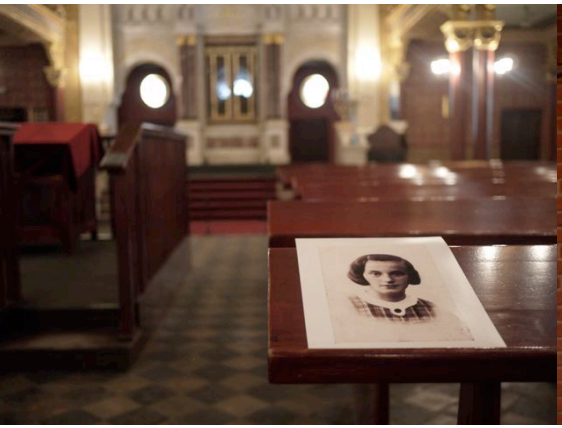
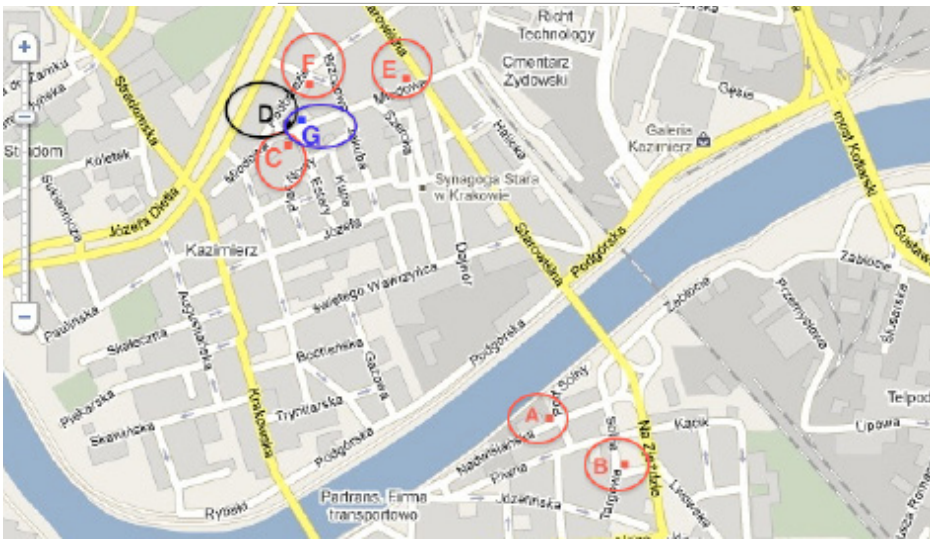


So that memory doesn't die

The Centropa interview
Teofila Silberring

A Google street view walking tour of Krakow

centropa



Locations for readings

Except for those years during the Holocaust, Teofila, or Toska Silberring never lived anywhere else but Krakow, and in her interview, she takes us on a tour of the city—to all the places she went to school, synagogue—even church on Sunday with her cook! She also takes us into the ghetto, Oskar Schindler's factory and the horrid places beyond.
Very few of Krakow's Jews survived the Holocaust. And few of those who did survive remained in their city. That is why this story is unique, as Toska takes us through five more decades of her life, and shares with us stories of how she rebuilt her life, and how, in time, she even made her peace with contemporary Germany. This remarkable story of horror, loss and redemption is availalbe as a forty page biography on our website, and also as a multimedia film. Feel free to use the QR codes below, and access the film on your smartphone or tablet computer.

This beta walking tour gives you street addresses in Krakow, and you can use this book either in front of each door as you walk through Krakow's Jewish quarter, or you can take this tour sitting at home, or in school, since every address we give you can be found in Google street view.

Use the QR codes to access our film on Teofila Silberring

Polish with English subtitles

Polish with German subtitles

Polish with Hebrew subtitles

Map of current day Poland

For years I refused interviews. Whoever called me, I refused. But then they started persuading me that it's for history.

Because when we're no longer here there won't be anyone to tell it, because there won't be anyone from our generation left. Only the second and third, who have heard about it. That's not the same.

But I catch myself sometimes at what I'm saying. Is it really a faithful account of what happened? Even I wonder if it's true.

I say that because if it is true, then it seems impossible to have survived it.

Hard to believe that you could have survived something like that. Some of my friends, they died at once... and me, who came straight from a home where there really was everything ...

Perhaps that's why I survived, that I was resilient, somehow. I only became hardened afterwards. Later I became hard, because I had to be hard--when I came back and found out that no one in my family had survived.

Google this address: Miodowa 21, Krakow, Poland

Before the war, Miodowa Street was largely a street of intellectuals, better secular Jews. And on the side streets lived Jews in cloaks. Not that the ones with sidelocks, in white socks [Hasidim], didn't walk along Miodowa Street. They walked along it because it was a main street, but they didn't live there.

We had a very nice apartment, eight rooms on the second floor. My brother had his own room, I had mine. The children's maid had her own room. We were well-off, though not potentates. Father loved everything modern. I didn't know that he borrowed money; it was only after the war that it transpired how many debts the house was burdened with. Father was such that whatever had just come out, he liked to buy: the first radio with a magic eye, a wind-up gramophone, and beautiful records.

There was a bathroom, a telephone, a refrigerator; there was everything there could have been. In my room I had cream and blue furniture built into the wall. Before the war! And I had this bed with a pull-out drawer. Father even had a washbasin with hot and cold water put in my room so that I wouldn't have to go to the bathroom in the morning. So I had this little washbasin with all my toiletries. The hall was very big. I remember that Father brought me a scooter with chromium-plated mudguards, and we used to ride it up and down the hall.

At home there was a girl to look after the children, who spoke English and German. Miss Brandwein. A Jewess from an intellectual but impoverished house. She was a chemist and taught in a gymnasium somewhere, and in the afternoon she was with us. She picked me up from school, and she did our homework with us and taught us languages.

Miss Brandwein had her own room and she had a boyfriend. He also taught at a school. I don't know whether they cuddled or kissed, but half the class used to come round to my house and we would look through the key hole at what they were doing in there. It was an eye-opener for us.

We had a maid too, and a cook. One of them lived in the servant's room and the other in the kitchen, and they stuffed themselves like I don't know what. I wrote the younger one love letters to her boyfriend, because she couldn't write; she was from the country. They were there until the war, literally. The cook was even still there when the war had already broken out.

Google this address: Miodowa 21, Krakow, Poland

This is the only picture I have of my father, Juda Nussbaum.

Father didn't have a degree. He only had his secondary school certificate, but he knew an awful lot of languages. He had simply taught himself. He was one of the first Esperanto speakers in Krakow.

Together with his friend, the well-known Polonist, Mr Dreher, he wrote pamphlets for learning Esperanto. Father was crazy about learning languages. He was even learning Spanish while he was in the ghetto!

He also worked on dictionaries, Polish-Hebrew and Polish-French, with that same friend. He was a journalist, a critic with Nowy Dziennik [New Daily, a Zionist daily published in Krakow], which had editorial offices on Orzeszkowa Street. Father had some personal charisma and an awful lot of friends. There were always heaps of guests at our house, those friends of father's, who weren't married and didn't have children.

I assimilated languages with great ease, whereas my brother was a math specialist; he had a brain for the exact sciences. We all spoke excellent Esperanto. Except that I don't remember Esperanto any more. We didn't speak Yiddish at all. I don't even know whether Father knew Yiddish.

Google this address: Miodowa 21, Krakow, Poland

Mom worried because I didn't want to eat, and she was afraid, the poor thing, that I would be hungry. So at night she would put some cake on the night table that I had by my bed. I used to devour them, because I was hungry, but I didn't want to eat, out of spite.

And in the morning Mom would get up and say, 'Who ate the poor child's cake?' And I would sit, mummble, then say, 'I don't know, perhaps someone came and ate it. I didn't eat anything, absolutely.' '

'Poor child, somebody ate it all up,' she would say.

I didn't want to eat anything, because I knew that they would worry. Evidently I wanted to be important. Because otherwise I would have eaten, but something wouldn't let me, out of spite. Later, in the camp, when I remembered, if I had just a crumb of that cake … I sinned terribly, not wanting to eat.

Temple Synagogue
Google this address: Miodowa 24, Krakow, Poland

My brother, Henryk, was four years older. When we were children, we would be first in love, then argue like crazy. My brother was a very able student, which always made me furious.

He was an excellent physicist and mathematician. I remember that in school they even used to call him 'Fosgen' [phosgene, carbon oxychloride – a highly toxic chemical substance used in World War I as a combat gas].

And I was in my brother's shadow. Yes, I was gifted, but not as much. He was always more talked about than me, and that annoyed me to no end.

Then Henryk had his bar mitzvah. It was a huge celebration, as there is among Jews, even assimilated ones. That was a duty.

There were a lot of guests and a great celebration. And I was furious, because my brother got a load of presents and they didn't give me anything. And I started crying that I hadn't gotten anything.

A whole roomful of presents and nothing for me, and he didn't want to give me anything. I even got mad at him and didn't give him my best wishes, because I was so mad. For three days there was a huge celebration, we ate and drank. And I was furious the whole time and was pleased when it was all over.

So Father went out and bought me a scooter, because I was howling and stamping my feet all the time that my brother had got so much.

Google these addresses: Miodowa 39 to see the school,
and this address to see the church: ul. Bozego Ciala 30, Krakow, Poland.

I went to a state elementary school; that school is still there – on Starowislna Street, on the corner of Miodowa Street, this big, red school. Somewhere around the 5th grade Father transferred me to the Hebrew school.

There were no barriers between us and the rest of the children at the elementary school. I didn't feel any. I had friends. I suspect it depends on the home and on the parents. If the parents at home, in front of the children, don't say, 'He's a Jew' or 'Don't play with her because she's a Jew,' then there isn't any difference. That was how it was with me and Esia – that was her name – Teresia, or something. She had a little dog and I was very friendly there.

And for instance our maid, she went to church on Bozego Ciala Street – there's a beautiful church there – and she always took me. 'Toska come on, we're going to church.' So I would go. And whenever the priest was sprinkling the congregation with holy water, she would say 'Get down under the pew, or he'll sprinkle you!' Mom never minded, because my parents had the healthy view that whatever I learned wouldn't harm me.

I had a carefree, wonderful childhood. It lasted 14 years. If I'd been at home that childhood would have lasted a little longer. I remember everything most marvelously. Most marvelously! I had everything that a child could possibly dream of.

Google this address: Podbrzezie 8/10, Krakow, Poland
for the location of the school

Around in the 5th grade, I became a pupil at the Dr. Hilfstein Hebrew Gymnasium--a beautiful school on Podbrzezie Street. Very high standards. All the subjects were in Polish, and there was also Hebrew.

The Hebrew gymnasium was more for the well-off. It was like an automobile show outside our school each morning. There was this one boy, Rath; apparently they're in Vienna, they survived. They had a company, 'Iskra', pencils and crayons. He used to come in a beautiful Chevrolet, and a servant with white gloves used to carry his briefcase. He would carry it into his young master's classroom, put it under his desk, take his coat off, and after lessons come for him.

The Libans, two sisters, used to come in a carriage with a maidservant in a veil. There were nannies like that, in navy blue veils; you addressed nannies like that using the term 'Schwester.'

My first love was a boy in my class. It wasn't only me, but the whole class was in love with him. A gorgeous boy; he was Viennese. I didn't know what had happened to him until ten years ago. There was a reunion for our school in Israel and he showed up from the States. And my friends told him that I was alive, so he wrote to me.

He said he was going to be in Krakow and of course, we met. We reminisced about old times, and I remembered where he used to live: on Sarego Street, in this beautiful house that was called Dom Wola. Even before the war there were entry-phones and an elevator.

I used to go round there a lot, because I liked riding in that elevator, and anyway his parents liked me very much. He asked me to take him to where he'd lived before the war. We went over to the house, and it turned out that this man was still alive who remembered him. That meant a lot to him. We parted warmly, but not as warmly as before the war.

Temple Synagogue
Google this address: Miodowa 24, Krakow, Poland. However the main entrance is around the corner from this address

Opposite our house was Tempel Synagogue. Before the war it was a reform synagogue, for wealthier people, who would come in cars and carriages. An orthodox Jew wouldn't have gone in there. My parents went to Tempel at every holiday, definitely.

And sometimes, when Father went with Mother on a Saturday, they would take me. Tempel was beautiful. The men were downstairs and the women upstairs, and I used to go up to Mom up these stairs. There was a barrier there, and you looked down, what the men were doing, how they prayed. That all delighted me.

On Sabbath Mom always lit candles and made those movements, I remember, over the candles. There was definitely fish on Friday evenings. And there were these special challot too. There was always almost the same food to eat, and most importantly, they made what the children liked. On Saturday there was definitely chicken soup with noodles, gefilte fish and aspic jelly. Delicious!

On Friday afternoon we would go and take chulent to the bakery on Nowy Square, and give it to the baker. Our maid carried it. It was a big stoneware pot. On Saturday morning she would bring it back warm. It was peas, round ones, which the Jews called 'arbese,' groats, some kind of fat …

There was always cake; on Saturdays there was an awful lot of cake. On Monday mornings this lady would come round and we would give her cake all packed up. She was Jewish too, very elegant, who had evidently fallen on hard times somehow.

Downstairs in our house there was a bar. It was run by this Orthodox Jew. He was very nice. He made the aspic that I liked so much, and to go with it he baked this special, round, sugar-coated… I don't know what it was, not cake, not bread. People used to go in for fish and for aspic. I remember that.

On Saturdays the maid did everything; Jews weren't even allowed to turn the light on, apparently. She could, because she wasn't Jewish. I knew that on Saturday driving wasn't allowed, that we weren't allowed to do certain things, but the children did everything, because the children were more assimilated.

Google this address: Miodowa 21, Krakow, Poland

This is the only picture I have of my mother. She is in the center. She was a stay at home kind of person in some ways, but she loved theater, too, and sometimes went out to cafes, which she loved.

[In December 1939] I came home from school one day, and the janitor stopped me at our front door.

She said, “Toska, you don’t have a mommy any more.”

Mom had been shot at home, by Germans who were taking away the furniture. She tried to stop them and they just shot her. I don’t know where she’s buried. We weren’t allowed to have funerals. They took her to somewhere in Podgorze and there, I don’t know, whether in a mass grave... And those Germans took the furniture anyway.

I remember how Father, with his friend Dreher, who he had written the dictionary and published various papers with, chopped up everything that was left--the built-in furniture, I mean, so the Germans wouldn’t take it. They chopped up those cupboards of mine, everything, I remember, they chopped it up with an axe. Furs were burned, so as not to hand them over to the Germans: my Mom’s furs.



Type into Google maps: Solna, Krakow, Poland, to view the memorial square of the Krakow Ghetto

We still had our things when we went into the [Podgorze] ghetto, and there they allocated one room to three to four families, divided by wardrobes. I slept behind one wardrobe, along with Father and my brother, another family slept behind another wardrobe, and well, that's how we lived. In the ghetto Father worked in the hospital.

We worked in three shifts. Sometimes I would come home and Father wasn't there; we would miss each other. And when I had a night-shift I would sleep during the day. There, in the ghetto, I was hungry all the time. Then I would have eaten anything, but there was nothing. They didn't pay us, of course. We worked for nothing, you see [but nevertheless everyone wanted to be employed, because that was protection from being deported from the ghetto].

After mother died, we had lived with my aunt for a while, and later, her cook would come to the ghetto looking for me from the fence, and she had made blueberry pirogies for me—my favorite. And she would cry—Toska, you're so hungry!

Father procured food from somewhere. I don't know whether he still had money or sold things; he didn't let me in on the secret. In any case he would bring soup from the hospital.

Later, when the ghetto was liquidated [13th March 1943], they ordered us to gather on the square, where the pharmacy was, which now a museum. This pharmacy, was run by a Pole, Tadeusz Pankiewicz, honored with distinctions including the 'Righteous among the Nations' medal]. You were allowed to take with you as much as you could carry. So poor Father, he dressed me up like an onion, literally [in layers], because how much could I carry?!

There were trucks standing on Zgody Square and the Germans very politely told us to write our names on our suitcases and load them onto the trucks. They said that we would get everything in Plaszow. Rubbish, they never brought any of it.

Google this address: Lipowa 4, Krakow, Poland. Google sometimes will bring you to the modern art museum next door, so just "travel" up the street to find the Schindler factory

I wasn't in Plaszow for long, because I was taken to the Emailwarenfabrik in Zablocie, Lipowa nr 4.

I recently talked about Schindler somewhere, and it was recorded…Really, he loved us, so to speak, and did everything to sweeten those times. Most importantly he didn't shoot anybody, didn't beat anybody, didn't kick anybody, and didn't call anybody 'Verfluchte Jude.'

…I had it very good at Schindler's, because he made the effort that we should have food. Apart from that, we were working with Poles, and if you knew anybody, they would pass on letters.

And they brought us bread rolls. If anybody had anything to sell they would sell it and bring something else for the money. They helped a lot. There's a Polish woman still alive, Zofia Godlewska, she lives on Smolensk Street, who worked at Schindler's with her mother. And they were really poor, but they helped us the most.

Zofia brought us letters – that was risking her life. She was my age. After the war I even met her on Szewska Street.

I say, 'So you're alive, so you're alive!' And she says, 'Yes. And the Lord God has rewarded me, because I've married a Jewish man and now I have a wonderful husband.' He was a doctor, Goldstein, he was a neurologist, but unfortunately he died. And she was a nurse at the Narutowicz hospital.

Google this address: Auschwitz- Birkenau

[Editor's note: In August 1944 the Zablocie satellite camp was liquidated and Schindler's Jews were moved to Plaszow. Schindler organized the relocation of the factory to Brunnlitz (today Czech Republic). On 15th October 1944, 2,000 men, 700 of them from Schindler, were sent in a transport to Brunnlitz. But on 21st October 1944, 2,000 women, 300 of them from Schindler, were sent to Auschwitz. They were put in separate huts and later moved to Brunnlitz. Toska was one of the 300.]

At Auschwitz we stood on the railway ramp because Schindler wouldn't let us be put in those blocks, because he wanted to have all of us. He was waiting for a transport. At the time I wasn't aware whether he'd paid for it or hadn't paid for it, whether he'd pulled any strings. And indeed, our group squatted by the railway tracks and waited for wagons. And so finally, I don't know after how many days – whether it was three days or five days I can't say because I can't remember – these wagons came in, these goods wagons.

And it started. 'Everybody from Schindler get up!' and there were about 2,000 people. Schindler said: 'Don't worry, you're all going with me.' Well, and there were these OD-men. That was the so-called Jewish police. An OD-man, that was the Ordnungsdienst, the law and order.

They were Jews, prisoners too. Schindler picked three of those OD-men and they were to take us into the wagons, according to the list. And it so happened that one of the OD-men, whom I in fact met after the war, had evidently taken some money from someone, because he didn't read my name out out, but took someone else instead of me. Ten of us he didn't read out.

We are standing there, and Schindler is by the wagons. I run to him, look, and the wagons are starting to move off, they're locking the wagons. And I tell him that he didn't read me out.

And he says, 'What do you mean?!' – because he even knew me personally, I mean he knew that I'd worked for him, because he'd known me from the camp. He calls the OD-man, and he says 'Hang on, hang on, hang on.' How he [the OD-man] pushed me, how he flayed me with that whip! The wagons moved off, and the ten of us stayed behind; that was in Birkenau [Auschwitz was a concentration camp; Auschwitz II - Birkenau was a death camp]. I met him after the war.

'You're alive?!' he asked me? And you? I asked him.

Google this address: Auschwitz- Birkenau

They put us into blocks in Birkenau. There were selections, but somehow I was lucky; I was sent to the gas, and then sent back. And from there I moved to Auschwitz, because they were taking people there. Incredibly, I still looked great. I was never a musulman; they took them straight off to the gas.

At that time they were selecting for Auschwitz. And there, beyond that 'Arbeit macht frei' there were six show blocks, which were the so-called Musterlager. And because I looked so good, this German Obserwierka [Polonization of the German 'Aufseherin', meaning female guard, warder] took me there.

The blocks were brick, there was water; we pinched ourselves, wondering if we were in the next world or this. We couldn't believe it was true. The food there wasn't better: once a day that slice of bread. But there was water and toilets; there weren't the latrines. Then they took me to the experimental block, again because I looked good.

And in that block they gave you not one slice of bread but two. And all my friends were so jealous—unaware of what could be there. And all because they gave me that slice of bread more. And in that block they injected us with typhus bacteria and made an antidote to test.

They were using us to make vaccines for the Germans for the front. The death rate among these prisoners was 90%.

[Toska was then sent on forced labor marches into Germany and was liberated in the spring of 1945 in Ravensbrück.]

Google these addresses:
21 Miodowa, Krakow, Poland and
38 Dluga, Krakow, Poland

I got back in July. I flew to Krakow like a madwoman. My father and brother had arranged to meet at our house, at the janitor's, whoever came back first. Father, my brother and I; whoever came back, it was to be there, and all news was to be given to the janitor.

So I flew; Father would be waiting for me, the apartment waiting, and I could go back to school, I wouldn't have to worry about anything any more.

Then I arrived. The confrontation with reality was the worst shock, worse than in the camp. What I felt inside me when I understood that there was nobody there, that no-one from the family had survived, only me!

I had nowhere to go; I stood on the street and cried.

And I wanted to go back to the camp. Because at least there, there had been that bunk and I had been someone's business… When I rang the bell, the one person who let me in was our janitor, 'Toska, are you hungry?' She was still there from before the war, so she knew me. 'Come on, come home!' – and she rang the bell, 'The owner has come back, the owner!' [They refused to let Toska in…she describes this in her interview].

I stood there without hope. The poor janitor cooked me two potatoes. She didn't have a lot herself, but at least she cooked me those potatoes. I ate because I was hungry all the time.

No-one here, what was I to do? No money, no-one wanted to let me into my own home, no-one wanted to give me back my things. What was I to do?

And I was without an education, too. It was well that I could read and write. At least there was that. No-one would even given me a job, because I couldn't do anything.

At 38 Dluga Street the Jewish Committee had set up; I was directed there.

And there you posted slips of paper saying who'd come back. And there were thousands of those slips on the walls. There was a large courtyard, and there they put straw down and you could sleep.

[A friend of the family came and found Toska and nursed her back to health]

Google this address: 19 Jagiellonska, Krakow, Poland, to view Jagiellonian University

After the war I was studying in university and I met Adam Silberring because of a book. I had textbooks that were hard to come by. And a girlfriend knew that I had them, and sent Adam to me. So that's how it started. That must have been in 1946. We married in 1947.

My son, Jerzy, was born in 1949. I had nothing when it came to serious learning, but my father instilled in me that I would never be someone without an education. Even as I was going to the ghetto he gave me a sack full of books 'because you are going to study,' he said.

So that was something I learnt at home and carried on with my son and granddaughter. I said, 'Son, whatever you learn will be yours.'

Once my son was at school, I used to get up at 5am to clean, sent him off to school at 8, and then I went out to work for in an office for four hours. I picked him up from school on my way back. I had to cook, wash, do everything.

I used to go to concerts, to the movies. Apart from that I had an awful lot of friends. We would play bridge all night, straight from bridge to work – I was hardly ever at home. I was never sad. Never. I didn't allow it, because I'd had enough sad years. So I made the most of it wherever I could.

At high school Jerzy had extra-curricular Latin, English at the cultural center, and he also went to music school and played the violin – very nicely too. Even when he was small, he used to say: I want to have two jobs. One I don't know what, and one in music, because it could come in useful.' He always said that.

When Jerzy was dating, I said, 'Jerzy, don't you bring home anyone who hasn't got a degree. Ever. There's no question of my daughter-in-law not having higher education!' Well, and at last he came to me and said, 'Mom, I have a girl; she's a graduate.' My daughter-in-law graduated in history from the Jagiellonian University and is now headmistress of High School No. 6. Jerzy studied chemistry and physics at Jagiellonian University. He did his Ph.D. very quickly and went away to Sweden; ten years he lectured at the university in Uppsala.

He did his assistant professorship there. When he came back he had to have it accepted. In fact, he still lectures there now, goes to Uppsala once a month. He's lectured in Japan too. He speaks five languages. In 2000 he became a professor at the Jagiellonian University. I let him go, gave him everything I could have given. It all cost. But becoming a professor is his own achievement, because I didn't demand that of him.

Many of my school-friends live in Israel. Stenia Hollender. She was from Krakow; we were in Ravensbrück together. Her parents had a notebook factory in Podgorze and they supplied the whole school. A few years ago we went to Ravensbruck [3], invited by the mayor. They received us with great pomp in a beautiful hotel.

There are these tents, and in the tents tables, marvelous food, and cooks are serving us. And there's a group from Israel.

So this lady gives a lecture in Hebrew, translated into Polish. She introduces herself, and my husband says to me: 'Go and ask, perhaps she knows that friend of yours, that Stenia Hollender, because she's got the same surname.' When she finishes, I go up to her and say, 'Excuse me, I used to have a friend by the same name; are you a relative perhaps?'

And she looks at me like this, because we all had these name badges.

Yes, she looks at me, 'Toska, dammit, you don't recognize me?!' How we started kissing!

Unfortunately, they were already leaving, this Israeli group. There were little pennants on each table. There were red and white ones on ours, and Israeli ones on theirs. And so Stenia gave me this pennant when we parted. But she comes to Krakow with groups of young people, because she is a pedagogue by profession. She comes almost every year, and then we see each other. It's great.

[Photo above: Lusia Helzel - that's her maiden name, of course - lives in Israel now. Her father was a friend of my father's. They had a large shop selling radios in the Main Square, near St. Mary's Church and just before the war he brought Father a radio with a magic eye. That was still a novelty then. He always brought us the gramophones and records. Lusia was in the camps. Which ones, that I don't know. But straight after the war I met her. We lived together for two years or so, and then she left for Israel.]

Google this address: Florianska 45, Kraków, Poland to view Cafe Jama Michalika, which is where Toska met with Mr Konradi

[In the years after the war, Toska Silberring went looking for every person who had helped her during the war. Here are a few excerpts]

I found Anna, Aunt Hela's maid, the one who brought me blueberry perogies. She was living on nothing, so I told her I was doing very well, and made her take a little something from me every month…And there was that guard at Schindler's. I just can't remember his name now, but I went to see him and gave him just a little something whenever I could.

There was a man from the Kolbe-Werk, called Konradi, who came to Krakow one fine day and he called me. He said he had read an interview with me and asked if he could meet me. He asked if I could even meet a German, if I didn't have some kind of mental scar. We arranged to meet in Cafe Jama Michalika. He came in, a very handsome, elegant man, in fact, and brought heaps of roses, a huge bouquet, about 20 or 30 roses.

At once, without hesitating, he knelt down, literally with tears in his eyes and gave me the roses. He asked if I could give him my hand; if he could greet me. So I say, 'Well, I've never done it before; I'm a Jew and you're a German, but this once…' and I greeted him. I had tears in my eyes too. That was seven or eight years ago.

After that he always came, every year, like the best of friends. Later he invited me to Germany. He paid for a holiday in Fulda for me and asked if I could bear the German language, if I would be able to listen to it.

But somehow that barrier of hate has broken down in me, as far as he goes. I considered him my friend.

Later I wrote to the Kolbe-Werk, that he was the first German with whom I'd been able to break down that barrier and give my hand. I wrote that he was a wonderful man, and that had there been people like that during the war, there wouldn't have been a war. He died two or three years ago, of cancer. I really took his death hard. Those meetings were wonderful. He was a man of silk.

[Toska ends her interview by saying] Today I have trouble walking, but still I go out to enjoy this beautiful city of mine. When I do go for a walk, sometimes a friend will try to lead me into Kazimierz, past Miodowa Street and my house.

I think—someday I'll be able to go by there, but not yet, I say. Not yet.

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