

## 0.26 FAVISH SURCA AND FAMILY COME TO AMERICA

**FAVISH:** The boys in America decided to take us out because grandma wanted us to be with her. Somehow we had in mind it might be worthwhile to come to America. The American embassy in Warsaw sent me a letter; we had a letter from the embassy. It said that if I had a passport I should come and see if they can give me a visa for the United States. Somebody in the United States worked for us. How they worked it out in America someone else can tell the story, because I wasn't here then.



So I applied for the passport. It took a long time, about three months to get a passport. When I got it I said to my wife, let's go to Warsaw and see if they're really going to give us a visa. At that time I wasn't too anxious to come to America because I was very involved in



business. I really didn't care. But I took my wife and kids and went to the consulate, to the American ambassador. We went in, went through exams, checked out, and he said "You have the Visa."

### DROSHKY WARSAW 1924

So we came home. We were nonchalant. They told me the

visa will terminate in 6 months if we don't use it. So I talked it over with my wife. She said "Let's wait for 6 months. We still have 6 months time so what're we going to lose. Let's wait."

One day, accidentally, I passed by the bureau, the office, the agency in Lutsk where I applied for the passport. It was lunch time. The man who worked out the passport for me was sitting and resting by the door.

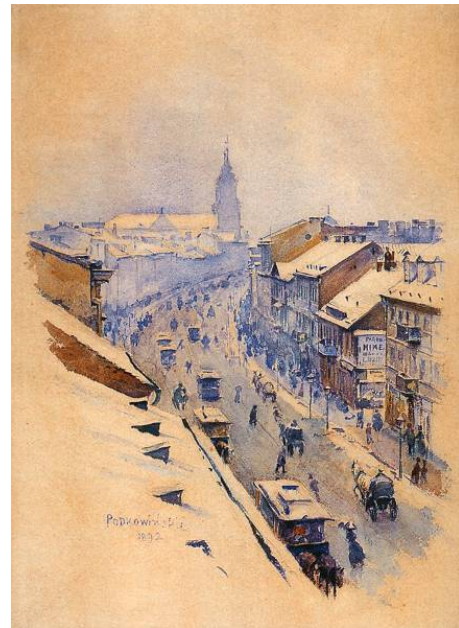
I passed by, and I looked in and said "Hi!"

He said "Mr. Krywat, what do you know about the visa to America?"  
I says, "I got the visa. "



that you have a visa, this is an accident. Take your wife."

He said it quietly. He whispered it to me even though no one was there. Polish Cavalry WW II



### WARSAW NOWAT ST.

"Then it was an accident."

"What makes you think that?"

He said "Do you know that it took me three times to send back and forth for the passport. They rejected you twice because you're registered in the army as a reserve officer. They didn't want to let you out of the country. They sent back your papers with the passport."

I tried to send it to 'different areas' every time until I finally got a passport; and I mailed it to you. Now

They were all out to lunch. "Take your wife and your children and RUN out of the country. And when you'll be outside of the country, later, you'll come back and liquidate your business."

He said "Don't you see, don't you see the clouds, don't you know what's going on with Germany? Germany is going to invade Poland any day."

We knew Germany had already annexed Czechoslovakia and Austria. We knew...But how could they attack Poland. The army had maneuvers through Torchin just a few months back. The staff stayed in my house. I talked politics with the general.

He said "We, with our ammunition, we can beat Germany and anybody in the world. And I gave him credit. And after that who would think that Germany would dare invade Poland. But that man in Lutsk got me so hot. He enthused me. He enticed me terrifically. And I was burning. I could hardly get home. I was so excited.

I got home.

"Surca said "What's the matter?"

And I told her that this and this man told me this and this is what we should do.

My wife said it can't be before Pesach. But in Europe no one traveled between Pesach and Shavuos. It was Sveera. We don't make weddings, simcas, and we don't take long trips.

I went from town to town; but I would never have gotten on a boat. It's not according to Jewish law. I said "If we wait, then we can't go until after Shavuos. And then God knows."

So I called up Shulam Rosenfeld, the newspaper man from Israel. His father had an apothecary shop. He had a telephone. I called the Cunard Line. They said the Queen Mary was leaving March 17th or 18th.

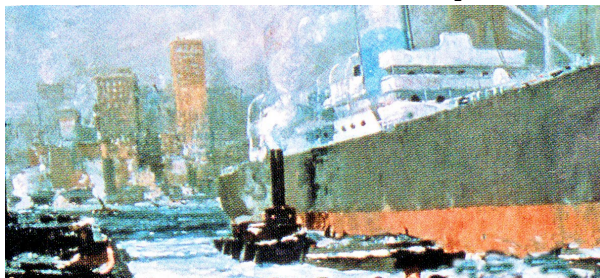
I reserved for two adults and two children. They told me how much money I should send. I sent it out right away. They told me when I should appear. We sold half the store to raise money to buy tickets.

I distributed the money I didn't need among the family. We were only allowed to take \$20 out of the country.

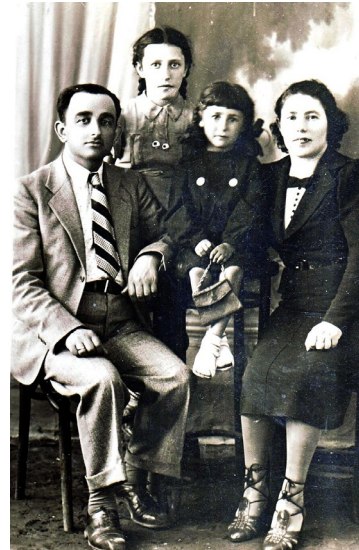
It was chilly. The snow was gone from the ground. We packed everything we could, clothes, books, our silver candlesticks, dishes from Czechoslovakia. We had one bamboo trunk, a Kosh, and a lot of packages.

We took a taxi to Lutsk. We took the train to Warsaw and a second train to Danzig. We took a Polish boat in Gadinia to London, and a boat from London to Cherbourg. We left Torchin 2-3 weeks after I talked to the man in Lutsk. On the way the Queen Mary stopped twice to pick up refugees in rowboats.

We came to America and Manuel picked us up. He had food. We arrived in America three days before Pesach. We were in Peoria for Yom Tov. Right after Yom Tov we rented an apartment on Cabanee.



Manuel picked up Favish and Surca and their two children at the boat. At the time, 1938, Manuel was married and had 2 children. He was the manager of the furniture store in Vandalia Illinois. Before he left he



traded cars with Avery, Dave's oldest son. Avery had a new, 2 door Plymouth. Manuel an old Pontiac. Manuel took a passenger along, Mr. Kaufman's daughter. She needed a ride to New York so she could visit a boy friend. The speed limit was 65, but Manuel was able to go 80-85 on sparsely traveled roads. He was stopped ...by a siren in Pennsylvania. The highway patrolman saw the driver was from out of state and hauled him over to the justice of the peace. The justice of the peace was out of town. So the policeman let Manuel go. In New York, Manuel looked up Dr. Giber, a landsmann from Torchin who was a successful New York dentist. He looked like Adolph Menjou, and he always welcomed his countrymen like long lost friends. Manuel beat the boat by 3 days. He spent the time seeing a little of New York and contacting Favish's brother and sister who lived there. Favish's brother would go with Manuel to the boat.

The day the boat arrived Manuel was up early. He drove to the Bronx and picked up Favish's brother. They headed for the piers.

The Queen Mary began unloading passengers about 9 AM.

Favish and Surca were easy to recognize. The only sign of their aging was the 2 little' girls at their side.

Manuel and Favish's brother waited on the other side of customs and watched as the newcomers passed through with their luggage. The reed, ratan koishes were the size of 4 regular suitcases. There was enough luggage to fill a pickup truck.

Manuel said hello to Surca and Favish and excused himself.

He asked for directions to a lumber yard. Favish's brother stayed behind.

Manuel bought 3-12 inch boards that were 12 ft. long;

Three 36 inch 2 by 4s; some nails, a hammer, and a long strong rope.

He opened the trunk of the Plymouth and constructed a platform.

Now there was room for the luggage.

Manuel returned to the piers and tied everything on. It was heavy, but it fit.

They spent shabbos at the home of Favish's sister, where Manuel camped in the living room. Saturday night, after the sun had set, Manuel went to a local Kosher delicatessen. He bought 3 loaves of rye bread, several pounds of corned beef, and pickles. He made 36 sandwiches, put them in their refrigerator, and went to sleep. The next morning he reloaded the car, and got Harry's oldest son, Irving. Irving was studying at a New York yeshiva, and was going home for the Pesach vacation.

It looked stormy as they approached Pittsburg, the halfway point. Manuel decided not to unload the car. So he found a downtown hotel with a covered garage. It was expensive, but it seemed worth the price. After he registered, Manuel drove the car into the garage. Surca wanted to unpack.

I rented the hotel room so I could leave the luggage in the car.

She had valuable dishes and silverware in the koishes.

In America, when you drive into a first class hotel, you trust them.

Surca insisted she was staying in the car. But they convinced her to come with them. The hotel rooms were luxurious with showers and soft beds. As Manuel broke out the sandwiches his sister asked him how much the rooms cost.

"Eighteen dollars."

In Poland that was a month's income. It was outrageous. "I'm leaving. Where are my clothes?" she was serious.



Manuel stopped her. "I was kidding. It was only \$6" he lied. It was still a lot of money, but \$6 was an amount she could accept.



The next day they filled the car up at a gas station outside Pittsburg. The tank of gas cost \$2.90. Manuel handed the man a \$5 bill. The man brought the change and walked away.

Manuel counted it. \$3.10. A dollar too much. Manuel got out and gave the man a dollar. "You gave me too much."

He got back in the car and was pulling away when he heard some yelling. The service station attendant was chasing him. Something was wrong.

Manuel stopped. The attendant handed him \$5. "You gave me \$10." he said.

"\$5 " Manuel said.

"No. I went to put your dollar in the cash register and realized my mistake. We just bought this place. You are our first customer. Before you came in we didn't have any money in the cash drawer. You bill was our first and it was a 10.

Manuel told the story to Surca and Favish (they didn't understand English.) They were amazed. So this was America.



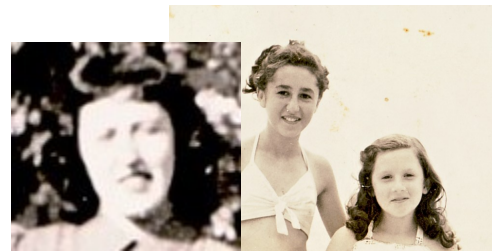
Lillian



Cyril Favish Lillian Surca Masha Kaila



Sherwin Weiss and his Father



Cyril

Perry  
Lillian  
Surca Favish

Lillian and  
Fran



Favish and Surca left Europe with two daughters, Cyril and Lillian. Lillian was born in 1932 and came to the U.S. in 1939. She remembers her parents house.

It was wooden. Surca and Favish's dry goods store was in the front of the house. The house had a large step and had one story. A hallway ran to the back of the house. They lived on one side of the hallway. A dentist was on one side of the hall. At the front there was a candy store. Lillian was told that during the Second World War the house became the Gestapo headquarters, and that it was blown up after the war.

Misha's mother and her new husband and their son Yonah lived in a small house behind Surca's house.

Lillian's husband Sherwyn Weiss recalls: His grandfather Asher Dov was born in Russia. The original family name was Cherdakovsky. His grandmother died shortly after childbirth when Sherwyn's father was three. His grandfather remarried, and Sherwyn's father's step mother, Ida, the only mother he ever knew, raised him. She was born in Europe. When Asher came to Ellis Island the official couldn't spell Cherdakovsky and changed Asher's name to Cohen. But he wasn't a "Cohen" so he and his brother's adopted the name of cousins who lived in Texas and called themselves Weiss. Sherwyn's father was Roy (Reuven). His mother was Rose. He has a sister. He was raised in East St. Louis. His father started as a fruit and vegetable peddler and his mother started a millinery store. She made more money so he went into business with her and the millinery store grew into a department, clothing, hardware, furniture, jewelry store. And instead of going into the family business Shewyn went to medical school and became a surgeon.

SURCA FAVISH

CYRIL FAVISH SURCA





PERRY



CYRIL, SURCA FAVISH LILLIAN

