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Summary

Ruth Landau Weiner, born in 1927 in Lemberg (now Lviv, Ukraine), talking about her father Elias Landau and her mother Sarah; her 8 years older sister Hedda; her father being a well-to-do business man; living in an apartment building owned by her mother's parents, sharing it with her mother's siblings and their families; going downhill skiing and skating in winter; not being a religious family; going to a non-Jewish school; describing the German take over in 1943; German soldiers setting the synagogue next door on fire; soldiers going door to door looking for Jews, picking up her neighbor and best friend Rena and her family, and forcing them into the fire; remembering Rena screaming; the Germans for some reason not going to their apartment; her nanny saving her life by taking Ruth to her own apartment and hiding her for 8-10 months; not knowing what happened to her mother after she was taken by the Germans in 1943; her father and sister also hiding at the nanny's place; the Czechoslovakian, Gentile wife of a relative taking her to Warsaw by train; wearing a cross on a chain and getting a new identity as Janina Morawski [PH]; going to a boarding school for children of Polish officers; blending in having learned Catholic prayers and rituals from her nanny and looking Aryan; knowing a false identity was the only way she could survive; once running into her former tutor who recognized her and called her Miss Landau, and hopping on a tram to get away; once hearing two girls in her class saying her eyes looked Jewish and feeling afraid; Warsaw being evacuated after the revolt in 1944; her father escaping and working on a farm, passing for a German, since he was fluent in German; her sister Hedda jumping off the train to a labor camp and surviving in the country side, trading goods; along other Polish students at the boarding school being taken to work in an underground weapons factory, NSU, in Ihringen in Germany; seeing a girl from her group being raped by a German soldier during the evacuation; the girl getting pregnant and having an abortion while in the labor camp; the prisoners setting up a New Year's show to keep up their spirits; feeling joy singing in the choir; getting her first kiss from a French officer in the neighboring camp; becoming a displaced person at the end of the war and being taken to Munich; her uncle, father and sister uniting in Breslau (now Wrocław, Poland), looking for her and finding her; living with them in Katowice; studying medicine in Breslau; emigrating to Israel; staying at a transitional camp near Jerusalem; working nights as a nurse at the Hadassah hospital; getting a small apartment in Jerusalem; completing her studies in medicine; moving to Sweden in 1963; feeling she lost her youth; her experiences having made her cynical, reserved and less likely to form close relationships; being agnostic; not thinking about her mother.