

# JEANNINE BURK:

## KEY QUOTES

“My father took me inside, and I remember he had a suitcase, but I hadn’t paid much attention to it, and that was the last time I saw my father.”

“And my mother said, ‘You can shoot me here. But I’m not leaving my daughter [Augusta].’”

“I don’t know her name. I have no way of thanking her for saving my life. “I have no way of thanking her for saving my life.”

“She saved my life. I know it, as sure as I’m sitting here telling you this. She saved my life.”

“I used to have imaginary friends. I had no friends. For two years, I never played with anyone.”

“I was so scared. I wasn’t sure exactly what it was, but I knew that I was scared. And I remember going to furthest littlest corner of this outhouse, absolutely petrified.”

“It was something to hold. I had nobody to make me feel better. I had no one to reassure me that it was gonna be okay. So it was, I think, I held that pussy cat for dear life. Because it was so frightening.”

“And I remember waiting outside with my mother and sister, we were waiting, and I guess it was three months after we were home we found out that my father had been exterminated at Auschwitz.”

“I never denied the fact that I was Jewish. I just didn’t believe.”

“I was already living in New Orleans, a mother, six children. And I still had these fantasies that my father was alive.”

“You see, the Germans, the bastards, were so meticulous in record keeping, they had actually handwritten the names of every Jew they had deported. From every country, every city in their country. And they had my father’s name.”

“I can’t forgive. I have no way. It’s not in me. I know it’s not right, maybe, intellectually at some level I understand that. There is no way that I can forgive. I can’t.”

“No. Oh no. It was the Nazis. It was the people who hate Jews. Belgians, it was Polish, Hungarians.

“No, it was not one man. He couldn’t have done this by himself. He’s not the one who came to take my father. He’s not the one who gassed him. Not the one who threw him in the oven. It’s not just him. It’s all the others.”

“It’s a maniac who started this hatred and he just fueled what was already there. And that’s not God. That’s man.”

“Because I think that’s why I survived. Survivors have to go through a guilt process, I guess. I used to ask myself: why did I live? Why wasn’t I taken with my father? And this is why: because this can never be forgotten.”