



Chapter 7

Now we knew of course, we had a good idea that our life will be finished before we were liberated. We were hoping to be liberated but conditions were so bad that we did not expect to survive, we were very pessimistic. And we made a pledge obliging any survivor to bear witness. You see we had that fancy idea that once we disclosed how evil starts and how evil spreads it will make a big impression and genocide won't happen again. We had a fancy expression. Well it was all wishful thinking actually. Anyway. I survived, I was one of the few, one of the 6% to survive from Lithuanian Jews, but I'm afraid I did not keep my promise to bear witness, to talk about it. It was just too traumatic to relive everything again and to talk about it. So in common with many, I should say with most survivors, I kept silent. Besides it was such a gruesome story, people could not believe it. But I was prompted by my children. They wanted to know and they were asking difficult questions. Why don't we have grandparents, uncles and family like the other children, and why do you speak with a funny accent? And they made fun of our accents. They used to imitate us, they enjoyed themselves. So we decided when the kids were about 8, 9, something like that, we decided we have to tell them what happened to us. But we had a problem. How do you introduce a child to the idea of radical evil? So we had to modify our statement, our story to their maturity and we had to adjust it slightly. Of course we could tell them the basic facts but we had to put a bit of a gloss on it. So we began telling them and it went down alright and then they insisted we should write about it. So I did write a book about it, my manuscript. It was published by Beth Shalom Holocaust centre. So there you are. The long silence was broke and we began talking about it and it escalated from there. We began talking to school children, adult audiences, to students, the police, and that's how it started, that's how it began.

I am a free thinker really. My family, except for my grandparents, my family were secular Jews. They believed that religion is a divisive factor and they didn't believe it, especially organised religion, they did not believe in organised religion.