

We were petrified that they would turn us in.

One night I wake up. Mom is sitting at a table with some sheets and a candle light sewing. After she sewed a while, she made a skirt. After a little while longer, she ended up with a top and a hat. I had no idea what that was all about. But sometime after midnight – in the mid-winter – mom bundled me up, bundled herself up, wrapped her clothes around herself, and we tippy-toed out.

I had no idea where we going. By this time, I'm almost nine years old. And we were hiding from alley to alley. Who goes out in the middle of the winter – let alone who we were – one of *them*?

A short time afterwards, I recognized the fact where we were going. There was one street, one highway, connecting the city of The Hague and Amsterdam. And the underground got us a small room back in Amsterdam. But how do you get there? There was only one highway connecting the two but it was only used by the Nazi forces.

As daylight came up, I recognized where we were going which scared – scared the holy heck outta me.

“Mom – we're not going to this highway? Those are the guys trying to kill us!”
“Don't speak Peter. Just come with me.”

As we got to the highway – now, I know what she did – the do-do was going to really hit the fan and she put up her thumb signaling hitchhiking.

I said “Mom what are you doing? These people are trying to murder us!”
“Do not talk Peter. Be quiet.”

It wasn't very long 'til a big flat-bed truck stopped. A SS officer got out and started to read my mother – to my mother the riot act. “What are you doing here? With the child? This is for the Fatherland. No civilians allowed!”

For whatever reason, for whatever reason, this Nazi officer let mom explain. And her explanation was: “You know about those British who are coming over to try and wipe out the V2 rocket?”

“*Ja Ja*, I know that! So?”

“Well, the other day, a bomb went astray from the British and hit the apartment house where the boy here was living” – pointing at me – “and it killed both of his parents. As you can see, I work for the International Red Cross. I'm a nurse. I'm taking him to an orphanage in Amsterdam.”

“Ah so! *Kommen sie mit mier!* Come with me!” He guided mom to the cab of the truck, lifted her up, and she sat next to the driver. He came back to me and lifted me up to the back part of the truck into the snow.

He went back to the cab. Mom sat between the two Nazi officers. I sat in the snow in the back. And thank you very much they took us to Amsterdam.