. And my late cousin's wife said, well, Margaret, to make you feel better and make us feel better, maybe you can pay \$20 a month for living here with us and eating. And I said, yeah, but I have to make some money first.

I had no money. I paid my own trip from Yokohama here to San Francisco. All I was paid was in yen. And in those days, they wouldn't change my yen into dollar. There was against the law, you know.

But the Red Cross girls were nice. They said, well, we buy little things here. So if you want to change some yen, we give you \$1. Then you can pay your trip to go over. Fine. So I did. Yeah, souvenirs.

So I did babysitting. And my husband-- and I did some house cleaning too, window cleaning, washing window in some families out there in Marin County, in San Rafael and in Mill Valley. I took the bus back and forth. They paid the bus fare too in those days, yeah.

And then my husband said, well, I mean with your education, you don't have to do that kind of work. What else can you do? I says, well, I used to work in a music store. He says, if you look in the paper, I look in the paper too, maybe you can work in a store here. And I said, yes.

So I think I went to the telephone company. And they said, no, with your accent. We only take people that have no accent. You have that certain accent when you speak English. I said, well, I can't help that.

Then I went to some insurance company. I says, I take any kind of job. Would you do filing too? I says, sure. Well, they said, you filled out the form with your education, you could get something better. Wasn't that nice to say something like that? I forgot the company that was. It was some insurance.

Then I went to I. Magnin, the personnel office. And I told them part of my destiny. And they said, well, what kind of a store have you done any clerical work? I says, I was a sales lady for almost 11 years in Berlin. Oh. And they said, have you ever sold clothings and shoes underwear? Well, I said this couldn't be too difficult to do that.

So they gave me the job. I worked at I Magnin's. And later on, I worked for Hales Brothers, for Robert Kirk Brothers, a British company. I even worked for Weinstein on Market Street, that old store. You probably don't know the story anymore. So long ago. I did all kinds of work.

And then I got my baby. We got married, my husband and I. And the baby came. I was wishing for a baby while I sat in

prison. I got that wish fulfilled, yeah. I got a nice little boy.

It was just a little late in life. Unfortunately, my husband passed on after 11 years married. That was another shock. Yeah, so I told you all.

How did you renew correspondence, find out what happened to your mother and sister and brother after the war? How did you meet up with them? Or after you were liberated.

Through a friend in Switzerland I think it was. I have to ask my sister. That I forgot. But they heard from Switzerland. And I wrote to Switzerland. But how I knew their address, that I don't know.

Or was it the Red Cross? Maybe they wrote to the International Red Cross. I don't for sure. That I forgot that part. But we got in exchanging letters right then. Yeah. Yeah, right after the war, not in Japan. While I was in the States, I heard from them.

I don't know who it was. I think it was the Red Cross. The International Red Cross, yeah.

Both your mother and your sister and your brother?

No. Not-- only Mother and my sister, yeah. Through the committee. I had to pay \$600. \$600 so that they could get Mother out of Germany over to Switzerland.

Was this is after the war?

Yeah. I was working then. I had a little money saved.

Why do they need to get your mother out of Germany into Switzerland before you could bring her over here?

Mother was way down in weight. And she had some trouble with her lungs and the heart. And they said, you will never pass your examination, your physical examination, with America to get the visa. So we send you to the home where we have some people who survived the Holocaust, who survived the concentration camp.

So they send my mother to Lugano. The sister-- they didn't take the sister in there because she was a Mischling. She had got a job with children. And she lived with the family and children, yeah.

What happened to your mother and your sister and your brother during the war?

Mother was in the hiding, I told you. And sister had a boyfriend she wanted to marry. And he was a young fellow from-- who was in Goering's flying deal, a flyer.

So she went to the city hall to get married. And she had to show her paper for Mother, the birth certificate, mother and father, I think. And they said, you are not an Aryan. You cannot get married. So that was it. So she was heartbroken.

And the brother was drafted as a soldier in Hitler's army being a Mischling. And from the beginning on-- that must have been '38 or '39, the war. And he never got up in rank. That was the brother.

And he was sent to all the places in France and Holland. And later, he was sent to Russia. And he told me there he got the yellow fever in Russia. And that way they sent him back to Germany to a hospital, or Lazarett, or whatever.

And towards the end of the war, after he came out of hospital, he told me that he was sent in the army again. And then he was taken prisoner. I don't know where. He was taken prisoner into France, yeah. But where that was I don't know. Was he in France or was in Holland?

He said all the big officers left us, the army. And we were taken prisoners in France by the American army. I don't know

how long he was a prisoner there.

He wasn't sent to the United States because he spoke fluently English. He was in America before the war as a young man. 1929 I think he was here. And he got a better treatment of being a Mischling than he ever got before.

So it seems they turned it the way they wanted. If you're not a real Aryan, they throw out of the Lufthansa. The sister wanted to marry a so-called Aryan, and they said you cannot marry him. We give you no license, marriage license. And then the brother was drafted in right from the beginning. So it shows you, they did turn it the way they wanted. And I was thrown in jail because of being a Mischling.

So it's-- but some went through worse things than we did. But still, I think I lost a lot of friends. I had good friends in Berlin. Mother, sister were picked up by the Gestapo, sent someplace.

A good friend went to Australia. I never heard from him. I don't know if he made it or not. He had his old parents shipped to France. But the Nazis went into France. I don't know if they made it too or not.

And I was invited one day by the German-- what is it-- senate to come to Berlin as a guest. And I tried to find out about some of my friends, you know. Impossible. Some, I don't know the first name, a nice couple in Berlin. They sent their son over to England. He was a child, a youngster, 14, 15 years old.

And they stayed-- they had a beautiful villa in Berlin on the outskirts. I went to say goodbye to them. And I said, what are you going to do? Well, our parents are in the southern part of France. So they are all right.

I says, and your brother went to Australia? Yeah. And I says, what are you? And our son went over to England on a children's transport. The two of us, my husband gave up his business, everything, so what should happen to us? I don't know.

I never heard from them. I only remember the name Bendix. So while I was in Berlin as a guest, I tried to find out from other friends. But it's hard to find out. It's so many years ago, right.

And me being in Japan, they didn't know where I go. They thought I might be able to go to the States or to Panama. But no, no letter, no correspondence, nothing. That's a sad thing. But that's the way it goes I guess. There's a war between, the First World War, the Second World War, you wonder what comes next.

The only thing with my mother was that she was able to leave Berlin. It seems that's the worst place to be. When I was still there 1940, they had those air raids in Berlin.

And you wouldn't believe it. We had an air raid shelter in the house. Mother-- apartment was up on the second floor, Mother and Father. Hilda was gone to Munich. She didn't want to stay in Berlin. Oh, I think the boyfriend or her fiancée was down there, yeah, in Munich.

And the air raid alarm was for Jews, who had a special cellar. Down in the cellar was a special little place for Jews. And father could go in the other cellars. Father was so weak and sick. He said, I'm not going down anymore. He went down once. Once he went down with mother, and it was such a small uncomfortable place and he felt so sick, I remember. I went with them downstairs. We had several air raids then, 1940.

But later, I heard it was worse. The house Mother lived-- well, Father was gone then. Father was not around anymore. Brother was in the army. The sister was in M^Änchen. I was in Japan. I still could write mother that I'm stuck here, and I make the best out of it. Don't worry.

But the mail didn't go through. Mother said she wrote every week how father-- how his health is slipping. She does the best not to take him to the hospital. But in the end, she had to take him in the hospital. And it's where he died.

My brother was able to come from the army out to father's funeral. Yeah, that was it. So he says, Mother, you have to

leave Berlin and you go someplace where nobody knows you, in the southern part of Germany. I think they went to Ravensbrück, Mother and Hilda, yeah.

Mother got no cards for the food. She told me because she wasn't registered. If she would register with her name, and they might have thought something was wrong.

She worked as a sewing woman. She was very good in sewing and mending clothes. She went to those wealthy peasant people out in the hills someplace. I don't know that part of Germany where Mother was in hiding.

And that's how she made her living. They had enough food. They gave her something to eat while she did the sewing. And she survived. That was the main thing.

So anything else you wanted to know?

Whatever happened to the fiancée in America, Henry Livingston, when you found out couldn't go to Panama and you were stuck in Japan?

Yeah.

Did you attempt any correspondence with him or ask for his help?

He sent me a little money over to Yokohama, yeah. And then I wrote him that I went through the most horrible times of my life in Japan. I had planned to get married to you, which I wrote you in my letters. And I had hoped that you could do something for me, to get the visa to come to the United States, and we get married right there. But either you couldn't do anything, or it was just not in your possibility to do something for me.

For that reason, I am kind of angry and sad. And on the other hand, I blame you, as I thought you should have done something. Because I landed in Japan end of 1940, and there was no war with the United States. The war broke out in 1941.

So it was fate that we were not supposed to meet. And that's what I wrote him. And then he wrote to me, which is not right. And I sent him back that shipping order, which I did not use from Japan. And I asked him, you collect the money, write to the shipping company, to get part of the money back.

And that's all. Then I didn't hear from him anymore. And I didn't write anymore either. That was the end of it.

In a way, I blamed him. And on the other hand, I thought, well, maybe it was impossible to do anything. I had a German passport. It was one of those things, right.

Then I thought it was risky anyhow to marry somebody you don't even know, you never met, right? You smile. Many Americans could have done that, you know, marry one of the Jewish girls by letter to save them from those horrible things they did, horrible things.

I'd like to go back to your parents. And I want to know, what was your mother's maiden name? And how did your mother and father meet and get married?

How they met? In Stuttgart. And they fell in love many years ago.

But it must have been a big thing for your mother to marry somebody who wasn't Jewish, from how you described your grandmother's behavior, that she didn't acknowledge you or her--

It must have been, yeah. But she says we just fell in love, your father and I. I remember her saying that.

And what was your mother's maiden name? What was her mother's full name.

That's her maiden name, Josef.

Josef. And her first name?

Margaretha, with a T-H, Margaretha.

Josef.

Josef.

And she was born in 1893.

That's why her mother never forgave her, that she married a non-Jew.

And where were you born?

In Chemnitz.

What's your birth date?

December 20, 1908. Long time ago. Almost a 100 years old. Yeah.

It's very hard to believe. Wow. So your background is so interesting. So you said that in your family life, you were basically brought up as a Protestant?

Protestant, that was Father's religion. yeah.

And you never-- or you never thought about whether or not you were Jew or a Protestant. It just never bothered--

Nobody talked about it. Father didn't. Mother didn't. They were just happy together. And until Hitler came, then--

And what was the private school that you went to? What was the name of that school?

It was called Bruckenschule, private school for girls.

In Berlin?

No, in Chemnitz.

In Chemnitz.

Yeah. Chemnitz, that's Saxony. That's near the Czechoslovakian border. That place was occupied by Russia-- by the Russians.

And in your school, was it mixed? Was there Jewish girls and Catholic girls and Protestant girls?

Mm, hmm, yeah.

And there was--

We had one girl that was Catholic and two Jewish girls, were nice girls. Sara Heller, I remember the name. And what was the other one? Rosie something. Hmm.

Were you friends with the Jewish girls?

Mm, hmm.

And you were friends with the non-Jewish girls too.

Yeah, mm, hmm.

There was no sense of discrimination--

No, nothing. We all got along fine, wonderful.

And--

Religion wasn't-- religion wasn't mentioned in school, and at home either, until that Hitler came.

So did you go to church on Christmas Eve and Easter and synagogue on the high holidays?

No.

So what holidays were observed in your house.

We said a prayer-- Father was very religious. Father would go to church sometimes. Once in a great while he took my brother and me along. And Mother had Jewish friends.

There was a [? Butterhoch. ?] And the Frau, what was her name? Stein. She came from Galicia. They were in the stocking business too. They had a abbatoir.

And her children and my brother and I, we play together like we're all friends. And Mother talked to Mrs. Stein. Nobody said, hey, what are you? What is your father? Nobody talked about who's who, what's what.

There was a strange thing and then they had those ideas of God. And then the Crystal Night I was in Berlin and mother said, oh, my goodness.

Can you tell us about your experience of Crystal Night?

I worked in that musical store on Kurfürstendamm on the main part in Berlin, the better part, the western part of Berlin. And next door was the Italian place. And then next door was a friend of mine. Father did business with his father. And the son was in that business. And he had a very nice clothing store right there on Kurfürstendamm.

The windows were all smashed in. And they put signs up. Next day when I went to work, took the subway, there were big signs-- don't buy in Jewish stores. And they put on, smeared on the windows, Heil Hitler, slogans.

It was terrible. Mother says, don't go out, stay home, stay home. I says, I have to go to work.

And then they came in the musical store, some Nazis, in black uniform that was. And they would go through the records. They were all on the walls and on shelves. And they took out certain records which were Jewish records or Jewish composer or Jewish singer, opera singers, or-- and they smeared all over, out with the Jews. Hang the Jews. And words like that.

And then the director came from the store. And I said, listen, you shouldn't do that. Well, we're going to smear that on you too. He seemed to be Jewish. I don't know. I didn't ask him.

And then they marched out. And another club of those people came in with their boots, black boots, and black coats,

swastika all over. And he sent us home the next day. Yeah, he sent us home at around noontime so that we wouldn't get in trouble with those people. And he said, don't come for two days, till everything quiet down.

And Mother says, don't get out of the house. I says, well, we have to buy some groceries. No, we can live on what we have in the house. It was terrible. It was terrible. I never forget that day, the Kristallnacht. I forgot the date. It was but I remember when it happened, yeah.

One of my girlfriends, she worked with me in that music store. Eva [? Hupfel, ?] she was-- I think her father was Jewish and the mother was not. I asked my mother, I says, what happened to her? And Mother says, she committed suicide. Oh, God. She committed suicide.

And I says, and another, Eva [? Breitl, ?] she was also-- she told me she is half-Jewish. Her father was Jewish, and the mother was Christian. And she used to call up Mother after I had left. And then she didn't call up anymore. And I says Mother, what happened to Eva? Mother says, I don't know. She called up for a long time, ask me how you are and if you made it over to America or not. And then she didn't call anymore. So I lost all the contact with all my friends.

And another one who had kind of a car business, he married. I said mother what happened to Fritz Poehler? And she says he married a nurse from the Jewish hospital. And then they were picked up by the Gestapo. So I don't know what happened to them either. Nice couple.

So many of my friends, oh, I mustn't even think. And then I think maybe they survived. But how would I know? How could I find out? I tried in Berlin, but that's almost hopeless. There are too many looking for-- that's the sad part in being in Japan, you lost all the contact.

I hope nobody has to go through something like that again. But you don't know. You don't know. Maybe good thing we don't know what the future will bring, right?

Well, how do you feel about what's happening in Eastern Europe and the Russian revolution last week?

Yeah, we live in a very interesting time, I must say. I'm not much of a politiker. But let's all hope for the best that people who want to get out, like in Russia, can leave without any troubles. They had the hardest time to begin with to get out from there. And with the Kommunismus, well, we don't know what's going to happen. Nobody knows. And with Israel.

How do you feel towards Israel?

I feel with them. But the ones that are there seem to be happy, happy to be there, especially that friend of mine I know from Yokohama who came visiting with his wife. He says we're happy there. But we don't know what's going to happen.

They live in-- what's the name? Nahariya?

Nahariya?

Yeah, Nahariya, which is a dangerous spot too.

Getting back to your life, with working as an airline stewardess for Lufthansa, how exactly did they figure out that you were not a full Aryan, or Mischling, as you said? Can you explain how they-- how did they get that information?

Well, it was written in the paper, my name. When I was with Lufthansa, some fellow came and introduced some of the stewardesses, where they come from and what they know, what they don't know, who they are. And one said, what is your name? And I says, Margaret Liebeskindt.

And they said, well, what kind of job did you do before? And I says, oh, I was a governess with children. I was in Switzerland and so on in the [? ponzianant. ?] I learned French, and I was in Paris as a companion.

So he had nothing better to do than put the whole schmear in the Nazi paper, which-- oh, which was the Volkischer Beobachter, the worst Nazi paper. There was another one, Der Stürmer, I think. But he put it in that Volkischer Beobachter.

And I didn't read the paper one day I was called to the press department. And I go there. And the fellow-- I says-- my name is Stern. I forgot the first name, Stern. And I have to let you know that you have to discontinue being with the German Lufthansa as a stewardess on account of your being non-Aryan.

I says, non-Aryan? Who is the Jewish part? And I says, my mother is. Yeah. And I must have asked him-- I don't remember that-- I must have asked him, well, who told you what? Yeah, he must have said, somebody denounced you. That's what he said. Somebody denounced you to the head of the German Lufthansa, to the director or whatever.

So that was it. And I went home. And I cried my heart out. And Mother says, well, how come?

So she had a girlfriend across the street, my mother, there in Berlin. And that one said she had a brother-in-law, or somebody from her family. And that one read my name in that Nazi paper. I have the copy from that. And he had nothing better to do than telling the head from the Lufthansa about me. And that's how it came.

And then they stamped that into your passport? That was before in the passport. That was when I was in the courses from the Lufthansa, when they tried out if we can take the flying up or flying down, all those excursions. They made one to Vienna and one to Amsterdam. That's when I had to have the passport. So they put in Angestellte Lufthansa. That was when I was with.

And what does that mean? Can you translate from the German?

That she is employed by the German Lufthansa.

And then after you were dismissed from the Lufthansa, did they stamp anything in your passports?

No.

Now was it the practice in Germany at the time for Mischlings to have J's into their passport? Or they didn't bother or some other stamp that would point--

The ones I talked that worked together with me, they had nothing stamped. They had no passport. They never left the country. So they were working girls. And I never asked them.

Mother had to wear that sign. And she had to come in and had her photo taken, the left ear-- I don't know what they found with the ears-- on a kind of identification photo. She had to carry that with her at all times.

And was that identification photo of your mother showing that she was a Jew?

Yeah, she had the armband here. And she had to wear a star.

But you did not, your brother did not, and your sister did not have to wear an armband or Jewish star.

No.

And your father--

They didn't know. They didn't know.

They didn't know she had children or they just didn't know?

They must have known she had children. Hilda had no passport, my brother either. That would be if you apply for a passport, you have to bring certain papers from your father and your mother. The only one that was in trouble was me because I traveled here, I traveled there.

But in Germany at the time, when Jews were being asked to wear armbands and being forced to wear yellow stars, you and your siblings and your friends who were Mischlings like, you were not asked to wear yellow stars?

No. No.

So you could--

We asked to come-- we were asked to come, in case of an air raid, to carry the buckets. They had to stand in line and pass the buckets with water. My sister says, I'm not going to help with the air raids. I stay home. I says, no come, you better go. Otherwise we get in trouble.

And then they send a card to her that she passed the courses, was handing out the water buckets in case of an air raid. She says, you see? I got the card that I passed the courses. And you worked there and you went there every evening and helped there with the buckets. Well, I says, I'm the dumb one. You're the clever one.

So there was then--

No, it was only when you come to a place like the police you have to ask for the passport, or my sister when she wanted to get married that they said, hey, no, you're a Mischling. Out.

Were Mischlings rounded up and transported with other Jews?

That I don't. While I was there, no. There were two Mischlings working in that company where I worked. And the one killed herself. And the other one she used to call up mother and father and ask about me. But later on, my mother didn't hear anymore. Either she killed herself or she was picked up. I don't know. Or she moved away could be too.

Did you ever hear anything, either through your mother or maybe the time that you were in Germany, of spouses, the non-Jewish spouse, the Aryan spouse, protesting when they tried to do something to the Jewish spouse?

No. Everybody was afraid because word went around about those concentration camps, that they hit you, torture you. So everybody was very much scared, even to say a word.

There was one family I was a governess for the little girl. The name was Dr. Rothstein or Rosenstein. And he went to Holland from Berlin. And his wife was an Aryan. And she stayed in Berlin with the little girl.

And she asked me if I could do them a favor. I said, sure. What can I do? I says, how is your husband? Oh, he's still in Holland, and he hopes to go someplace.

And she's sending him money. She says, there is a family and they are bad off. And I was wondering if you could help them out with some. I says, what do you mean by helping out? I gladly help, but I have to know what is it.

And she said, just to take a suitcase over to them. They have a few things here in Berlin. And we would pay-- or they would pay for the trip, the train trip to Amsterdam. And maybe you have a sister, maybe she could come too and bring another suitcase. Yeah, I says, we can do that.

So that was the only time we were able to help really. So we took a suitcase. I didn't ask what's in there or anything. They could have packed God knows what in. We could have been stopped on the border somewhere. But we were lucky at that time.

We brought that over. And they paid us the trip back. And I stayed with the little girl a week or so, yeah. And then we went back to Berlin.

No, that was then when the war broke out. My sister had to go back. She worked in an office. She had to go back to work in Berlin, yeah. The war broke out and my mother sent me a cable-- I should stay there. And I stayed in Amsterdam.

And then some family told me I should go to Rotterdam. I get my permit to stay prolonged. So I went there to get the visa prolonged because they were very strict then. They had a lot of Nazis in Holland in those days.

And I go to certain office to ask for the permit to stay. And the guy said, you have a war in your country. If there would be a war in my country, he said, I would be the first one to help. So if you are not leaving this country by midnight, we have you arrested right here.

I could never forget that. So I says, no, I was just going to ask if there is a possibility that I stay a little longer. So that was the answer. So I left the same night, went back to Berlin. I had hoped I could stay a little in Holland and then get a ship or somehow to some place.

Get out of Europe?

Get out of Europe. My mother said, why did you come back? Couldn't you make it? I said, no. They're Nazis in Holland too. Same crowd you have here.

Certain things you remember so clearly. Now, I remember the name from the girl I was a friend with in school, Rose Simpf was her name. I told you the other girl with Sarah Heller-- and Rose Simpf. They are nice girls. Wonder what happened to them.

So I talked a long time.

[INAUDIBLE]