

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:45,265

2
00:00:45,265 --> 00:00:45,765
Camera 14.

3
00:00:45,765 --> 00:00:48,910

4
00:00:48,910 --> 00:00:50,940
Can you tell me
what life in Poland

5
00:00:50,940 --> 00:00:52,860
was like before the war started?

6
00:00:52,860 --> 00:00:55,590

7
00:00:55,590 --> 00:00:58,320
My family came to
Poland from Russia.

8
00:00:58,320 --> 00:01:03,390
Escaped in '24, 1924.

9
00:01:03,390 --> 00:01:08,430
And we settled in Vilna,
which was not too far

10
00:01:08,430 --> 00:01:10,680
from the Russian border.

11
00:01:10,680 --> 00:01:14,100
My father was a physicist.

12
00:01:14,100 --> 00:01:17,040
And he was raised in Russia.

13
00:01:17,040 --> 00:01:21,990

And he believed that the
moment the system in Russia

14
00:01:21,990 --> 00:01:25,590
will change, we will
be back in Russia.

15
00:01:25,590 --> 00:01:27,480
But we never went
back to Russia.

16
00:01:27,480 --> 00:01:31,060
And Poland was very different.

17
00:01:31,060 --> 00:01:34,320
We felt in Poland
that we are Jews.

18
00:01:34,320 --> 00:01:37,680
That we are
second-rate citizens.

19
00:01:37,680 --> 00:01:41,580
And I, for me, it
was a very painful

20
00:01:41,580 --> 00:01:44,370
and a very lasting realization.

21
00:01:44,370 --> 00:01:51,480
Because I didn't feel it in
my hometown in [PLACE NAME]..

22
00:01:51,480 --> 00:01:56,640
But Vilna had a very large--

23
00:01:56,640 --> 00:01:59,660
a third of Vilna were
Jews, a third were Poles,

24
00:01:59,660 --> 00:02:03,600
and a third of Vilna
were Belarusian,

25
00:02:03,600 --> 00:02:08,030
Russians and Lithuanians.

26
00:02:08,030 --> 00:02:09,949
It was a very cultured city.

27
00:02:09,949 --> 00:02:11,660
It had a big university.

28
00:02:11,660 --> 00:02:14,330
It had many conservators.

29
00:02:14,330 --> 00:02:20,330
And I had to learn a new
language, which was Yiddish.

30
00:02:20,330 --> 00:02:23,060
And I had to learn a
new language, which

31
00:02:23,060 --> 00:02:25,370
was the language of
the country, Polish.

32
00:02:25,370 --> 00:02:29,270
And I was very fascinated
with the new experience.

33
00:02:29,270 --> 00:02:32,810
The experience of the Civil
War in Russia affected me.

34
00:02:32,810 --> 00:02:35,360
I always looked
for some disaster,

35
00:02:35,360 --> 00:02:43,100
for some changing of armies, for
some part of the city burning.

36
00:02:43,100 --> 00:02:44,570

But the war was over.

37

00:02:44,570 --> 00:02:49,160

And slowly, slowly I got
adjusted to a new reality.

38

00:02:49,160 --> 00:02:55,550

It was very important to me
that at a very young age,

39

00:02:55,550 --> 00:02:58,310

I started to paint.

40

00:02:58,310 --> 00:03:04,280

And since I was a very restless
and a very unhappy child--

41

00:03:04,280 --> 00:03:06,680

not because of my
home, but because

42

00:03:06,680 --> 00:03:10,340

of the political and
social situation in Russia

43

00:03:10,340 --> 00:03:14,270

--my teacher had a great
deal of problems with me.

44

00:03:14,270 --> 00:03:17,930

And one day when I was
in the lower grades,

45

00:03:17,930 --> 00:03:21,620

and I had difficulties with
adjusting to a new language,

46

00:03:21,620 --> 00:03:26,790

she gave me a little piece
of paper and said, draw.

47

00:03:26,790 --> 00:03:29,490

And that decided

about my whole future.

48
00:03:29,490 --> 00:03:34,530
I started to draw and I
forgot about the whole world.

49
00:03:34,530 --> 00:03:38,700
And my teacher said,
you never drew before?

50
00:03:38,700 --> 00:03:41,770
I said, no, but--

51
00:03:41,770 --> 00:03:47,140
and then she came over
with another teacher

52
00:03:47,140 --> 00:03:50,440
who was the art
teacher in my school.

53
00:03:50,440 --> 00:03:55,570
He was a very interesting,
a very unusual personality.

54
00:03:55,570 --> 00:04:01,060
He was, by profession, a soldier
in the occupational forces

55
00:04:01,060 --> 00:04:04,930
of the Prussian army in Vilna.

56
00:04:04,930 --> 00:04:09,210
And after the revolution
when the army retreated,

57
00:04:09,210 --> 00:04:15,090
he stayed in Vilna and became a
teacher in the Yiddish schools.

58
00:04:15,090 --> 00:04:17,850
I guess he became a teacher
in the Yiddish school

59

00:04:17,850 --> 00:04:21,510
because he believed that we
spoke a straight German accent.

60

00:04:21,510 --> 00:04:23,310
He [? could ?] understand it.

61

00:04:23,310 --> 00:04:26,160
And in order to get
adjusted to Yiddish,

62

00:04:26,160 --> 00:04:33,300
he used German words with a
few Hebrew words in between.

63

00:04:33,300 --> 00:04:37,140
He was a very loving
and a very unusual

64

00:04:37,140 --> 00:04:40,950
and a very creative person.

65

00:04:40,950 --> 00:04:43,770
Can I stop you here?

66

00:04:43,770 --> 00:04:44,270
OK.

67

00:04:44,270 --> 00:04:49,572
Can you tell me where you were
when World War II broke out?

68

00:04:49,572 --> 00:04:50,405
What were you doing?

69

00:04:50,405 --> 00:04:53,900
Who you were with?

70

00:04:53,900 --> 00:04:57,950
After graduating from
the University of Vilna,

71
00:04:57,950 --> 00:04:59,630
I went to Warsaw.

72
00:04:59,630 --> 00:05:05,120
And the last two years before
the war I spent in Warsaw.

73
00:05:05,120 --> 00:05:14,990
When the war broke out,
I waited to be mobilized.

74
00:05:14,990 --> 00:05:20,020
But I never got the
card from the army

75
00:05:20,020 --> 00:05:23,710
because Warsaw was bombarded.

76
00:05:23,710 --> 00:05:28,660
The city started to
get up in flames.

77
00:05:28,660 --> 00:05:34,270
And my landlady told me,
what are you waiting for?

78
00:05:34,270 --> 00:05:35,770
You're a young man.

79
00:05:35,770 --> 00:05:40,270
You know what the Germans
are going to do with you.

80
00:05:40,270 --> 00:05:45,340
I said, but I'm also a
soldier of the Polish army.

81
00:05:45,340 --> 00:05:48,460
I waited for my card.

82
00:05:48,460 --> 00:05:52,330

Well, she told me that
she is working with a--

83
00:05:52,330 --> 00:05:54,200
she was a doctor, dentist.

84
00:05:54,200 --> 00:05:56,170
She working with
a Polish dentist.

85
00:05:56,170 --> 00:05:59,830
And she told me
that her husband is

86
00:05:59,830 --> 00:06:02,770
working for the headquarters
of the Polish army.

87
00:06:02,770 --> 00:06:05,710
It wouldn't be the
resistance in Warsaw.

88
00:06:05,710 --> 00:06:10,760
And all young men should go to
the Eastern border of Poland.

89
00:06:10,760 --> 00:06:13,810
So I took two or
three paintings.

90
00:06:13,810 --> 00:06:17,020
And I said, well, wherever
I go I'll show my paintings.

91
00:06:17,020 --> 00:06:18,370
I'll make a living.

92
00:06:18,370 --> 00:06:21,550
My wife, my first
wife, was a nurse.

93
00:06:21,550 --> 00:06:27,070
So we just packed and left

the country, left the city.

94

00:06:27,070 --> 00:06:32,770

We didn't have any penny,
because the bank were closed.

95

00:06:32,770 --> 00:06:34,690

The trains didn't move.

96

00:06:34,690 --> 00:06:37,510

So we walked out from the city.

97

00:06:37,510 --> 00:06:42,000

And outside of Warsaw we
met many, many, many people.

98

00:06:42,000 --> 00:06:45,130

Most of the time,
young people who

99

00:06:45,130 --> 00:06:48,940

didn't want to be
captured by the Germans

100

00:06:48,940 --> 00:06:53,710

and went to the
eastern part of Poland

101

00:06:53,710 --> 00:07:01,330

believing that some sort of
resistance would be organized.

102

00:07:01,330 --> 00:07:02,990

Where did we get food?

103

00:07:02,990 --> 00:07:04,450

Where did we get water?

104

00:07:04,450 --> 00:07:07,900

Where did we get
places to sleep?

105

00:07:07,900 --> 00:07:10,750

The little towns on
our way were burning

106

00:07:10,750 --> 00:07:13,330

and the people left them.

107

00:07:13,330 --> 00:07:15,370

They ran out.

108

00:07:15,370 --> 00:07:22,270

In the countryside, the peasants
came out and they gave us food.

109

00:07:22,270 --> 00:07:24,940

They said take it, eat it.

110

00:07:24,940 --> 00:07:34,160

We don't want to wait with all
our cows and pigs and horses

111

00:07:34,160 --> 00:07:35,030

for the German.

112

00:07:35,030 --> 00:07:37,310

You're our brothers.

113

00:07:37,310 --> 00:07:43,730

It was an atmosphere of
fear and expectations.

114

00:07:43,730 --> 00:07:46,940

On the way, we were
all the time bombarded

115

00:07:46,940 --> 00:07:49,880

by the German's Luftwaffe.

116

00:07:49,880 --> 00:07:52,730

Many people were killed.

117

00:07:52,730 --> 00:07:56,840

Finally, we went to the eastern part of Poland,

118
00:07:56,840 --> 00:08:02,750
to the eastern and southern part of Poland.

119
00:08:02,750 --> 00:08:05,180
And at that time, we all of a sudden

120
00:08:05,180 --> 00:08:13,140
got the news that Poland will be divided between Stalin's Russia

121
00:08:13,140 --> 00:08:15,720
and Hitler's Germany.

122
00:08:15,720 --> 00:08:18,760
And we didn't know what to expect.

123
00:08:18,760 --> 00:08:25,700
We cross the river Bug and we ended up in the city

124
00:08:25,700 --> 00:08:26,570
of [? Rovna. ?]

125
00:08:26,570 --> 00:08:28,600
Could you hang on a second?

126
00:08:28,600 --> 00:08:30,190
How are we doing on sound?

127
00:08:30,190 --> 00:08:33,247
[INAUDIBLE]

128
00:08:33,247 --> 00:08:34,539
What is that other [INAUDIBLE]?

129
00:08:34,539 --> 00:08:39,590

OK, so let's go back
to you knew that Poland

130
00:08:39,590 --> 00:08:45,080
was going to be divided by
the Germans and the Soviets.

131
00:08:45,080 --> 00:08:46,800
Shall I start from now?

132
00:08:46,800 --> 00:08:49,210
Yeah.

133
00:08:49,210 --> 00:08:51,940
Now, you were interested
where we slept.

134
00:08:51,940 --> 00:08:54,730
We slept in the woods.

135
00:08:54,730 --> 00:08:56,800
We were young people.

136
00:08:56,800 --> 00:09:04,270
It was not too difficult.
The most frightening thing

137
00:09:04,270 --> 00:09:12,670
was what's going to happen
after the Germans capture us.

138
00:09:12,670 --> 00:09:18,700
But since we cross the
Bug, we were in the power

139
00:09:18,700 --> 00:09:23,230
of the Russian marching forces.

140
00:09:23,230 --> 00:09:25,240
As you know, I
was born in Russia

141

00:09:25,240 --> 00:09:27,100
and I was educated in Poland.

142
00:09:27,100 --> 00:09:33,700
But I spoke fluent
Russian and I became aware

143
00:09:33,700 --> 00:09:39,310
that the whole approach
of the Russian army

144
00:09:39,310 --> 00:09:46,000
was, strangely enough,
anti-England, anti-France,

145
00:09:46,000 --> 00:09:47,600
and pro-Germany.

146
00:09:47,600 --> 00:09:51,550
Germany is our ally
and they didn't

147
00:09:51,550 --> 00:09:56,290
want to hear anything
about the violence

148
00:09:56,290 --> 00:09:59,005
of the new system in Germany.

149
00:09:59,005 --> 00:10:01,870

150
00:10:01,870 --> 00:10:04,840
It was a very, very
painful experience.

151
00:10:04,840 --> 00:10:07,640

152
00:10:07,640 --> 00:10:14,760
I didn't have any money and
my wife didn't have anything.

153

00:10:14,760 --> 00:10:18,170

We started to look for work.

154

00:10:18,170 --> 00:10:25,780

And there were big posters all
over the city of Brest-Litovsk

155

00:10:25,780 --> 00:10:31,980

that writers,
musicians, painters,

156

00:10:31,980 --> 00:10:41,390

actors would get a job, but
they have to pass an exam.

157

00:10:41,390 --> 00:10:45,200

Since I was a painter,
I decided that I

158

00:10:45,200 --> 00:10:49,490

would try to pass the
exam and see what's

159

00:10:49,490 --> 00:10:52,490

going to be offered to me.

160

00:10:52,490 --> 00:10:58,790

A delegation of Russian
artists came from Minsk.

161

00:10:58,790 --> 00:11:00,110

Why from Minsk?

162

00:11:00,110 --> 00:11:04,670

Because this part of
Poland was included

163

00:11:04,670 --> 00:11:10,670

in the Russian Republic of
Byelorussia and the capital

164

00:11:10,670 --> 00:11:12,000

was Minsk.

165

00:11:12,000 --> 00:11:16,610

So the delegation, the Russian
delegation came not from Moscow

166

00:11:16,610 --> 00:11:18,860

but came from Minsk.

167

00:11:18,860 --> 00:11:21,980

And we had to pass an exam.

168

00:11:21,980 --> 00:11:24,930

And the exam was very simple.

169

00:11:24,930 --> 00:11:29,675

We had a model and we were
supposed to draw the model.

170

00:11:29,675 --> 00:11:33,550

171

00:11:33,550 --> 00:11:38,950

Since I was quite well-versed
in the Russian literature

172

00:11:38,950 --> 00:11:45,940

and in the Soviet
approach to art,

173

00:11:45,940 --> 00:11:49,150

I knew more or less what
they expected from me.

174

00:11:49,150 --> 00:11:54,640

They expected to do almost
precise, like a photograph.

175

00:11:54,640 --> 00:11:57,610

And I wanted to pass the exam
because I wanted to work,

176

00:11:57,610 --> 00:11:59,080
so I did it.

177
00:11:59,080 --> 00:12:03,850
I mention it because next to
me was a famous Polish artist.

178
00:12:03,850 --> 00:12:06,370
And of course, he
didn't know anything

179
00:12:06,370 --> 00:12:10,120
about the requirement
of Socialist Realism.

180
00:12:10,120 --> 00:12:13,580
So he did a very
beautiful drawing

181
00:12:13,580 --> 00:12:18,900
but in a stylized
cubistic style.

182
00:12:18,900 --> 00:12:21,550
And I told him you
won't pass the exam.

183
00:12:21,550 --> 00:12:25,040
And so he asked me why,
don't you like my drawing?

184
00:12:25,040 --> 00:12:31,150
I say I love your drawing, but
it is not good for propaganda.

185
00:12:31,150 --> 00:12:33,960
He didn't pass the
exam, which was--

186
00:12:33,960 --> 00:12:36,240
I passed the exam.

187
00:12:36,240 --> 00:12:48,890

And so I got a little two
rooms and I could get paint.

188
00:12:48,890 --> 00:12:52,280
You must realize that the
Russian artists didn't

189
00:12:52,280 --> 00:12:55,640
have to his [? exposal ?]
a free market

190
00:12:55,640 --> 00:12:58,580
where you can buy
canvases and paint.

191
00:12:58,580 --> 00:13:00,500
He had to be a
member of the union.

192
00:13:00,500 --> 00:13:02,890
And through the union
he would get paint,

193
00:13:02,890 --> 00:13:06,590
he would get
necessary materials,

194
00:13:06,590 --> 00:13:08,960
and he would get some support.

195
00:13:08,960 --> 00:13:11,510
So for the moment,
we were very happy.

196
00:13:11,510 --> 00:13:13,280
We got two rooms.

197
00:13:13,280 --> 00:13:17,720
And I got canvases and paint.

198
00:13:17,720 --> 00:13:22,010
Then came the saddest part.

199

00:13:22,010 --> 00:13:23,250

Let me interrupt you.

200

00:13:23,250 --> 00:13:24,680

I'm going to have to--

201

00:13:24,680 --> 00:13:28,880

we're going to only need
like 30-second or 20-second

202

00:13:28,880 --> 00:13:29,840

stories--

203

00:13:29,840 --> 00:13:34,500

very short stories --and
yet your emotional response.

204

00:13:34,500 --> 00:13:36,290

All right.

205

00:13:36,290 --> 00:13:38,110

And I have--

206

00:13:38,110 --> 00:13:41,890

I need short answers, OK?

207

00:13:41,890 --> 00:13:48,120

So when did you go back to
Vilna, you and your wife?

208

00:13:48,120 --> 00:13:51,340

Or how did you get-- you
had to cross Bug River.

209

00:13:51,340 --> 00:13:52,300

Was it frozen, or?

210

00:13:52,300 --> 00:13:58,350

I'll tell you, you'll
have to cut my answers

211

00:13:58,350 --> 00:14:03,663
because when you reach 80, 85
years, everything is very long.

212
00:14:03,663 --> 00:14:04,390
[LAUGHTER]

213
00:14:04,390 --> 00:14:08,440
When you are 30,
you can spit up.

214
00:14:08,440 --> 00:14:12,390
I traveled by using horses.

215
00:14:12,390 --> 00:14:14,880
I didn't travel by planes.

216
00:14:14,880 --> 00:14:17,310
So please forgive me.

217
00:14:17,310 --> 00:14:21,720
To make it short, I had
to leave Brest-Litovsk

218
00:14:21,720 --> 00:14:32,040
because at a certain point,
the Russian required from us

219
00:14:32,040 --> 00:14:36,660
to decide whether we
want to go back to Poland

220
00:14:36,660 --> 00:14:40,500
or whether we want
to stay in Russia.

221
00:14:40,500 --> 00:14:42,360
And if we want to
stay in Russia,

222
00:14:42,360 --> 00:14:46,110
we had to accept
Russian citizenship.

223
00:14:46,110 --> 00:14:48,720
That was one obstacle
because I didn't want

224
00:14:48,720 --> 00:14:50,350
to become a Russian citizen.

225
00:14:50,350 --> 00:14:56,880
The second obstacle was that
we had to paint one of [? 18 ?]

226
00:14:56,880 --> 00:14:58,800
subjects.

227
00:14:58,800 --> 00:15:04,620
The [? 18 ?] subjects had to
do with the life in Poland.

228
00:15:04,620 --> 00:15:08,700
And everything was very
negative, very negative

229
00:15:08,700 --> 00:15:11,970
in the subject.

230
00:15:11,970 --> 00:15:15,510
I couldn't paint anything
negative about Poland.

231
00:15:15,510 --> 00:15:20,700
Because Poland was defeated by
a very evil force, by Germany.

232
00:15:20,700 --> 00:15:24,300
And though I had
very many objections

233
00:15:24,300 --> 00:15:27,850
about the system in
Poland, it was better,

234

00:15:27,850 --> 00:15:30,480
it was more noble than Germany.

235
00:15:30,480 --> 00:15:35,820
So I said to one of the
artists, I cannot paint any one

236
00:15:35,820 --> 00:15:37,530
of the subjects.

237
00:15:37,530 --> 00:15:40,110
And so the artist asked me--

238
00:15:40,110 --> 00:15:44,580
I remember her name,
[PERSONAL NAME],, why don't?

239
00:15:44,580 --> 00:15:46,770
I said, I only paint flowers.

240
00:15:46,770 --> 00:15:48,060
I only paint still life.

241
00:15:48,060 --> 00:15:50,010
It was a lie.

242
00:15:50,010 --> 00:15:59,530
But anyway, they tried not to
make any negative conclusions

243
00:15:59,530 --> 00:16:01,630
from my resistance.

244
00:16:01,630 --> 00:16:04,600
And I painted some still
life and the background

245
00:16:04,600 --> 00:16:07,860
or some portraits anyway.

246
00:16:07,860 --> 00:16:12,250
They are chosen from the group

of artists three artists,

247

00:16:12,250 --> 00:16:15,520
and I was one of
them to go to Moscow.

248

00:16:15,520 --> 00:16:17,530
And then, so I had--

249

00:16:17,530 --> 00:16:21,010
I didn't know to go
to Moscow or not.

250

00:16:21,010 --> 00:16:23,780
I didn't know.

251

00:16:23,780 --> 00:16:26,130
I knew that I didn't
want to be a citizen.

252

00:16:26,130 --> 00:16:31,670
And all of a sudden, it
was 12 o'clock at night.

253

00:16:31,670 --> 00:16:34,430
Somebody knocked at my door.

254

00:16:34,430 --> 00:16:36,500
And it was the artist.

255

00:16:36,500 --> 00:16:37,880
She was a female artist.

256

00:16:37,880 --> 00:16:40,730
She was a very lovely person.

257

00:16:40,730 --> 00:16:44,780
And her husband was
[PERSONAL NAME]..

258

00:16:44,780 --> 00:16:47,170
Also a very lovely person.

259

00:16:47,170 --> 00:16:51,800

We never spoke about politics,
but we became friends.

260

00:16:51,800 --> 00:16:53,510

And she opened the door.

261

00:16:53,510 --> 00:16:58,220

And I remember it like it
would have happened yesterday.

262

00:16:58,220 --> 00:17:00,800

"Please disappear.

263

00:17:00,800 --> 00:17:01,460

Run.

264

00:17:01,460 --> 00:17:03,700

You are in danger."

265

00:17:03,700 --> 00:17:05,380

I said, [PERSONAL NAME], why?

266

00:17:05,380 --> 00:17:06,859

She said, don't ask me.

267

00:17:06,859 --> 00:17:09,240

You are in danger.

268

00:17:09,240 --> 00:17:12,560

Take your wife and
go to the train.

269

00:17:12,560 --> 00:17:16,400

And remember, if
you are arrested

270

00:17:16,400 --> 00:17:19,980

and you mention my
name, I'll denounce you.

271
00:17:19,980 --> 00:17:24,874
I'll tell that I always
expected that you are a spy.

272
00:17:24,874 --> 00:17:28,119

273
00:17:28,119 --> 00:17:29,530
Please run.

274
00:17:29,530 --> 00:17:34,660
So I understood that
somebody denounced me.

275
00:17:34,660 --> 00:17:36,160
For what?

276
00:17:36,160 --> 00:17:38,290
That I wasn't happy
with the Soviets.

277
00:17:38,290 --> 00:17:43,300
That I was in Warsaw a member
of the Socialist Party.

278
00:17:43,300 --> 00:17:45,940
That I didn't want
to take citizenship.

279
00:17:45,940 --> 00:17:48,400
I don't know why
they denounced me.

280
00:17:48,400 --> 00:17:52,000
It's very funny to think
that this little boy who

281
00:17:52,000 --> 00:17:55,840
was, at that time, 22 years
was a danger to Stalin.

282
00:17:55,840 --> 00:17:57,640

But that was the system.

283
00:17:57,640 --> 00:18:01,860
So we left everything
and went to the train.

284
00:18:01,860 --> 00:18:03,180
Did I answer the question?

285
00:18:03,180 --> 00:18:04,110
Too long.

286
00:18:04,110 --> 00:18:04,980
Yeah.

287
00:18:04,980 --> 00:18:05,897
But that's all right.

288
00:18:05,897 --> 00:18:06,480
That was good.

289
00:18:06,480 --> 00:18:09,370
It was a very good description.

290
00:18:09,370 --> 00:18:10,240
Yeah.

291
00:18:10,240 --> 00:18:11,530
Can you try and look at me?

292
00:18:11,530 --> 00:18:14,230
You seem to be looking
over your left.

293
00:18:14,230 --> 00:18:18,130
Because he got very interested.

294
00:18:18,130 --> 00:18:20,710
OK, I'll look at you.

295
00:18:20,710 --> 00:18:23,180

The conversation is with me.

296
00:18:23,180 --> 00:18:23,680
OK.

297
00:18:23,680 --> 00:18:24,710
I know.

298
00:18:24,710 --> 00:18:32,440
And so once you were
Vilna, how did you live?

299
00:18:32,440 --> 00:18:33,115
What did you do?

300
00:18:33,115 --> 00:18:37,625

301
00:18:37,625 --> 00:18:44,270
Vilna was already, at
that time, Lithuania.

302
00:18:44,270 --> 00:18:50,500
The Soviets took Vilna
and gave it to Lithuania,

303
00:18:50,500 --> 00:18:52,510
and then took it back.

304
00:18:52,510 --> 00:18:56,770
That is a historical event.

305
00:18:56,770 --> 00:19:04,100
Because we tried to get to
Vilna, but Vilna was Lithuania.

306
00:19:04,100 --> 00:19:06,190
So we crossed the border.

307
00:19:06,190 --> 00:19:08,680
And we were arrested
by the Soviets

308
00:19:08,680 --> 00:19:11,090
because it was illegal
to cross the border.

309
00:19:11,090 --> 00:19:12,700
And we were in jail.

310
00:19:12,700 --> 00:19:15,400
And in jail, everybody
who was arrested

311
00:19:15,400 --> 00:19:18,820
went to Siberia for seven years.

312
00:19:18,820 --> 00:19:21,310
Why didn't I go to jail?

313
00:19:21,310 --> 00:19:24,310
Because I told my wife--

314
00:19:24,310 --> 00:19:29,440
my first wife at that time
--that we should, in order

315
00:19:29,440 --> 00:19:32,140
not enrage the
Bolsheviks, we should

316
00:19:32,140 --> 00:19:37,590
say that we don't run from
them to the Lithuanians

317
00:19:37,590 --> 00:19:42,800
but that we came from
the Lithuanians to them.

318
00:19:42,800 --> 00:19:44,620
So we were fortunate.

319
00:19:44,620 --> 00:19:49,720
The judge, he was a captain,

said, oh, you like us.

320
00:19:49,720 --> 00:19:55,720
And instead of getting
seven years, we were free.

321
00:19:55,720 --> 00:19:59,710
Even more, he wanted to
know what my profession.

322
00:19:59,710 --> 00:20:02,570
And I said that I am a painter.

323
00:20:02,570 --> 00:20:05,480
So he asked me
whether I need money.

324
00:20:05,480 --> 00:20:06,850
So I said no.

325
00:20:06,850 --> 00:20:10,390
So he said I know that painters
are very bashful people.

326
00:20:10,390 --> 00:20:12,800
And they let us go.

327
00:20:12,800 --> 00:20:16,460
So we went to
another little town.

328
00:20:16,460 --> 00:20:20,495
And then we made a second
attempt to cross the border.

329
00:20:20,495 --> 00:20:23,260
And we came to Vilna.

330
00:20:23,260 --> 00:20:28,320
So you can see life
is full of miracles.

331

00:20:28,320 --> 00:20:32,170

But in the war,
miracles are reality.

332

00:20:32,170 --> 00:20:35,710

A reality is, in
itself, a miracle too.

333

00:20:35,710 --> 00:20:39,170

I came to Vilna.

334

00:20:39,170 --> 00:20:43,460

And a few days
later, the Bolsheviks

335

00:20:43,460 --> 00:20:46,400

took Vilna again
from the Lithuanians.

336

00:20:46,400 --> 00:20:49,520

But in the meantime,
I found out that there

337

00:20:49,520 --> 00:20:56,630

was a Japanese honorary consul
who gave to the refugees

338

00:20:56,630 --> 00:21:04,210

many visas to Curacao, who
was a Danish free colony

339

00:21:04,210 --> 00:21:08,270

and everybody could
go to Curacao.

340

00:21:08,270 --> 00:21:13,220

But it was important that
in order to get to Curacao,

341

00:21:13,220 --> 00:21:16,820

they had to cross
Japanese territory.

342

00:21:16,820 --> 00:21:20,030
So he was kind enough
to give a permit

343
00:21:20,030 --> 00:21:23,360
to cross Japanese territory.

344
00:21:23,360 --> 00:21:27,480
And if you had a permit to
cross Japanese territory,

345
00:21:27,480 --> 00:21:32,780
you could apply to the NKVD
for a permit to cross Siberia,

346
00:21:32,780 --> 00:21:34,370
to cross Russia.

347
00:21:34,370 --> 00:21:36,450
Do you get the complications?

348
00:21:36,450 --> 00:21:36,950
Yes.

349
00:21:36,950 --> 00:21:38,390
I didn't create them.

350
00:21:38,390 --> 00:21:40,040
History created them.

351
00:21:40,040 --> 00:21:43,550
And I am not
responsible for history.

352
00:21:43,550 --> 00:21:47,570
So I tried to get a visa.

353
00:21:47,570 --> 00:21:50,240
But the consul didn't--

354
00:21:50,240 --> 00:21:54,600
the consulate, the honorary

consulate was closed

355

00:21:54,600 --> 00:21:56,660
and I couldn't get a visa.

356

00:21:56,660 --> 00:22:02,260
But I found out from my friends
from the socialist movement

357

00:22:02,260 --> 00:22:08,920
from the Bund that many had two
and three visas so they could

358

00:22:08,920 --> 00:22:13,160
share them with other people.

359

00:22:13,160 --> 00:22:14,500
So I got a visa.

360

00:22:14,500 --> 00:22:18,370
But the visa didn't
have my name,

361

00:22:18,370 --> 00:22:20,770
didn't have my photograph.

362

00:22:20,770 --> 00:22:27,130
So since I'm an artist, I
put in another photograph.

363

00:22:27,130 --> 00:22:29,230
I forged the stamp.

364

00:22:29,230 --> 00:22:34,360
And my father was a physicist,
so I created a chemical mixture

365

00:22:34,360 --> 00:22:36,550
and we took out the
old name and put

366

00:22:36,550 --> 00:22:40,960

in my name and the
name of my first wife.

367
00:22:40,960 --> 00:22:50,280
And that allowed us to go
through Russia to Japan.

368
00:22:50,280 --> 00:22:56,650
Now, in order to get a Russian
visa, we had to go to the NKVD.

369
00:22:56,650 --> 00:22:58,150
Shall I continue?

370
00:22:58,150 --> 00:22:59,140
Sure.

371
00:22:59,140 --> 00:23:01,610
But try and talk to me again.

372
00:23:01,610 --> 00:23:03,630
OK, OK.

373
00:23:03,630 --> 00:23:06,490
I went to the NKVD.

374
00:23:06,490 --> 00:23:10,900
Everything in my
passport was faked.

375
00:23:10,900 --> 00:23:14,920
Only my photograph
and my name was real.

376
00:23:14,920 --> 00:23:20,650
I put in another city because
nobody could leave Vilna.

377
00:23:20,650 --> 00:23:23,920
Because the Russians said,
well, you're in Vilna.

378

00:23:23,920 --> 00:23:26,240
It's already a liberated city.

379
00:23:26,240 --> 00:23:28,870
Why do you want to run away?

380
00:23:28,870 --> 00:23:33,430
So we could only get
a visa as refugees.

381
00:23:33,430 --> 00:23:37,210
So in my passport
was written that I'm

382
00:23:37,210 --> 00:23:41,060
from some little town in Poland.

383
00:23:41,060 --> 00:23:48,470
I walked in to the NKVD and to
my dismay, the man at the table

384
00:23:48,470 --> 00:23:54,980
was a student whom
I knew from Vilna.

385
00:23:54,980 --> 00:23:57,080
He was probably a communist.

386
00:23:57,080 --> 00:24:02,015
So he got the job of checking
who is going to get a visa

387
00:24:02,015 --> 00:24:05,420
and who is not
going to get a visa.

388
00:24:05,420 --> 00:24:10,010
He graduated from the
same gymnasium as I,

389
00:24:10,010 --> 00:24:12,440
and he knew me quite well.

390

00:24:12,440 --> 00:24:17,770

So I said, that's my
end or the end of me.

391

00:24:17,770 --> 00:24:21,430

This I cannot foreshorten,
because people survive

392

00:24:21,430 --> 00:24:26,200

because of politics and
cruelty in concentration camp.

393

00:24:26,200 --> 00:24:30,400

Some human pulse is always
ticking and ticking.

394

00:24:30,400 --> 00:24:34,010

And because of that, the
world didn't come to an end.

395

00:24:34,010 --> 00:24:35,320

He looked at me.

396

00:24:35,320 --> 00:24:38,100

He recognized me.

397

00:24:38,100 --> 00:24:39,530

And he said, oh--

398

00:24:39,530 --> 00:24:42,080

and he mentioned
this little town.

399

00:24:42,080 --> 00:24:42,950

And said, OK.

400

00:24:42,950 --> 00:24:44,960

You don't want to
live in Russia.

401

00:24:44,960 --> 00:24:46,130

Go ahead.

402
00:24:46,130 --> 00:24:48,290
Go ahead to the
capital this country.

403
00:24:48,290 --> 00:24:50,840
But he gave me the stamp.

404
00:24:50,840 --> 00:24:53,760
And I will never
forget his name.

405
00:24:53,760 --> 00:25:00,220
I tried later to find out.

406
00:25:00,220 --> 00:25:02,530
His name is [PERSONAL NAME].

407
00:25:02,530 --> 00:25:05,610
And because of him, I'm alive.

408
00:25:05,610 --> 00:25:06,860
He gave me the stamp.

409
00:25:06,860 --> 00:25:12,120
And he knew that he's committing
a crime against his system

410
00:25:12,120 --> 00:25:14,100
and against his beliefs.

411
00:25:14,100 --> 00:25:17,930
But the human
element was stronger.

412
00:25:17,930 --> 00:25:28,840
And then, I got the visa
for my wife, myself.

413
00:25:28,840 --> 00:25:33,820
And some other people for
whom I falsified the documents

414
00:25:33,820 --> 00:25:36,500
got visas too.

415
00:25:36,500 --> 00:25:43,400
And then we cross Siberia
on false documents.

416
00:25:43,400 --> 00:25:48,350
And we came and
then to Vladivostok.

417
00:25:48,350 --> 00:25:54,800
And from Vladivostok, we crossed
with a Japanese freighter,

418
00:25:54,800 --> 00:25:56,330
[PERSONAL NAME].

419
00:25:56,330 --> 00:26:00,430
We came to Japan to
the city of Kobe.

420
00:26:00,430 --> 00:26:02,890
Had you ever been
to Japan before?

421
00:26:02,890 --> 00:26:07,640
Or what did you expect and
what did you find when you got?

422
00:26:07,640 --> 00:26:09,670
One word I would add.

423
00:26:09,670 --> 00:26:13,480
From the train, which crossed--

424
00:26:13,480 --> 00:26:17,890
the train, it took about
three days and three nights.

425
00:26:17,890 --> 00:26:21,500

Many people, many
refugees disappeared.

426
00:26:21,500 --> 00:26:26,030
So probably the NKVD still
checked who is dangerous

427
00:26:26,030 --> 00:26:27,780
and had to go to Siberia.

428
00:26:27,780 --> 00:26:29,780
And who is no
danger there and had

429
00:26:29,780 --> 00:26:32,210
to go to the
capitalistic countries

430
00:26:32,210 --> 00:26:34,430
because they're
worthless anyway.

431
00:26:34,430 --> 00:26:38,510
Luckily enough, I was one
of the worthless people.

432
00:26:38,510 --> 00:26:41,705
And I reached the
shores of Japan.

433
00:26:41,705 --> 00:26:44,250

434
00:26:44,250 --> 00:26:46,950
And what did you expect
Japan to be like?

435
00:26:46,950 --> 00:26:49,080
And what did you find
when you got there?

436
00:26:49,080 --> 00:26:50,070
And how did you live?

437
00:26:50,070 --> 00:26:53,240
And what did you do?

438
00:26:53,240 --> 00:26:56,210
I didn't know what to expect.

439
00:26:56,210 --> 00:26:58,260
It was so clean.

440
00:26:58,260 --> 00:27:01,650
It was like a painting
of Vincent van Gogh--

441
00:27:01,650 --> 00:27:03,735
little houses, beautiful skies.

442
00:27:03,735 --> 00:27:06,920

443
00:27:06,920 --> 00:27:11,500
Two groups of people
met us at the train.

444
00:27:11,500 --> 00:27:15,990
Russian Jewish refugees
from the First World War

445
00:27:15,990 --> 00:27:20,100
settled in Japan, escaped
from the Russian revolution,

446
00:27:20,100 --> 00:27:22,650
and became quite prosperous.

447
00:27:22,650 --> 00:27:26,280
And a group of Japanese
which decided they're

448
00:27:26,280 --> 00:27:28,470
our blood brothers.

449

00:27:28,470 --> 00:27:32,670

Because according to the
Jewish history, 10 tribes--

450

00:27:32,670 --> 00:27:36,060

in Israel, there were 12 tribes.

451

00:27:36,060 --> 00:27:38,730

10 disappeared.

452

00:27:38,730 --> 00:27:40,360

We don't know what
happened to them.

453

00:27:40,360 --> 00:27:41,740

They got assimilated.

454

00:27:41,740 --> 00:27:49,250

And two of the
[INAUDIBLE] survived.

455

00:27:49,250 --> 00:27:51,910

So they decided they are--

456

00:27:51,910 --> 00:27:53,320

there are many legends.

457

00:27:53,320 --> 00:27:57,940

Members of the
disappearing 10 tribes.

458

00:27:57,940 --> 00:28:01,060

And we were very happily
received by them,

459

00:28:01,060 --> 00:28:04,180

and received by
the Russian Jews.

460

00:28:04,180 --> 00:28:10,030

And we got some
support from the Joint

461
00:28:10,030 --> 00:28:13,960
and from the colony of Jews.

462
00:28:13,960 --> 00:28:19,930
And Japan was so
beautiful for the eye--

463
00:28:19,930 --> 00:28:23,480
mountains, clean skies.

464
00:28:23,480 --> 00:28:27,860
But of course, our heart was
with our relatives behind us.

465
00:28:27,860 --> 00:28:31,020
And the news were terrifying.

466
00:28:31,020 --> 00:28:39,210
And as a painter, how could
I survive emotionally?

467
00:28:39,210 --> 00:28:41,710
That was more important
than even physically.

468
00:28:41,710 --> 00:28:48,450
So I got some money and went to
a store to buy paint and paper.

469
00:28:48,450 --> 00:28:54,360
And the storekeeper didn't
understand a word of Russian,

470
00:28:54,360 --> 00:28:57,300
of German, a few
words of English.

471
00:28:57,300 --> 00:29:02,190
So some young man came over to
me and he showed me a brush.

472

00:29:02,190 --> 00:29:03,900
And then he gave me a brush.

473
00:29:03,900 --> 00:29:05,280
He was Japanese.

474
00:29:05,280 --> 00:29:08,735
And he showed me the two
brushes kiss each other

475
00:29:08,735 --> 00:29:11,610
to understand that
he is a painter too.

476
00:29:11,610 --> 00:29:14,010
And he helped me
to find the paint.

477
00:29:14,010 --> 00:29:21,570
But in Japan, we waited for
a possibility to go to Canada

478
00:29:21,570 --> 00:29:26,310
and to join the Canadian
or the formation

479
00:29:26,310 --> 00:29:32,610
of the Polish army in Canada
in order to fight the Nazis.

480
00:29:32,610 --> 00:29:35,430
But there was no contact.

481
00:29:35,430 --> 00:29:38,760
There was no communication
with the other world.

482
00:29:38,760 --> 00:29:43,020
It was very clear that
Japan is preparing for war.

483
00:29:43,020 --> 00:29:45,780
We saw Hitler's pictures.

484
00:29:45,780 --> 00:29:49,260
We saw German slogans.

485
00:29:49,260 --> 00:29:52,350
And we had a strange
mixture that the country

486
00:29:52,350 --> 00:29:55,140
was preparing for war.

487
00:29:55,140 --> 00:29:57,540
The old people were very nice.

488
00:29:57,540 --> 00:30:01,500
The young people were marching
and screaming and yelling.

489
00:30:01,500 --> 00:30:07,470
And after spending six months
in Japan, all of a sudden

490
00:30:07,470 --> 00:30:14,400
we were all taken by force to
the ships and sent to Shanghai.

491
00:30:14,400 --> 00:30:18,360
We came to Shanghai and
two days later, the attack

492
00:30:18,360 --> 00:30:20,920
on Pearl Harbor took place.

493
00:30:20,920 --> 00:30:23,630
How did you [INAUDIBLE]?

494
00:30:23,630 --> 00:31:13,387