

So we're today, November 23, 1998, 10:30 in the morning, in Beit Yitzhak and speaking to Manka Alterova about her experience, and especially her musical experience, in Terezin ghetto. Manka, maybe first you could tell us when you were born and where.

I was born at the beginning of '23, 1923, on a small village in what was then Czechoslovakia, and now is Czech Republic. And all the surrounding have been Czech people, village people, and we have been the only Jewish family in all the villages around.

What was the name of the village?

Suchdol. And the nearest town to Suchdol, Kutna Hora, means Suchdol belongs to Kutna Hora. And as far as I remember, I always sang. When I was four years old, I could hold a tune, already. Which, I don't know which is--

And when I was five years old, they put me on the stage in the village. It was some kind of Cabaret or Sylvester, or something. I don't remember which one. And I had to sing a song that you have also in Hebrew. This is the-- no, it remind me--

[HUMMING]

[NON-ENGLISH]

[HUMMING]

There is the--

[HUMMING]

[NON-ENGLISH]

As anyway, I had to sing it. And played the movements, at the age of five. Which was very easy for me. Mostly the movement.

So I make my eyes like this, and I sing like this. I am the little daughter. And then, I had to show how short my shirt is.

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

And then I had to weep like this. It was very successful. I was five years old, of course.

And then, it's cool-- I got always, because of this one, or perhaps, I got always the main part in the play. And when it sometimes didn't happen, I was very insulted, because it was my part. And so it went on, and I liked to sing anywhere.

I used-- when I was 12 years old, or 13, I sang in the synagogue for the Simchas Torah, as a soloist, in front of the huge congregation. And I got presents and everything. And two months afterwards, they wanted me in the church. So I sang in the church.

It was the same to me. I mean, I didn't mind. And so it was.

The love of singing I shared with my big brother, who was six years older, and who always wanted to be opera singer. But of course, mother said, do you want to be a comedian? No.

So she didn't-- it was not included in the list of professions for a son. But he sang much more better than me. And we used to sing together a lot of songs. And mostly, this political cabarets, the political songs of the two--

[NON-ENGLISH]

Yes, [NON-ENGLISH]. And these are-- I think they had at least 150 songs or more. And we knew them all by heart. And with him, I also did develop, so to say, rhythms and things. And then, I had my best friend-- a girl from the village-- we used to go out in the evenings and sit on the walls, or behind fences, you know, and sing the whole time.

After some time, a few boys came together, and with harmonica and guitar. And we used to sing at night. And then, I also developed singing the second voice, which you need to. So it was very important to me, singing.

And then, I had to leave the village and went away to school. And all the party fell apart, and I didn't have any friends left. And I didn't want to have any friends later.

And then, in the ghetto, yes, I remember that when I went on the train to ghetto, it was after three days of quarantine in a school. And all the people were crying, and embracing their children, and everything. And they were so unhappy they are leaving their flats, and everything.

I was so happy, because I was, after a terrible period of time, I was held by Gestapo for months. And I had house arrest, and I was held in a cell. And my parents they took away. And it was a terrible time for me.

I would think much worse than the ghetto. So when I last-- when I at last was on the train to ghetto, where only Jews have been, I mean, I was so happy to be with Jews, and leave the village behind, that I sang the whole time-- on the train, I was singing, what came to my head.

So this is my story. Nothing at all.

When was it that you went to Terezin?

I went at the beginning of June '42. And for a long time, I didn't think-- I didn't think of-- I wasn't happy, and everything. But as it-- you know, as the culture life began in ghetto, it began very slowly and very quiet. So the Germans couldn't hear, and could notice that we try, or--

So they have been mostly lectures. Then people started singing. And I remember, the first singing I did was at [NON-ENGLISH], in the music by Smetana, which is called [NON-ENGLISH]-- it means, it's some symphonic poem, called [NON-ENGLISH].

And there, I was in the choir. And but I don't remember [NON-ENGLISH], how it looked, or something. And after some time, I had to stop. I was working in the kitchen.

And working in the kitchen is automatically-- this was one of the most difficult jobs in ghetto, but one of the most-- how do you say it-- everybody wanted to work in the kitchen. I was very happy when I succeeded to be taken into the kitchen.

But I worked many hours a day. I was very tired. And mostly, the chefs didn't let us go to make music, you know, to participate, because they have been afraid we were not to work harder.

So there was always the danger they will throw me out of the kitchen. So I stopped with the Smetana music. And then, much later on, Schwenk called for me. I don't know until now, from whom he knew about me.

I don't-- I never had any official musical education. I played violin for three years. But nowadays, what I accomplished during the three years, a child in Israel would accomplish in three months, I mean. The teacher, himself, was like Antonin Dvorak once was, a kapellmeister on a village, so how much did you know about theories? And so this was my education.

Nothing in the school. At school, in a private school before the ghetto, I started piano for less than a year. And it was

also-- I wouldn't say it was on a good level.

And so, I don't have any education. Of course, it was just a lot of singing. And then, in the ghetto, when Schwenk called for me, he didn't tell me where he knows, from where he knows about me. And I didn't ask him. I was in heaven when he asked me to come, because Schwenk, for us, was like a God. Nothing was better than Schwenk.

We sometimes heard the songs from the German cabarets, and everything, but he didn't speak to us so much as his songs. His songs have been in the style of the Muscovites, and very-- the political songs-- and the cabaret songs have been like the time that we were used to it. And more like-- I don't know-- like-- no, it has been spoke of.

The couple of the German songs?

Yes.

Brecht?

Brecht-- like Brecht a little bit. You know? So this was wonderful for us.

And after I have been with the rehearsal at Schwenk for three, four times, he gave me only some 10 minutes or something, even less, my chef heard about it-- my kitchen chef heard about it. He called me, and he told me, or it will be Schwenk or it will be the kitchen. You are not going.

And I stopped going. And the other girl got the part. It was the part, the main part, in the Last Cyclist.

Oh, the Last Cyclist.

Cyclist. And the destiny wanted that she was later with me in the concentration camps. And I hated her.

What's the name of the girl who replaced you?

You see her-- I am today-- no, I know, Nita Petschau. Nita Petschau, she sang with-- I think she must have sang with him before.

With Schwenk?

Yes, Nita Petschau.

Could you, Manka, say something about, even though it was short, but you said you had two or three rehearsals. Did he play? Did you read from the music? Did he play it for you? How did the rehearsal go?

No, no, no, he told me, stand by me, and I will play it for you twice, and start to catch up. And he played it from the beginning with me, as a-- I'm tired today. And then, in the middle of the song, there is a monologue. And he played on the whole-- as a background music.

The song is very short, very simple. And one part is singing, one part is only the background. And one part is two sentences he put on the end, or it must have seemed to him too short, or suddenly he got some inspiration.

The melody is almost non-existent. And but it was a very sentimental song. It must have been about a woman that remembers her friend, or husband, and somebody, long after he went away. I think that the words are the most important in the song.

Did he have the words written down?

Yes, he gave me the words, written down. I read them at the beginning. But I was catching very quickly, and I knew the

song well after twice. And it's very simple. And then, I stopped coming.

And then, much later on, at '44 or so, I-- no, no, before it was perhaps before, when the [NON-ENGLISH] started?

'43.

'43, so--

No, [NON-ENGLISH] must have been '44, before the actual visit of the Red Cross?

Yes. And the [NON-ENGLISH], some one, a young man approached me, his name was Pepik Roubicek. I never heard of him after the war. And once I heard that he was a survivor, he was living after the war, he approached me, and told me, I heard from somebody that you are singing. And would you like to sing my song in the cafe of Terezin?

Of course, of course, I only sing. And the only place I was singing in ghetto was during my work in the kitchen. As I worked very hard, I was always singing. It helped me.

And I said, yes, OK. So he wrote a song for me-- which is not-- still shorter. I remember only two verses. And it is such a blue song-- such a very, like Zarah Leander such a song.

And then, he asked me if I knew another one. And I saw-- I think the cafe, another one-- it was a Czech jest song. It must have been American, perhaps. Perhaps you heard about it. The words mean, I am building the--

Stairway to paradise.

Stairway? Stair castles?

To paradise.

To paradise.

Gershwin. Gershwin.

No, no, no, no-- [HUMMING]

It was, no, no-- it's just--

You remember the Pizmon?

Yes.

[HUMMING]

How would you call it? Sky castles?

Skyscraper?

No, no, no, no, no, no, I am building illusions.

Castles in the sky.

The castles in the sky. I'm in the sky, and I'm dreaming about-- we will be living there alone under the sky, and be happy.

Is it not White Christmas?

No, no-- it must be some.

Can you sing it, even in Czech?

I can, yes, but I don't know today. Yes, it was such a song-- I used to sing it in Israel afterwards, also, in the chevra.

There are some words I missed there. But it was a success. And then, I think, I had the third song also in Czech, but this fell out of my memory-- about rain. I only know it was a song about rain. Rain, it's raining, an umbrella, something?

And I don't know anything about it.

[SPEAKING CZECH]

No, no.

Ask it again.

Do you remember the song that Roubicek wrote for you?

Yes, yes, yes. But it's very, very short.

Maybe sing it.

They write for you only short songs?

Yes, I don't know why. Only perhaps I remember only part of it.

[SINGING IN CZECH]

And then, again, I had some sentence to say, and he played on the piano. And the words are-- tomorrow will be a new day, will come a new day, where everybody will be happy. Tomorrow, I am whispering to myself, tomorrow, during the whole day. This is the first part.

The second-- they are nice words-- and the second part is tomorrow, before the sunrise rises, it will be my last-- [NON-ENGLISH]-- last grieving. No, sadness, sadness, it will be my last sadness. Tomorrow, tomorrow, the last one is, tomorrow-- Ah, tomorrow, I am whispering to myself, tomorrow for during the whole day.

The words are nice, but it's very short. And then, he played, and I said something. I don't know what.

Would you say the name of the song is "Tomorrow"?

Tomorrow, yes.

Tomorrow? And this is a Schwenk song? Oh, this is--

The Rubiczek song.

Which it was a known composer?

No, he used to play. I don't know where.

But his song is know there? People loved it?

I don't know. Not many young people heard the song. Why? In this cafe, mostly old people came to listen. They wanted to show that the old people have a place where they have coffee, [NON-ENGLISH] coffee.

Do you think there's a flavor of a tango? Would you say so?

No, this-- Tomorrow? No-- [HUMMING]

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

[HUMMING]

Like schlepping with the music, schlepping. How much more schlepping, it was better. He wanted to show somehow the atmosphere in the ghetto. And the words, if you use words that the Germans didn't pass, you couldn't had them. It was not allowed.

But in these words are nothing against the Germans-- and no ghetto, no nothing, only tomorrow. So they passed.

Oh that's interesting, something I hadn't heard. Did the Germans demand to see and have somebody translate the text?

Yes, I think so, because the Last Cyclist, they didn't pass. And he had to remake it. So what did he do? He didn't remake it-- he just put another title.

And the title was, instead of Last Cyclist, The Same but Otherwise. And they ate it, the Germans, and they ate it. The Same but Otherwise.

I didn't know. I knew there were two cabarets-- but I didn't know the Last Cyclist, and The Same but Otherwise, but I didn't know it's two different-- it's the same cabaret.

Yes, it's the same cabaret. I didn't see it at last. I don't know why.

You could imagine that somebody would translate for them not exactly. They would make it sort of [NON-ENGLISH].

I don't know if somebody was so--

This is the same? This is the poster, The Same but Otherwise, right? Am I right?

Yes, this is the original-- original placard.

Let's continue about Schwenk, about the umbrella song. Do you remember the words?

No, no, no, I have no idea. I only know it has something to do-- song that I remember.

[HUMMING]

No, no, this was not-- it was a schlager. It was a schlager, some kind of-- I'm walking in the train.

This one you know?

This one, I heard. I heard it, yes.

So it's different race maybe.

This is different, yes. Yeah for the [NON-ENGLISH]. This is also original. And you know who did it, the placard, the

poster? It's beautiful.

Beautiful.

Beautiful, for them.

I can tell it's a [NON-ENGLISH].

Beautiful, beautiful.

No, it's not written who did it.

Yes, he must be-- he didn't sign it or something?

No.

Very nice. They have been good graphics, and painters, and everything.

Let's go on about Schwenk. So did you, I mean, you had to go back to work in the kitchen.

I think in the evening it's better with me.

Yeah.

I have-- I take cortisone, and that's why. I am blocked completely.

I think maybe Manka remembers this song of the rain, about the rain, that she sang?

Yeah, but I can't remember. I'm trying for 50 years to remember, 60 years. I can't remember.

Even the melody?

No, it's something that I-- perhaps it will-- best guess, it will come to me.

Yeah, any other Schwenk songs which come to mind?

No, not with me. We used to sing the march, and we used to sing another song that we knew half of it.

You were there in '44?

Yes.

You were aware of the cabaret carousel?

I heard the cabaret carousel, but I didn't go to see it.

You didn't go see it.

I must-- if you would give me the songs, I'm sure I remember something of it. This was so important to us-- the singing.

You remember Martin Roman?

Me? Martin?

Roman.

No, he was a German, no?

A German? But he was there, he did-- he wrote that kind of stuff. Did you ever hear any jazz played, the Ghetto Swingers, for example, outside, in the staatskapelle?

In the cafe, in the cafe, the Ghetto Swingers have been playing in other times. The piano was for them and for us, also-- Fritz Weiss, and--

Quintet?

Quintet of chess. Yes, sometimes I came too early, so I heard them practice or something. They'd be wonderful.

Yeah, tell us something that I think is-- tell us what was the atmosphere like in these cabaret, making music in the coffeehouse, for such a maybe even grotesque kind of audience? Old people? We see the drawings of Fritter, which show the real psychological misery in their eyes. Not the drawings of-- who's the-- Spies. I forgot his name, from Holland, which are very elegant, which it wasn't like it.

What was the real atmosphere like? How was the audience reacting?

I tell you, when I came-- when I first came-- when I first sing at the cafe, and I saw people coming, I imagined I will sing for people of my age-- my age, people, young people, chevra, as you see. And then, I saw the people coming, started coming, and they have been all like this, they just wanted to sit down. And have been in-- and be in four walls that are not so cold, and getting something hot to drink.

And I was a little bit-- of course, I was not shocked, but I was disappointed. And then, when I was singing the second time, I told myself, I have to bring a little bit out of themselves. So I look at them, and I make movements in my hands, and I smiled. And when I saw some of the reaction--

So they started reacting. They didn't listen to the song, they saw me. I mean, and it was interesting. There have been some that slumped into a sleep, you know, immediately. But there were some that make like this with their feet, and enjoy themselves a little bit.

Of course, they knew the purpose-- they knew why they had to be there, because the people that had to work for the Germans didn't have time to sit in the cafe. And the Germans didn't want them to.

So they played the audience. It was there-- it had been in the program. Programmed to be an audience.

So this was the atmosphere. I didn't mind so much, because the main thing was to sing. And he was a good accompanist on the piano, this Rubiczek. And this was--

Only Rubiczek accompanied you?

Yes, he, himself, himself.

Only him?

Only him. On the piano, he was accordionist, but he accompanied me on the piano. And it must have been the only piano in ghetto, I think. I don't know if it was--

Legal, or upright?

I don't remember. But it couldn't be, because they couldn't schlep me from place to place. And the cafe was on the



corner of the main square. It was just one-- over one single house, was the kommandatura, which I never knew. I came there, I didn't know that I'm so near the SS, there.

Now, after the war, when I came to Terezin, they told me this house was the cafe, and this was some shop, and this was the kommandatura. Yes, it was legal, of course.

The pictures that we know, excuse me, the pictures and the photographs also, and drawings, you see there was a fence. That the Jews couldn't walk in the street, they had a fence on the sidewalk. The Jews had to go on the sidewalk. They could cross the street.

No, in the beginning-- yes, when I came to the ghetto, the ghetto was closed. Nobody was allowed to go on the street. I don't remember any parting of the road, or something. We were forbidden to go in the street-- only with permission.

At the beginning, they chose me to be a-- I belonged to the ghetto [NON-ENGLISH]. I was a guard. I had something on my sleeve, and--

GW?

Something, GW, or something. And I was standing in the front, in the entrance to the public building, so the military building, letting people all pass when they have papers, or not pass. It was very, very strict at this time, ghetto. And because of that, because I was a guard, I had a permission to go each fortnight to see my brother, because I could walk on the street. I had to have the permission, but I got it, because of the work, of my profession.

But other people didn't. But there have been few people going on the street. I can imagine, as you say, they had to be on the side. Because at that time, the Germans roamed the streets a lot. They walked alone on the streets, and with guns like this in the hands, and everything, played with it. I had an impression they were looking for some adventures.

And we have been very much afraid to pass, or to meet somebody, sing like this on the empty streets. But after a few months, it must have been less than three months, they opened the ghetto. Because of the Jewish elders, because of the plan to make an order in ghetto.

And suddenly, we could go out and roam the streets. At that time, the Germans didn't walk around so much. Perhaps they put the-- if something happened, they would have put the blame on the Jews. I mean, because they was the responsible for us.

Did the Germans ever come to hear any of these performances?

No, in the cafe, no, never. And I, for a long time, we all have been imagining they didn't know about it, because it was high up under the roofs, mostly. But then, later, much later, we learned they knew all about it. And it played-- it played into their hands, so to say. Then, they must have planned the [NON-ENGLISH].

I think they didn't think about it before.

Yeah, can you tell us something-- and maybe this one scene, about the Black Jim song?

The Black Jim, why do we have extra wagons for the White gentlemen? [HUMMING]

[SINGING IN CZECH]

This, I don't know the rhythm. Perhaps it was said and not sang. I don't know. This is only-- but in between, if I heard it, I would have-- perhaps I would remember.

Try again.

Hmm?

Try it again. Forget about all this--

[SPEAKING CZECH]

No, I don't know-- if I heard it, I would remember.

No, perhaps I will remember. It was everything with him is such a monotony. I think it was on purpose, perhaps, to show the atmosphere, the darkness, the darkness of history. It shouldn't be gay and pleasant, and something like this.

You think it was different from his Prague songs? Because he was active in the liberated theater. And there, the influence was Jezek.

He was influenced by Jezek-- everybody was influenced by Jezek. I don't know, but about the song I think for Schwenk, I wasn't supposed to sing for Schwenk. Now, two years ago, you know about the film that the-- no?

Makarova?

Makarova-- and Sibylla.

And Sibylla.

Billy Ann Schoeneman-- I never saw it. I knew about it, I never saw it.

Good for you. Good for you. All my friends said it was terrible. And but I was in it.

And I liked it. I mean, it was very light. There was no-- Billy was not interested in the history. She knew the history of the ghetto. She was not interested in the history.

She was interested about us. When we come nowadays into this town, how do we react? How-- you understand? He wanted everything on the light side of things.

She never wanted sad stories, or tragic stories, or no-- how would you say it? She didn't want anything heavy. I don't know why, that's why she called it One Day in Terezin. but she was supposed to do it now, the name now, because people that came to see it, they didn't know the Terezin as they knew it. And they thought that it was too trivial to--

So we didn't know why she wants it like this. But the young people that saw the film, I was in Cinematheque when it was first shown, and they have been invited-- many, many teachers have been invited. And all the young teachers of Israel, they loved it. And all the old women that had been in Terezin, didn't like it. Understand?

Because they felt it was a false picture?

Yes, yes-- because they saw there was nothing from Terezin, I mean. So I can't explain it. I'm not a psychologist.

Film in Terezin, and nothing of Terezin? A talent.

Huh?

It was filmed in Terezin, partly, without conveying really--

What it was about. She had a feeling that all people know about the Terezin as it was, perhaps. That there is enough documentation about the Terezin that has been. There a few sad songs in it, also.

I mean, there is a lullaby that one of very good actors in Czech Republic sang-- the lullaby is beautiful.

The song of--

Of Gideon Klein?

No, it was lullaby by also Schwenk.

Oh, Schwenk lullaby?

Oh, yes, this here. It is a beautiful lullaby.

I don't even know-- do you remember the name of it?

Yes, it is here. Lullaby--

Is this the music for that?

I don't know the music-- [NON-ENGLISH SINGING]

I can bring it. I can fix it for you. The MAN lives in the Czech Republic. He sings it in the film. And he's a good actor, and he sings it beautifully.

Also, the words are very nice. And it's very nice. He says here, one of the sentences here is, the day changes into the night. And the year are rolling. Once, perhaps, you will open your sleepy eyes-- how I translate it straight away-- and you wouldn't-- and you will not want to sleep.

All the sadness will go away. And you will only remember the day-- the time it was. Not even in the-- not even in the dream. You will laugh-- you will laugh. Everything which was said, doesn't long-- doesn't long-- doesn't stay long--

Oh, it doesn't last?

Doesn't-- yes. And it will be again good. And in time, will be good again. It's beautiful.

Do you remember the melody at all?

[HUMMING]

[SINGING IN CZECH]

I don't know.

[CZECH]

It's very difficult to sing. They are half-tones in it. It's difficult to sing.

But in the film, it's sung well?

Yes, he was singing it well. He was singing it in the ghetto, I think. His name is Ludwig Elias. That has been--

Ludwig?

Ludwig Elias. Like Elias, they are Elias, he's Elias. They changed it from the Czech, Elias, the same thing. Ludwig Elias.

And that's in [NON-ENGLISH].

Yes, in [NON-ENGLISH]. And he lives Morova, in the part of Czech Republic. The Lucas are her best friends. Do you know Pavel Lucas?

No.

Pavel Lucas organizes always in [NON-ENGLISH] the concerts from the Friendship Israel and Czech Republic. I can make it a--

What's the name? Pavel?

Pavel Lucas. He is living here in the village. And Eve's his best friend.

Where does Elias live? What's the name of his town?

I can--

Afterwards, I would like that.

I will call him.

And what was the context that this lullaby was sung? Was it in a show?

I don't know. He will know.

Let me go to another subject. It's not really another subject, but did you, with your kitchen work, and all of that, but still, did you go to any performances as an audience, as part of audience?

Very, very few ones. I don't even remember. I knew the songs from the street, from the others that's singing, you know. I don't really remember contents of the shows.

Did you hear it--

I must have gone-- of course, I must have gone.

Did you hear a piano recital? Did you hear a chamber music concert?

Yes, we heard the concerts, but which ones, I don't remember. I didn't even saw the [NON-ENGLISH], which was very important. Perhaps I didn't get tickets, or something, you know. It was sold out.

It was so funny, too, these tickets in ghetto, without money, and everything.

Did you know about Gideon Klein?

I knew about Gideon Klein, I didn't meet him personally. He was like somebody very famous.

Yeah, they spoke of him like he was some kind of God.

[NON-ENGLISH].

Yeah, yeah.

Yes, and then, the German cabaret, we also heard about the songs of the German cabarets. But we-- I didn't so much wanted to go. I was always, always so tired. I slept already on the way home. It was very hard.

Later, I discovered, that I was put down as a hard worker. I was in the first category-- it must have been the reason that they kept me in ghetto for such a long time. I was doing a man's work.

This book, there was a song that you told me about, "Ballad for an Empty Belly, Shrinks." Do you remember, it's written--

I also only know one sentence of it, or something. This is-- at the beginning, it must-- it was such a melody, almost a talking, and not without a melody. It's about a-- it's such a ballad, you know, from a town, from a street, such a dark street, and everything. Ballad about the hungry stomach, or belly, more hungry belly.

And there, as somebody stays on the streets, and all people that are passing saw him singing. [SINGING IN CZECH]

It must have been already my-- now, this was not the original.

[CZECH]

I can't sing something that I'm not sure of. It must--

It's something.

You can make it up.

[SINGING IN CZECH]

I knew the melody-- [CZECH], I'm selling a hungry belly. Please buy--

[SINGING IN CZECH]

Come here, what would you give for that? And like this, it goes ON. It's very nice.

If I will be once rich, I will elect-- I will let people eat, even the dresses I will buy them.

[LAUGHTER]

It's very nice. It's very nice. It's very good, written down, the words.

It's got written--

Written? Yes, it must be-- it must have written with Schwenk.

It is rhymed?

Schwenk, this is Schwenk.

It is rhymed?

It must be such, again, such a slow, schlepping melody, that you don't have to know how to sing.

Oh, yes, if it's got [NON-ENGLISH].

Yes, yes-- [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH].

It has--

But it doesn't have written a meter-- [NON-ENGLISH].

What do you mean, [NON-ENGLISH]?

Yes, [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH].

Yes, yes. No, no, no-- [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH].

It ends without the rhyme. So Mr. [NON-ENGLISH], what are you ready to give? And then it starts again.

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

Could you read it a little from the beginning? With how you feel the rhyme, even if-- you sang it. What you sang, you remembered the little bit that you sang?

I think when I saw it later, I put my own--

[NON-ENGLISH]

Yes-- like this--

[SINGING IN CZECH]

Something like this, again.

[SINGING IN CZECH]

It was, again, quick.

It's [SPEAKING CZECH].

It changes to be slow, and again, such a quick one. Again, it goes slowly-- this is the pain, it makes it-- [SINGING IN CZECH].

Now, it is said, in the belly, the belly, [SPEAKING CZECH]

If I will be once rich, I will give to him-- the belly says. It's very nice. They have been such so original.

And it was so difficult in this situation to be creative, and to think of things.

I wonder where-- I mean, the words are by-- he writes here, Josef Valic.

I don't know who he was, [NON-ENGLISH]. I have no idea. No idea.

I suppose that it was somebody in Terezin.

The words-- all words of Schwenk have been beautiful. I think even much better than the melody, because the melody is such a-- and it's not always the same one. It's not always the same one. This is beautiful.

He used some pseudonym, sometimes.

Yes, maybe it's his name. It could be just he gave himself another name.

Perhaps this, I don't know. Somebody that made research on Schwenk.

He called himself Franticek Schmolnek, Peter Klitz.

Right, you have here songs and monologues by Peter Klitz-- but maybe this song was a little bit dangerous. And he wanted to be on the safe side.

Perhaps, perhaps. I don't know. I don't know the reason. But I know that. It's beautiful.

I think it's his song.

And here, again, and the [NON-ENGLISH] and the pain is going up. It broke-- it broke the beautiful dream of my eyes. And even on Sunday, there is just a day. And hunger-- [NON-ENGLISH], these are very, very, very poor, how you call it, what is it if you are very poor? You know, [NON-ENGLISH].

And several suffering, [NON-ENGLISH] suffering, a suffering goes up. And here, it's again, at the end, if sometimes in our street, suddenly will be quiet, a sad voice will be trembling and asking, I'm selling a lot of [NON-ENGLISH] again, I'm selling my hungry belly, as in the beginning. But this time, only I'm selling-- yes.

It's very nice. You sooner-- you sooner sell your hands, your feet, your fist, even a heart, even a heart, you change for bread. Know what it means? The girls went to the boys for a piece of bread.

But a belly, everything has his own one. Or a healthy one, or a sick one. And yes, and that last word-- and brain is not necessary, and brain is not necessary. Isn't it beautiful?

I don't know this.

I think it's like philosophy. It's like--

[NON-ENGLISH]

Much, much--

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

In science is the belief-- it's the believing. In science is believing. You know, the-- I don't know. This is something-- this is such a humor. This must be somebody very young that did it.

There have been also young boys that made songs. And the people were--

The people were wondering, how Stephenson's, with the glass of beer, developed the locomotive? And he was interested in [NON-ENGLISH], in-- no, [NON-ENGLISH]?

Speed.

Speed, because before that, only [NON-ENGLISH]-- there was only such-- that people went-- no-- like the one that is in Jerusalem, near the mill. No, how do you call it? These carriages that when before carts?

[NON-ENGLISH]

[NON-ENGLISH]

Yes, [NON-ENGLISH], because they liked-- [NON-ENGLISH]-- no, how did you say?

Speed.

Speed, because before, they only had this [NON-ENGLISH]--

Hearse?

They forgot, and by the first-- by the first ride, they cried. This is more like a child-- [SINGING IN CZECH].

It is wonderful, [SINGING IN CZECH], it is wonderful. Everything you have to try-- [SINGING IN CZECH]. This is too wild. This is not poetic, or something. It is more humorous, more--

Fun time.

Yes, also on trains and everything. The train, the train, even it came to Greenwich. It's such a salad of-- it doesn't have a melody that some thought. But it's very long. [LAUGHS] It's such a mishmash, such a salad. This is not important.

Is there any other--

This is beautiful. These are the five floors. This you know. And this-- who was singing it? Wasn't it Nita Petschau that took my song? I think she was singing it.

I'm also-- I'm almost sure that the one that got after me the song, she sung it beautifully, I think.

Who is that? Who sang it?

Nita Petschau, the one that was with me later in the camps. We used to sing it every part, the same melody, because it was easy to remember. But Billy found the documents about this song, and the first had another melody. And then, the refrain, and again, another melody.

So in the film, when they sing it-- I don't want to lose it-- in the film-- in the film, this is a beautiful song. You know the song. And the words also in Hebrew.

Five stairs.

Five steps? This is beautiful. So we sang it like this every time the same. But she discovered the original melody, which I don't know it. I heard it the first time in the film.

But everybody I know knows it as I do, I know it. The whole-- and this is really such a Brecht song. It's beautiful. We all sang it.

[SINGING IN CZECH] You know, so you don't need--

Yeah, it's one that we have this manuscript.

Who sang it for you?

No, I've never heard it sung, I just played it on the piano.

[HUMMING]

[SINGING IN CZECH]



[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

You know, what, if you feel it, sing the whole song, would you?

Had a better day today.

You have a good day.

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

[SINGING IN CZECH]