

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,493  
[TEST TONE]

2  
00:00:03,493 --> 00:00:40,918

3  
00:00:40,918 --> 00:00:43,940  
OK, so tell me about  
life in Japan again.

4  
00:00:43,940 --> 00:00:46,400  
How was your life in Japan?

5  
00:00:46,400 --> 00:00:47,585  
When we came to Japan--

6  
00:00:47,585 --> 00:00:48,678  
Oh, I'm sorry.

7  
00:00:48,678 --> 00:00:50,470  
Camera just went into  
my little booth here.

8  
00:00:50,470 --> 00:00:52,340  
Oh, yeah, sorry.

9  
00:00:52,340 --> 00:00:53,080  
Sorry.

10  
00:00:53,080 --> 00:00:54,680  
Here we go.

11  
00:00:54,680 --> 00:00:56,930  
Just like, yeah, I'll have  
to take an inch there more.

12  
00:00:56,930 --> 00:01:00,820

13  
00:01:00,820 --> 00:01:01,420

Is that it?

14  
00:01:01,420 --> 00:01:01,930  
That's fine.

15  
00:01:01,930 --> 00:01:09,830

16  
00:01:09,830 --> 00:01:13,220  
So tell me what was life  
like as a refugee in Japan?

17  
00:01:13,220 --> 00:01:15,830  
Where you were a tourist?

18  
00:01:15,830 --> 00:01:17,075  
How did you occupy your days?

19  
00:01:17,075 --> 00:01:21,750

20  
00:01:21,750 --> 00:01:25,680  
When I came to Japan, Japan  
looked like paradise itself.

21  
00:01:25,680 --> 00:01:30,090  
It was green, there  
wasn't a inch of land

22  
00:01:30,090 --> 00:01:32,760  
that wasn't utilized.

23  
00:01:32,760 --> 00:01:38,610  
And the people were the most  
polite, wonderful people for us

24  
00:01:38,610 --> 00:01:44,260  
as refugees, or as they  
called us, tourists.

25  
00:01:44,260 --> 00:01:48,230  
The reason that they

were so nice to us,

26

00:01:48,230 --> 00:01:54,880

we found out being there, was  
that when the Japanese occupied

27

00:01:54,880 --> 00:01:58,330

Manchuria in 1937.

28

00:01:58,330 --> 00:02:03,150

The United Nations at  
that time was the--

29

00:02:03,150 --> 00:02:04,150

OK, we're not going to--

30

00:02:04,150 --> 00:02:05,548

No?

31

00:02:05,548 --> 00:02:06,340

You don't want to--

32

00:02:06,340 --> 00:02:07,340

We can't use that story.

33

00:02:07,340 --> 00:02:08,350

No, OK.

34

00:02:08,350 --> 00:02:10,930

Because I want to  
tell you why they

35

00:02:10,930 --> 00:02:13,360

were so nice to the  
Polish refugees.

36

00:02:13,360 --> 00:02:14,080

Yeah, no.

37

00:02:14,080 --> 00:02:16,200

No, OK.

38

00:02:16,200 --> 00:02:21,280

Just tell me-- can you hear  
in the background, Mark?

39

00:02:21,280 --> 00:02:22,060

No, why?

40

00:02:22,060 --> 00:02:22,560

OK.

41

00:02:22,560 --> 00:02:29,510

42

00:02:29,510 --> 00:02:32,240

Just tell me your  
impressions of Japan,

43

00:02:32,240 --> 00:02:35,180

what your daily life  
was like, what--

44

00:02:35,180 --> 00:02:37,910

you know, did you play cards?

45

00:02:37,910 --> 00:02:41,090

Did you go visit Temples

46

00:02:41,090 --> 00:02:43,700

OK.

47

00:02:43,700 --> 00:02:47,330

When I came to Japan, the  
first day we looked around,

48

00:02:47,330 --> 00:02:49,370

of course, and we  
went right away

49

00:02:49,370 --> 00:02:52,400

to register in the  
Jewish Committee, which

50

00:02:52,400 --> 00:02:54,350  
was in the center of the city.

51

00:02:54,350 --> 00:02:56,900  
From there, we went  
to explore the city

52

00:02:56,900 --> 00:03:02,450  
and see some markets full  
of fruits, and vegetables,

53

00:03:02,450 --> 00:03:05,120  
and very little meat.

54

00:03:05,120 --> 00:03:07,910  
But some fish.

55

00:03:07,910 --> 00:03:09,800  
And we looked at the  
Japanese, and they

56

00:03:09,800 --> 00:03:13,790  
were all the cleanest  
people we ever saw.

57

00:03:13,790 --> 00:03:18,260  
And everybody was so polite  
to us that it's unbelievable.

58

00:03:18,260 --> 00:03:21,620  
If we went someplace  
and lost our way,

59

00:03:21,620 --> 00:03:26,390  
anybody that could  
help us, helped us.

60

00:03:26,390 --> 00:03:30,830  
If they couldn't  
speak any English--

61

00:03:30,830 --> 00:03:33,950

which we didn't ourself,  
we knew a little.

62  
00:03:33,950 --> 00:03:36,680  
But somehow, they  
knew a few words.

63  
00:03:36,680 --> 00:03:39,560  
So they took us to  
a police station,

64  
00:03:39,560 --> 00:03:42,530  
where they always got somebody  
that could understand us.

65  
00:03:42,530 --> 00:03:48,530  
Either Russians spoke with  
the Russian, or the German,

66  
00:03:48,530 --> 00:03:50,090  
or any other language.

67  
00:03:50,090 --> 00:03:52,760  
And some of them,  
the richer people,

68  
00:03:52,760 --> 00:03:56,420  
used to put us in a  
taxi and take us home.

69  
00:03:56,420 --> 00:04:01,630  
I mean, it's unbelievable  
how nice they were to us.

70  
00:04:01,630 --> 00:04:04,900  
And our day started, of  
course, after breakfast.

71  
00:04:04,900 --> 00:04:07,450  
We went to explore places.

72  
00:04:07,450 --> 00:04:10,570  
There was beautiful

places in the mountains.

73

00:04:10,570 --> 00:04:12,640

There was ballet.

74

00:04:12,640 --> 00:04:18,490

There was a seashore, which  
was white and beautiful.

75

00:04:18,490 --> 00:04:23,020

We used to go bathing  
for a few hours a day.

76

00:04:23,020 --> 00:04:24,520

And then we used  
to, in the evening,

77

00:04:24,520 --> 00:04:26,590

we used to come to the  
Jewish Committee, where

78

00:04:26,590 --> 00:04:28,540

all the refugees used  
to come together.

79

00:04:28,540 --> 00:04:31,870

And we used to see  
the bulletin boards

80

00:04:31,870 --> 00:04:35,590

and hear all the news,  
where can you go,

81

00:04:35,590 --> 00:04:39,400

what country would let  
you in, and this and that.

82

00:04:39,400 --> 00:04:45,220

And while we lived in  
the hotels, or the homes

83

00:04:45,220 --> 00:04:49,300

what they called, we had

a wonderful people there.

84

00:04:49,300 --> 00:04:52,660

And we had a good  
time among ourselves.

85

00:04:52,660 --> 00:04:56,260

This one went to the  
theater or to a dance,

86

00:04:56,260 --> 00:04:58,150

and this one went  
here and there.

87

00:04:58,150 --> 00:05:05,290

And we spent our days  
really in a wonderful way.

88

00:05:05,290 --> 00:05:08,390

Because of course, we  
came from a little town

89

00:05:08,390 --> 00:05:10,960

and a lot of things  
was new to us.

90

00:05:10,960 --> 00:05:12,660

And the country  
was so beautiful.

91

00:05:12,660 --> 00:05:14,980

And the people were so polite.

92

00:05:14,980 --> 00:05:19,270

But main occupation  
was to look for places

93

00:05:19,270 --> 00:05:22,180

how do we get a visa  
someplace to leave Japan

94

00:05:22,180 --> 00:05:24,880

and not to go to Shanghai.



95

00:05:24,880 --> 00:05:29,440

So our time in Japan was really most of the time beautiful.

96

00:05:29,440 --> 00:05:32,080

We really enjoyed being in Japan.

97

00:05:32,080 --> 00:05:34,030

How did you end up going to Shanghai?

98

00:05:34,030 --> 00:05:36,190

What-- Wait a second, sorry.

99

00:05:36,190 --> 00:05:37,030

Yeah.

100

00:05:37,030 --> 00:05:42,340

But you know, did they force you to go to Shanghai?

101

00:05:42,340 --> 00:05:43,300

Yes.

102

00:05:43,300 --> 00:05:44,530

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

103

00:05:44,530 --> 00:05:47,870

That's what I want to know.

104

00:05:47,870 --> 00:05:50,440

And go ahead.

105

00:05:50,440 --> 00:05:55,960

After our two weeks of transit went by,

106

00:05:55,960 --> 00:05:59,260

they prolonged it for two months, of course

107  
00:05:59,260 --> 00:06:01,480  
with the help of the  
Jewish Committee.

108  
00:06:01,480 --> 00:06:05,860  
And after the two months, again  
for two months and two months.

109  
00:06:05,860 --> 00:06:08,050  
From March till December.

110  
00:06:08,050 --> 00:06:12,100  
When it came end of  
November, we got the notice

111  
00:06:12,100 --> 00:06:14,470  
that you have to leave Japan.

112  
00:06:14,470 --> 00:06:17,620  
Wherever you want  
to go, you can go.

113  
00:06:17,620 --> 00:06:23,080  
But of course, there was no  
country that we could go to.

114  
00:06:23,080 --> 00:06:27,100  
So the only place  
left was Shanghai.

115  
00:06:27,100 --> 00:06:32,260  
And in Shanghai, we had very  
sad stories about Shanghai.

116  
00:06:32,260 --> 00:06:34,000  
And they were  
reluctant to go there.

117  
00:06:34,000 --> 00:06:37,870  
But when there was no way,  
you had to go to Shanghai,

118

00:06:37,870 --> 00:06:39,130  
you went.

119

00:06:39,130 --> 00:06:41,380  
So this way, we  
went to Shanghai.

120

00:06:41,380 --> 00:06:44,560  
And when I came  
to Shanghai, I saw

121

00:06:44,560 --> 00:06:49,630  
that all the stories that they  
told us, although in some way

122

00:06:49,630 --> 00:06:52,390  
it's true, but in  
other ways, people

123

00:06:52,390 --> 00:06:54,580  
lived there like  
kings, some of them.

124

00:06:54,580 --> 00:06:58,195  
There was a nice  
Jewish community.

125

00:06:58,195 --> 00:07:02,950  
There where Russian troops that  
ran away from the World War I,

126

00:07:02,950 --> 00:07:05,290  
from the revolution in Russia.

127

00:07:05,290 --> 00:07:09,520  
And they were  
established with clubs,

128

00:07:09,520 --> 00:07:12,940  
with the old the luxurious  
you could think of.

129

00:07:12,940 --> 00:07:17,050  
Shanghai was a city at that  
time of about 5 million people.

130  
00:07:17,050 --> 00:07:19,450  
And Shanghai was  
called the Pearl

131  
00:07:19,450 --> 00:07:22,260  
or the Paris of the Orient.

132  
00:07:22,260 --> 00:07:25,750  
All the luxuries in the world  
you could find in Shanghai.

133  
00:07:25,750 --> 00:07:32,140  
Best restaurants, there was  
clubs, all kinds, and night

134  
00:07:32,140 --> 00:07:35,170  
clubs, and organizations.

135  
00:07:35,170 --> 00:07:38,410  
So you could live a beautiful  
life there, and we did.

136  
00:07:38,410 --> 00:07:40,300  
The only thing, we  
had to look for ways

137  
00:07:40,300 --> 00:07:42,170  
to make a living there.

138  
00:07:42,170 --> 00:07:45,460  
And we found how  
to make a living.

139  
00:07:45,460 --> 00:07:49,030  
After eight days being in  
Shanghai, Pearl Harbor,

140  
00:07:49,030 --> 00:07:52,570  
the war broke out,

American-Japanese War.

141  
00:07:52,570 --> 00:07:55,750  
After three days, the Japanese  
kept us-- for three days,

142  
00:07:55,750 --> 00:07:57,850  
they kept us in the houses.

143  
00:07:57,850 --> 00:07:59,170  
You couldn't go out.

144  
00:07:59,170 --> 00:08:04,030  
After three days, we were free  
to go any place we wanted.

145  
00:08:04,030 --> 00:08:08,590  
So right away, I  
pooled my resources

146  
00:08:08,590 --> 00:08:15,190  
with another two friends of mine  
and we went out where to buy--

147  
00:08:15,190 --> 00:08:19,090  
money in time of  
war is, you can not

148  
00:08:19,090 --> 00:08:21,880  
do much with it except when  
you have merchandise so you

149  
00:08:21,880 --> 00:08:23,680  
can buy for it something.

150  
00:08:23,680 --> 00:08:30,190  
So we went out and bought six  
sacks of rice, 200 pounds each.

151  
00:08:30,190 --> 00:08:31,810  
1,200 pounds.

152

00:08:31,810 --> 00:08:35,020  
And we figured,  
people have to eat

153  
00:08:35,020 --> 00:08:38,299  
and the imports  
won't be anymore.

154  
00:08:38,299 --> 00:08:45,610  
So Japan had so much foreign  
merchandise in its warehouses

155  
00:08:45,610 --> 00:08:48,460  
that we are bursting  
of it because Shanghai

156  
00:08:48,460 --> 00:08:52,000  
was its distribution  
place for all China.

157  
00:08:52,000 --> 00:08:53,950  
So I went to--

158  
00:08:53,950 --> 00:08:59,980  
in Shanghai was with us also  
a yeshiva, the Mirrer Yeshiva,

159  
00:08:59,980 --> 00:09:03,410  
which they brought them over  
from Poland, through Japan,

160  
00:09:03,410 --> 00:09:05,180  
to Shanghai.

161  
00:09:05,180 --> 00:09:09,800  
And we went to the head  
rabbi and we told him

162  
00:09:09,800 --> 00:09:13,280  
that we have six sacks of rice.

163  
00:09:13,280 --> 00:09:16,160  
You have to feed 300 people.

164  
00:09:16,160 --> 00:09:18,480  
They had 300 students.

165  
00:09:18,480 --> 00:09:20,360  
So we says, we will sell you.

166  
00:09:20,360 --> 00:09:22,160  
We want a small profit.

167  
00:09:22,160 --> 00:09:23,370  
I paid so much.

168  
00:09:23,370 --> 00:09:28,070  
And so he got a nice, small  
profit, which really wasn't

169  
00:09:28,070 --> 00:09:29,630  
much, a small percentage.

170  
00:09:29,630 --> 00:09:33,470  
But for us, it was enough  
to live a month on it.

171  
00:09:33,470 --> 00:09:37,310  
And from this, we started to  
buy all kinds of foreign goods

172  
00:09:37,310 --> 00:09:41,810  
and resell it to the population,  
to the Jewish population there.

173  
00:09:41,810 --> 00:09:44,780  
And also, we started  
to get connections

174  
00:09:44,780 --> 00:09:48,590  
with Chinese  
merchants, which they

175  
00:09:48,590 --> 00:09:53,300  
were the most skillful,

most excellent merchants

176  
00:09:53,300 --> 00:09:54,380  
in the world.

177  
00:09:54,380 --> 00:09:56,630  
We thought that the  
Jews are good merchants,

178  
00:09:56,630 --> 00:10:00,140  
but they could sell us  
and buy us twice a day.

179  
00:10:00,140 --> 00:10:02,330  
And we started to ask  
them, what kind of goods

180  
00:10:02,330 --> 00:10:04,160  
are you looking for?

181  
00:10:04,160 --> 00:10:06,920  
Or what kind of goods  
you want to get rid of?

182  
00:10:06,920 --> 00:10:10,820  
And we're starting to  
go and try to sell it.

183  
00:10:10,820 --> 00:10:13,890  
And we succeeded and we  
made a nice living there.

184  
00:10:13,890 --> 00:10:15,350  
And we didn't make money.

185  
00:10:15,350 --> 00:10:18,380  
But if you made a  
transaction once a week,

186  
00:10:18,380 --> 00:10:20,750  
you had enough for  
the week to live.



187

00:10:20,750 --> 00:10:24,050

But so we did it, and  
this way you existed.

188

00:10:24,050 --> 00:10:26,790

And life was beautiful  
in Shanghai for us.

189

00:10:26,790 --> 00:10:29,120

But the only thing  
that the Japanese,

190

00:10:29,120 --> 00:10:34,730

after about six months or  
eight months, they want

191

00:10:34,730 --> 00:10:37,520

put us in a ghetto.

192

00:10:37,520 --> 00:10:43,250

The ghetto was actually like a  
part of New York, like Hong--

193

00:10:43,250 --> 00:10:45,920

like the Bronx or Brooklyn.

194

00:10:45,920 --> 00:10:49,340

You could live  
only in the Bronx.

195

00:10:49,340 --> 00:10:52,430

Where they put us in  
is Hongkew, Hongkew

196

00:10:52,430 --> 00:10:54,440

was a suburb of Shanghai.

197

00:10:54,440 --> 00:10:57,290

But in that suburb  
were two million people

198

00:10:57,290 --> 00:10:58,610

or one and a half million.

199  
00:10:58,610 --> 00:11:05,630  
Chinese mostly, some  
Russians, and some Jews.

200  
00:11:05,630 --> 00:11:08,060  
And we had to find  
quarters there.

201  
00:11:08,060 --> 00:11:12,200  
And we lived there.

202  
00:11:12,200 --> 00:11:16,370  
We could live anyplace we  
wanted in Hongkew, but not

203  
00:11:16,370 --> 00:11:19,830  
in the main part of Shanghai.

204  
00:11:19,830 --> 00:11:24,350  
The main part was the French  
concession, the English,

205  
00:11:24,350 --> 00:11:25,650  
the Japanese--

206  
00:11:25,650 --> 00:11:27,260  
Japanese was in  
Hongkew, actually.

207  
00:11:27,260 --> 00:11:30,920  
French and English mostly.

208  
00:11:30,920 --> 00:11:37,340  
But you have to live  
only in this part of--

209  
00:11:37,340 --> 00:11:42,140  
and they put up  
barriers in each street

210

00:11:42,140 --> 00:11:45,260  
that you came out from Hongkew.

211  
00:11:45,260 --> 00:11:50,270  
Like to go to the  
main part of Shanghai.

212  
00:11:50,270 --> 00:11:56,290  
And then they put there some  
policemen, civil policemen.

213  
00:11:56,290 --> 00:11:58,340  
They selected from  
the Jewish people.

214  
00:11:58,340 --> 00:12:04,010  
The Jewish Committee had  
to appoint policemen,

215  
00:12:04,010 --> 00:12:05,750  
who they paid a small fee.

216  
00:12:05,750 --> 00:12:14,960  
And in order to get out  
to go out of Hongkew,

217  
00:12:14,960 --> 00:12:17,450  
you had to get a passport.

218  
00:12:17,450 --> 00:12:21,320  
A pass which is good for,  
let's say, from 8 o'clock

219  
00:12:21,320 --> 00:12:24,350  
in the morning till  
7:00 in the evening.

220  
00:12:24,350 --> 00:12:26,330  
In order to get  
this pass, you had

221  
00:12:26,330 --> 00:12:29,300  
to go to the Japanese police.

222  
00:12:29,300 --> 00:12:32,870  
And there was the  
head of the police,

223  
00:12:32,870 --> 00:12:36,410  
of the Jewish section  
in the police,

224  
00:12:36,410 --> 00:12:40,190  
was a fellow by  
the name of Goya.

225  
00:12:40,190 --> 00:12:43,040  
Goya wasn't a giant, he  
was, as a matter of fact,

226  
00:12:43,040 --> 00:12:44,570  
under five feet.

227  
00:12:44,570 --> 00:12:46,940  
And he was a  
scroungey little guy.

228  
00:12:46,940 --> 00:12:51,320  
He didn't look more  
like a 12-year-old boy.

229  
00:12:51,320 --> 00:12:53,540  
But he was a tyrant.

230  
00:12:53,540 --> 00:12:57,230  
When you came to him  
for a visa to get--

231  
00:12:57,230 --> 00:13:01,100  
for a passport to  
get out of Hongkew,

232  
00:13:01,100 --> 00:13:03,590  
you had to show that  
you have employment

233

00:13:03,590 --> 00:13:07,830  
outside of the ghetto.

234

00:13:07,830 --> 00:13:10,130  
And this was for  
us a small problem.

235

00:13:10,130 --> 00:13:14,090  
We had friends and  
came to them, give me

236

00:13:14,090 --> 00:13:17,180  
a letter that you  
are employing me.

237

00:13:17,180 --> 00:13:19,580  
And then they gave us willingly.

238

00:13:19,580 --> 00:13:20,600  
We came with this.

239

00:13:20,600 --> 00:13:25,160  
And with this, we got a  
permit for five day, six days

240

00:13:25,160 --> 00:13:29,960  
a week you could get  
out, except Sundays.

241

00:13:29,960 --> 00:13:35,540  
And from, let's say, from  
8:00 to 7:00 in the evening.

242

00:13:35,540 --> 00:13:41,360  
But he was a tyrant  
and a stupid guy also.

243

00:13:41,360 --> 00:13:45,140  
And some people who  
didn't know how smoothly

244

00:13:45,140 --> 00:13:49,250

to answer his questions,  
he used to hit them.

245  
00:13:49,250 --> 00:13:50,840  
That he couldn't  
reach them where do

246  
00:13:50,840 --> 00:13:53,070  
we hit a person in the face.

247  
00:13:53,070 --> 00:13:56,720  
So he used to stand up on  
a chair and hit people.

248  
00:13:56,720 --> 00:14:02,400  
And who got most of the beatings  
were the German refugees.

249  
00:14:02,400 --> 00:14:07,190  
Because in Shanghai was  
20,000 German Jewish refugees

250  
00:14:07,190 --> 00:14:09,500  
and 1,000 Polish refugees.

251  
00:14:09,500 --> 00:14:13,280  
But the Germans were guys  
that were professionals,

252  
00:14:13,280 --> 00:14:18,110  
like lawyers, doctors,  
professors, chemists.

253  
00:14:18,110 --> 00:14:22,890  
All these guys didn't know  
how to go around them.

254  
00:14:22,890 --> 00:14:25,580  
So when they asked him a  
question, they told the truth.

255  
00:14:25,580 --> 00:14:27,590  
And the truth wasn't good.

256  
00:14:27,590 --> 00:14:30,170  
So he used to climb  
up on a chair.

257  
00:14:30,170 --> 00:14:32,930  
It could be a  
professor, a doctor,

258  
00:14:32,930 --> 00:14:35,430  
and he used to hit  
them in the face.

259  
00:14:35,430 --> 00:14:39,710  
And when you had to  
go to get the permit,

260  
00:14:39,710 --> 00:14:42,210  
every month you had to renew it.

261  
00:14:42,210 --> 00:14:43,940  
And they were dreaded it.

262  
00:14:43,940 --> 00:14:45,300  
We weren't afraid.

263  
00:14:45,300 --> 00:14:52,160  
We were very smooth in telling  
them what they wanted to hear.

264  
00:14:52,160 --> 00:14:54,410  
So we made a very nice living.

265  
00:14:54,410 --> 00:14:57,650  
But some refugees  
lived in homes.

266  
00:14:57,650 --> 00:15:01,880  
We lived in private  
rooms or private houses.

267  
00:15:01,880 --> 00:15:10,100

But there were a big a part of  
the refugees lived in homes.

268

00:15:10,100 --> 00:15:12,170  
There was five homes, I believe.

269

00:15:12,170 --> 00:15:15,170  
They gave them shelter,  
they gave them there.

270

00:15:15,170 --> 00:15:18,620  
And they gave them some  
provisions for the day.

271

00:15:18,620 --> 00:15:20,780  
And once a day, a hot meal.

272

00:15:20,780 --> 00:15:23,390  
That everybody  
could come, and even

273

00:15:23,390 --> 00:15:25,970  
if you lived in a private  
room or you had money,

274

00:15:25,970 --> 00:15:32,160  
you could come to get a  
hot meal during the day.

275

00:15:32,160 --> 00:15:33,560  
But we didn't need it.

276

00:15:33,560 --> 00:15:37,460  
But these people existed  
only on these provisions.

277

00:15:37,460 --> 00:15:41,090  
And a lot of them we  
were really desperate.

278

00:15:41,090 --> 00:15:48,720  
And a lot of them committed  
suicide among the German Jews.



279  
00:15:48,720 --> 00:15:53,550  
But otherwise, we--  
myself and my friends--

280  
00:15:53,550 --> 00:15:57,540  
we lived a pretty normal life.

281  
00:15:57,540 --> 00:16:00,355  
Of course, we were  
unattached bachelors.

282  
00:16:00,355 --> 00:16:03,160  
If they said we couldn't go out  
of the ghetto, we played cards.

283  
00:16:03,160 --> 00:16:05,220  
At night, we played cards.

284  
00:16:05,220 --> 00:16:08,040  
We had there coffee houses.

285  
00:16:08,040 --> 00:16:10,470  
We used to play, in  
the coffeehouses,

286  
00:16:10,470 --> 00:16:11,880  
we used to play cards.

287  
00:16:11,880 --> 00:16:13,960  
Then one day, they  
surrounded the cafes.

288  
00:16:13,960 --> 00:16:14,460  
Great.

289  
00:16:14,460 --> 00:16:17,620  
I don't need that story.

290  
00:16:17,620 --> 00:16:18,712  
That was good.

291  
00:16:18,712 --> 00:16:20,170  
How did you finally  
leave Shanghai?

292  
00:16:20,170 --> 00:16:23,650

293  
00:16:23,650 --> 00:16:26,140  
How did I leave Shanghai?

294  
00:16:26,140 --> 00:16:28,990  
We started to look for a  
way to leave, of course.

295  
00:16:28,990 --> 00:16:32,440  
When it opened up, I had a  
brother and sister in Israel.

296  
00:16:32,440 --> 00:16:33,860  
We got in touch with them.

297  
00:16:33,860 --> 00:16:38,200  
They sent me papers  
to go to Israel.

298  
00:16:38,200 --> 00:16:42,280  
But somehow, the papers  
or the certificate

299  
00:16:42,280 --> 00:16:46,140  
that I was supposed  
to get got lost.

300  
00:16:46,140 --> 00:16:48,330  
It didn't get lost,  
somebody else got it.

301  
00:16:48,330 --> 00:16:52,860  
The people that were  
taking care on it--

302  
00:16:52,860 --> 00:16:55,950

somehow, when they  
got the certificate,

303  
00:16:55,950 --> 00:16:59,010  
they divided among  
people, probably,

304  
00:16:59,010 --> 00:17:03,790  
that they knew, or cared,  
or from their organizations.

305  
00:17:03,790 --> 00:17:06,839  
So I couldn't get the visa.

306  
00:17:06,839 --> 00:17:09,940  
My brother and sister  
were despondent there.

307  
00:17:09,940 --> 00:17:13,589  
But the communications  
was very bad at that time.

308  
00:17:13,589 --> 00:17:17,760  
It was 1945, '46.

309  
00:17:17,760 --> 00:17:20,700  
So next, I started  
to look for a way

310  
00:17:20,700 --> 00:17:22,410  
to get to the United States.

311  
00:17:22,410 --> 00:17:26,040  
I had two uncles here  
and some cousins.

312  
00:17:26,040 --> 00:17:30,750  
So in order to get here,  
I had to get a letter

313  
00:17:30,750 --> 00:17:33,620  
from an organization  
that I am employed

314  
00:17:33,620 --> 00:17:36,570  
or they are going to  
employ, like a school.

315  
00:17:36,570 --> 00:17:41,430  
I knew Hebrew very well so they  
sent me a letter as a teacher.

316  
00:17:41,430 --> 00:17:46,140  
I'll be employed in a  
certain school as a teacher.

317  
00:17:46,140 --> 00:17:48,870  
With this, I went to  
the American consulate

318  
00:17:48,870 --> 00:17:51,390  
and I got a visa.

319  
00:17:51,390 --> 00:17:55,620  
And that was in 1947.

320  
00:17:55,620 --> 00:17:59,100  
In September '47,  
I left Shanghai

321  
00:17:59,100 --> 00:18:01,440  
and came to the United States.

322  
00:18:01,440 --> 00:18:03,810  
When did you find out  
about the Holocaust?

323  
00:18:03,810 --> 00:18:06,310  
And who did you lose  
in the Holocaust?

324  
00:18:06,310 --> 00:18:08,286  
Wait for John.

325  
00:18:08,286 --> 00:18:10,260

OK.

326  
00:18:10,260 --> 00:18:14,700  
In 1945, by the  
end of '45, rumors

327  
00:18:14,700 --> 00:18:21,270  
started to come in that  
there was a Holocaust.

328  
00:18:21,270 --> 00:18:27,040  
But we couldn't grasp the  
enormity of the thing.

329  
00:18:27,040 --> 00:18:32,280  
So by bits and  
pieces, started to get

330  
00:18:32,280 --> 00:18:35,480  
the truth what happened there.

331  
00:18:35,480 --> 00:18:40,940  
And of course, I left a family  
of father, mother, a brother,

332  
00:18:40,940 --> 00:18:42,230  
and uncles and aunts.

333  
00:18:42,230 --> 00:18:45,110  
In the family was probably,  
in the extended family,

334  
00:18:45,110 --> 00:18:47,420  
about 50 people.

335  
00:18:47,420 --> 00:18:52,880  
And with the cousins, lots of  
cousins, from babies to older.

336  
00:18:52,880 --> 00:18:56,060  
And we found out what happened.

337

00:18:56,060 --> 00:18:58,550

And then it started,  
the newspaper

338

00:18:58,550 --> 00:19:00,270

started to publish  
what happened.

339

00:19:00,270 --> 00:19:03,620

Could you tell me again when you  
found out about the Holocaust

340

00:19:03,620 --> 00:19:06,390

and what happened  
to your family?

341

00:19:06,390 --> 00:19:08,690

We didn't know what  
happened to our family.

342

00:19:08,690 --> 00:19:10,710

The details, we  
couldn't get any.

343

00:19:10,710 --> 00:19:11,210

Right.

344

00:19:11,210 --> 00:19:16,790

But tell me when you found out  
what happened to your family.

345

00:19:16,790 --> 00:19:20,720

And tell me that  
they were killed.

346

00:19:20,720 --> 00:19:22,620

I'm not telling the story.

347

00:19:22,620 --> 00:19:26,870

So you have to  
tell me the story.

348

00:19:26,870 --> 00:19:30,110

The details, I found out  
in the United States.

349  
00:19:30,110 --> 00:19:30,830  
OK.

350  
00:19:30,830 --> 00:19:34,190  
But start with-- when did you  
find out about the Holocaust,

351  
00:19:34,190 --> 00:19:35,375  
and then go.

352  
00:19:35,375 --> 00:19:44,530  
We found out about the  
Holocaust in beginning of 1945.

353  
00:19:44,530 --> 00:19:45,030  
I'm sorry.

354  
00:19:45,030 --> 00:19:48,910  
Could you just tell me that  
you were in Shanghai when you

355  
00:19:48,910 --> 00:19:50,270  
found out about the Holocaust.

356  
00:19:50,270 --> 00:19:53,572  
And then tell me how long  
it took for you to find out

357  
00:19:53,572 --> 00:19:54,780  
what happened to your family.

358  
00:19:54,780 --> 00:19:57,280  
And tell me what  
happened to your family.

359  
00:19:57,280 --> 00:20:03,910  
In the middle of 1945,  
when the German-Russian War

360

00:20:03,910 --> 00:20:08,140  
was finished, they  
started to publish

361  
00:20:08,140 --> 00:20:11,830  
in the newspaper  
about the Holocaust,

362  
00:20:11,830 --> 00:20:19,180  
but no details about how they  
destroyed the European Jewry.

363  
00:20:19,180 --> 00:20:21,670  
This was hard to come by.

364  
00:20:21,670 --> 00:20:25,210  
You had to talk to eyewitnesses.

365  
00:20:25,210 --> 00:20:28,960  
But then, I got letters  
also from Israel

366  
00:20:28,960 --> 00:20:31,690  
that our family is no more.

367  
00:20:31,690 --> 00:20:35,290  
Nobody of our family is alive.

368  
00:20:35,290 --> 00:20:37,010  
Of course, when the  
war was finished,

369  
00:20:37,010 --> 00:20:40,240  
I tried to send  
letters to my hometown,

370  
00:20:40,240 --> 00:20:43,600  
but they got lost on the  
way because communication

371  
00:20:43,600 --> 00:20:46,660  
was horrible at that time.



372

00:20:46,660 --> 00:20:50,260

And little by little,  
drips by drips,

373

00:20:50,260 --> 00:20:53,560

we found out more and  
more what happened.

374

00:20:53,560 --> 00:20:56,650

But I didn't know anything  
about my family, where they are,

375

00:20:56,650 --> 00:21:01,720

if they are alive or not until  
I came to the United States.

376

00:21:01,720 --> 00:21:05,680

When I came to the United  
States, I had friends of mine

377

00:21:05,680 --> 00:21:08,610

that I left that came out  
alive from the Partisans

378

00:21:08,610 --> 00:21:10,690

and from the woods.

379

00:21:10,690 --> 00:21:13,390

And I heard right away that  
my wife with her family

380

00:21:13,390 --> 00:21:17,860

is alive, which was--

381

00:21:17,860 --> 00:21:20,170

we are distant cousins.

382

00:21:20,170 --> 00:21:24,250

And I knew all the kids  
since they were babies.

383

00:21:24,250 --> 00:21:28,510

And my wife is 13 years  
old-- younger than I am.

384  
00:21:28,510 --> 00:21:31,300

And I knew her as  
a little child.

385  
00:21:31,300 --> 00:21:38,290

But she had a family,  
aunts and cousins.

386  
00:21:38,290 --> 00:21:41,830

And when I came in  
touch with them,

387  
00:21:41,830 --> 00:21:43,990

then they told me  
that they are alive.

388  
00:21:43,990 --> 00:21:48,370

And told me that most  
of the people are dead.

389  
00:21:48,370 --> 00:21:54,760

And then I met some people  
that were already here,

390  
00:21:54,760 --> 00:21:58,750

some friends of mine  
who were the Partisans

391  
00:21:58,750 --> 00:22:00,340

and came out alive.

392  
00:22:00,340 --> 00:22:04,540

And they told me the story  
what happened in our hometown.

393  
00:22:04,540 --> 00:22:13,870

That they took out all  
the people in 1942,

394  
00:22:13,870 --> 00:22:16,940

in the fall of 1942.

395

00:22:16,940 --> 00:22:21,310

First, they put them in  
a ghetto and later, they

396

00:22:21,310 --> 00:22:26,200

took them out three  
kilometers beyond the city.

397

00:22:26,200 --> 00:22:32,320

And they shot them all  
and put them into graves,

398

00:22:32,320 --> 00:22:35,440

into mass graves,  
and covered them.

399

00:22:35,440 --> 00:22:38,860

And none of my family  
came out alive except one

400

00:22:38,860 --> 00:22:42,670

brother of mine, who  
ran away into the woods.

401

00:22:42,670 --> 00:22:45,460

But the Russian  
Partisans killed him.

402

00:22:45,460 --> 00:22:53,330

Him with another 16 boys just  
finished the middle school.

403

00:22:53,330 --> 00:22:56,140

17, 16, 17.

404

00:22:56,140 --> 00:23:00,040

Beautiful people that I  
knew them as children.

405

00:23:00,040 --> 00:23:02,980

And the Russians came,

the Russian Partisans

406  
00:23:02,980 --> 00:23:06,700  
came to the place where  
they were in the woods,

407  
00:23:06,700 --> 00:23:08,850  
and they told them that  
they are going to take them

408  
00:23:08,850 --> 00:23:11,150  
in into the Partisans.

409  
00:23:11,150 --> 00:23:14,680  
But they have to come two by  
two, two people at a time,

410  
00:23:14,680 --> 00:23:18,610  
because otherwise the Germans  
might have spies and see

411  
00:23:18,610 --> 00:23:20,890  
if many people are going.

412  
00:23:20,890 --> 00:23:24,190  
And when they took them  
away, about a kilometer

413  
00:23:24,190 --> 00:23:29,830  
from their hiding  
place, they killed them,

414  
00:23:29,830 --> 00:23:32,020  
killed them with knives.

415  
00:23:32,020 --> 00:23:37,060  
And in this way, they killed  
16 young boys and girls.

416  
00:23:37,060 --> 00:23:39,820  
Except one was left for dead.

417

00:23:39,820 --> 00:23:41,800  
But he was just wounded.

418  
00:23:41,800 --> 00:23:45,910  
And he came back to the Jewish  
people, the Jewish Partisans

419  
00:23:45,910 --> 00:23:48,160  
and people who were  
hiding in the woods,

420  
00:23:48,160 --> 00:23:50,110  
and told them the story.

421  
00:23:50,110 --> 00:23:51,340  
Of course, the non--

422  
00:23:51,340 --> 00:23:55,320  
the Jewish people were hiding  
from the Partisans, also.

423  
00:23:55,320 --> 00:23:59,900  
So they had they were  
in double jeopardy.

424  
00:23:59,900 --> 00:24:02,450  
So that's how I found  
out what happened.

425  
00:24:02,450 --> 00:24:02,950  
OK.

426  
00:24:02,950 --> 00:24:06,940  
Can you condense it all  
down and just tell me,

427  
00:24:06,940 --> 00:24:10,580  
I was in Shanghai when I  
found out about the Holocaust.

428  
00:24:10,580 --> 00:24:12,040  
It came in.

429

00:24:12,040 --> 00:24:14,320

But it wasn't until I  
got to the United States

430

00:24:14,320 --> 00:24:16,960

that I found out that  
my mother, and father--

431

00:24:16,960 --> 00:24:17,680

And my brother.

432

00:24:17,680 --> 00:24:19,120

--and brother were killed.

433

00:24:19,120 --> 00:24:20,020

That's all I want.

434

00:24:20,020 --> 00:24:22,330

And all my extended family.

435

00:24:22,330 --> 00:24:25,300

And many of my  
extended family, OK.

436

00:24:25,300 --> 00:24:26,440

All of them.

437

00:24:26,440 --> 00:24:27,520

None was left.

438

00:24:27,520 --> 00:24:29,440

Well, your brother and  
sister are in Israel.

439

00:24:29,440 --> 00:24:32,660

Well, but they were  
in Israel since 1935.

440

00:24:32,660 --> 00:24:33,160

Right.

441

00:24:33,160 --> 00:24:34,330  
But we don't know that.

442  
00:24:34,330 --> 00:24:35,230  
We don't know that.

443  
00:24:35,230 --> 00:24:36,880  
But you do it.

444  
00:24:36,880 --> 00:24:40,060  
Oh, OK.

445  
00:24:40,060 --> 00:24:42,790  
But very short.

446  
00:24:42,790 --> 00:24:47,230  
In Shanghai, I found out in  
generality what happened there.

447  
00:24:47,230 --> 00:24:51,440  
I didn't have any  
details and no newspaper.

448  
00:24:51,440 --> 00:24:51,940  
And then--

449  
00:24:51,940 --> 00:24:52,520  
Sorry, sorry.

450  
00:24:52,520 --> 00:24:54,010  
You have to start,  
in Shanghai, you

451  
00:24:54,010 --> 00:24:55,360  
found out about the Holocaust.

452  
00:24:55,360 --> 00:24:57,220  
We have to know what  
you're talking about.

453  
00:24:57,220 --> 00:25:00,280  
In Shanghai after

the war was finished,

454

00:25:00,280 --> 00:25:02,500

I found out about the Holocaust.

455

00:25:02,500 --> 00:25:07,830

But I didn't have any

details because it

456

00:25:07,830 --> 00:25:13,670

was hard to get by any

information more than

457

00:25:13,670 --> 00:25:15,540

in general.

458

00:25:15,540 --> 00:25:19,590

When I came in '47

to New York, then I

459

00:25:19,590 --> 00:25:23,110

found out actually what

happened, all the details.

460

00:25:23,110 --> 00:25:25,770

And I found out

from eyewitnesses

461

00:25:25,770 --> 00:25:31,740

and my whole family were killed,

except for one brother that

462

00:25:31,740 --> 00:25:37,650

ran away into the woods with

many other Jewish young people.

463

00:25:37,650 --> 00:25:41,270

And he was later killed

by the Russian Partisans.

464

00:25:41,270 --> 00:25:43,890



465

00:25:43,890 --> 00:25:46,360

I had left for my  
family in Israel.

466

00:25:46,360 --> 00:25:49,870

I had a brother and a sister,  
which left before the war.

467

00:25:49,870 --> 00:25:52,980

And this is all my  
family that was left.

468

00:25:52,980 --> 00:25:57,075

And all, about 50 people of  
my family, were all killed.

469

00:25:57,075 --> 00:26:00,080

470

00:26:00,080 --> 00:26:01,120

Great, great.

471

00:26:01,120 --> 00:26:04,050

472

00:26:04,050 --> 00:26:07,440

What role do you think  
your youth, or your luck,

473

00:26:07,440 --> 00:26:11,730

or your willingness to take  
risks played in your survival?

474

00:26:11,730 --> 00:26:13,590

In your story, your whole story.

475

00:26:13,590 --> 00:26:17,320

Wait for John to finish, please.

476

00:26:17,320 --> 00:26:24,790

It was all luck, except a little  
initiative, and a little drive

477  
00:26:24,790 --> 00:26:25,290  
to--

478  
00:26:25,290 --> 00:26:27,498  
Again, you have to tell me  
what you're talking about.

479  
00:26:27,498 --> 00:26:31,750  
So you could say, your survival  
or your being a refugee

480  
00:26:31,750 --> 00:26:32,584  
was all luck.

481  
00:26:32,584 --> 00:26:35,190

482  
00:26:35,190 --> 00:26:41,340  
The way I left my hometown  
and my survival was all luck.

483  
00:26:41,340 --> 00:26:44,430  
Maybe a small part  
was initiative

484  
00:26:44,430 --> 00:26:48,510  
because I was willing  
to take risk and do

485  
00:26:48,510 --> 00:26:50,020  
everything I can to survive.

486  
00:26:50,020 --> 00:26:53,390

487  
00:26:53,390 --> 00:26:57,960  
And that's how it happened the  
that I am still alive today.

488  
00:26:57,960 --> 00:27:01,830  
Of course, on the way,

there was many risks.

489

00:27:01,830 --> 00:27:08,760

Even in Shanghai, I took risks which was a stupid risk,

490

00:27:08,760 --> 00:27:10,410

but I did take them.

491

00:27:10,410 --> 00:27:16,230

And all in all, somehow, 90% was luck.

492

00:27:16,230 --> 00:27:19,590

Because they most clever, the most intelligent,

493

00:27:19,590 --> 00:27:23,700

the most learned, and the strongest people died.

494

00:27:23,700 --> 00:27:28,050

And some of the weaker people came out alive.

495

00:27:28,050 --> 00:27:32,190

So I attribute it mostly to luck,

496

00:27:32,190 --> 00:27:35,010

except for a little initiative.

497

00:27:35,010 --> 00:27:38,400

What role do you think that you were young played in it?

498

00:27:38,400 --> 00:27:39,900

A very big role.

499

00:27:39,900 --> 00:27:44,760

When you're young, you are liable to take many risks.

500

00:27:44,760 --> 00:27:50,760

You see, I had an episode in  
China, if you want to hear it.

501

00:27:50,760 --> 00:27:54,090

When the war was  
finished, we started

502

00:27:54,090 --> 00:27:59,010

to deal in American  
goods, mostly.

503

00:27:59,010 --> 00:28:08,310

And we had some news from  
China, from Tianxin and Harbin

504

00:28:08,310 --> 00:28:15,000

and Peking that in Tianxin,  
for an American dollar,

505

00:28:15,000 --> 00:28:22,260

you can get a five Chinese yen.

506

00:28:22,260 --> 00:28:25,290

But in Shanghai, you can  
get four American dollars

507

00:28:25,290 --> 00:28:27,300

thirty yen.

508

00:28:27,300 --> 00:28:29,880

So we went.

509

00:28:29,880 --> 00:28:32,700

Again, we pooled  
all our resources,

510

00:28:32,700 --> 00:28:36,390

myself and another  
three friends.

511

00:28:36,390 --> 00:28:39,255

We sold our dollars,  
whatever we have.

512  
00:28:39,255 --> 00:28:41,730  
I had, I believe, \$400.

513  
00:28:41,730 --> 00:28:43,720  
And altogether, we had \$1,000.

514  
00:28:43,720 --> 00:28:45,750  
We went to Shanghai--

515  
00:28:45,750 --> 00:28:52,140  
to Tianxin by train  
to change the dollars

516  
00:28:52,140 --> 00:28:57,840  
and come back five for  
one, let's say six for one

517  
00:28:57,840 --> 00:29:03,870  
and be able for 400 to buy  
2000 dollars in Shanghai.

518  
00:29:03,870 --> 00:29:05,730  
So we went by train.

519  
00:29:05,730 --> 00:29:11,580  
By overnigher, came to Nanking  
and stayed overnight there.

520  
00:29:11,580 --> 00:29:16,470  
From Nanking, we started  
to go closer to Tianxin.

521  
00:29:16,470 --> 00:29:19,230  
But on the way, the  
communists broke up

522  
00:29:19,230 --> 00:29:21,750  
the lines, the railroad lines.

523

00:29:21,750 --> 00:29:26,310  
What they did is they  
took a couple of villages

524  
00:29:26,310 --> 00:29:33,210  
and pulled away all the  
ties, the railroad ties.

525  
00:29:33,210 --> 00:29:35,940  
And you couldn't go anymore.

526  
00:29:35,940 --> 00:29:38,130  
But there was one  
where you could

527  
00:29:38,130 --> 00:29:42,150  
go by foot for, let's  
say, 10 kilometers

528  
00:29:42,150 --> 00:29:43,880  
and catch another train.

529  
00:29:43,880 --> 00:29:47,610  
Well, they couldn't take  
all the railroad ties away.

530  
00:29:47,610 --> 00:29:52,762  
So from there, we went  
to the next station.

531  
00:29:52,762 --> 00:29:57,750  
But on the way, the  
communists caught us.

532  
00:29:57,750 --> 00:29:59,560  
And they didn't know  
what to do with us,

533  
00:29:59,560 --> 00:30:02,410  
so they took us to  
their headquarters.

534  
00:30:02,410 --> 00:30:06,060

We were four, myself  
and my friends,

535  
00:30:06,060 --> 00:30:09,700  
plus about seven Russians.

536  
00:30:09,700 --> 00:30:12,250  
And they brought us  
to their headquarters.

537  
00:30:12,250 --> 00:30:13,530  
This is too long, sorry.

538  
00:30:13,530 --> 00:30:15,360  
Too long.

539  
00:30:15,360 --> 00:31:09,000