

CASABLANCA

Of the Good Times During the Bad Times

DIALOG

Text:

During the Second World War, many Jews tried to escape the racist persecution of Nazi Germany. In 1941, after the occupation of the Third Reich, refuge in France was also eliminated. Many of them now had to leave Europe. One path took them to Casablanca.

Sophie-Interview: Casablanca was not the kind of town with many old buildings and temples and mosques; it was rather kind of a random town where people got stuck. It was rather an immigrant town with many different sorts of people who were kind of washed onto the shore.

Fritz-Interview: I didn't have any opinions. Everything I experienced shortly after the concentration camp and detention in Nice, I compared with the past, with the concentration camp and detention. So, I was free, I was in French uniform and for me it was the most beautiful city in the world.

Kurt- Interview: I have never been more welcomed, so many friends that I had there... For me Casablanca was my second home although I don't like to demote it, I would say it was my home!

CASABLANCA - Of the Good Times During the Bad Times **Three Paths out of Europe**

Woman: What's the score?

Sophie: 13:15

Sophie: 17:19

Sophie: All right we made it.

Sophie- Interview: I was just in the process of becoming an adult, I was 13 and a bit, and in some ways I grew up faster than I would have under different circumstances.

The people in America didn't know what it was like to be alive in the morning but perhaps dead by the end of the day. And that is what the knowledge of this uncertainty.

Woman: Tell me what your name is –

Sophie: Sophie Freud.

Woman: Sophie Freud – nice to meet you Sophie.

Sophie: And your name was "O'Donnell"? – "Carol Dwyer".

Text:

In 1938, before the outbreak of The Second World War, Sophie Freud immigrated at the age of 14 with her mother to Paris. After German troops invaded France, they escaped to Nice.

Sophie-Interview: Then we faced the question of immigration. My mother didn't know if she wanted to migrate because she was terrified to be poor in America. So, decisions were made back and forth and one day we packed everything only to unpack it again the next day. And then my mother sent a telegram to my father, apparently that was possible then, whether we should migrate and he sent a telegram back saying, yes. So she told me this meant he will pay alimony in America, though he did not have the slightest intention of paying alimony. But that was the deciding criteria for her.

Shop Man: It is not sweet.

Fritz: How much is this?

Shop Man: 90 Cent.

F: How much?

S: It's Styrian apple juice with carbonation. It is not too sweet. I hope it is the right flavor.

F: Thanks.

S: You're very welcome.

F: I'll pay tomorrow.

S: That's fine Mr. Koenig, okay.

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Text:

In 1938, Fritz Koenig is deported to the concentration camp in Dachau afterwards to Buchenwald. After receiving a visa, he travels via Italy to France shortly before the outbreak of war. There he is detained as a former Austrian citizen in Les Milles. From then on, he poses as a Czech soldier lost behind enemy lines. After the occupation of France, he gets on the way to Marseille.

Fritz- Interview: So, I came to Marseille where I had the idea to impersonate as a Czech soldier. Since the French Army was then ruled by chaos, they believed me and I was clothed in French uniform. From then on, it took a fortnight or 3 weeks, I don't know anymore, until the order was given, I assume by the supreme Commander, that all volunteers were to be returned to the country of their commitment. In my case at least, I declared Casablanca because I had hoped to continue my travels from there to Portugal or to England.

Edith: So, half the table is already in shadow. And if you move that over there...

Kurt: We have to replace that. It's not strong enough. - No, the white thing!

E: Now, what do you want?

K: The water saucer.

E: The whole shade, I mean, the whole saucer?

K: Yes!

Text:

Kurt Grossmann deserted in 1938 from Vienna via Switzerland to France. When the war broke out, he gets detained with many other German immigrants at Les Milles. He escapes the camp and tries to withdraw to a destination overseas.

Phototitel: Kurt Grossmann in Nice

Kurt-Interview: And how can one escape this prison of Europe? To gather legal papers from the Dutch consulate was impossible because it was already closed down. We used these circumstances because we knew the French police are not able to call them and verify whether the visa had actually been given. I'm a designer and so we drew a nice visa and placed a stamp on it and sign it with "Van der Heek" and so the visa was ready.

When I arrived in Marseille, the police officer taps me on the shoulder and asks for papers. I believe I felt each single hair on my body, that's how frightened I was. Not a drop of blood was left in my face because I thought the game was over now. They found out I am a falsifier, I tried to get a visa with faked papers and now in the last second I'm caught because this officer asks for my papers. I give him the papers he says they are okay and I can proceed...

ARRIVAL IN CASABLANCA

Kurt-Interview: Well, finally on board the vessel after difficult situations we could see the Southern Cross in the night sky and as we admired this constellation it suddenly turned. We got all nervous but we knew something was wrong, this can't be. It turned out that our ship, "Mont Viso", had received an alarm signal from her sister ship "Wyoming", I don't know its name right now, anyway, it was hit by an English torpedo and were captured. We should not continue our route. This we noticed only because of the Southern Cross that we were returning to Casablanca.

Sophie-Interview: In 1941, we came from Marseille across the Mediterranean Sea to Casablanca. But the ship that was supposed to bring us to America wasn't there. It was delayed and our visa was only valid for one more day. So, all the people from on board the ship, many of them were immigrants, were put into a transfer camp which was very primitive, only with mattresses on the floor, a lot of people in one room, which I didn't mind but it bothered my mother a lot...

Kurt- Interview: The Moment at Casablanca harbor, that is hard to explain. I used the opportunity and performed some theater acts, jokes, and songs to calm down the crowd. There were suicides; the people were desperate, since they didn't know if they would send us back to Marseille into the arms of Gestapo. The French officials actually didn't know what to do with us.

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Kurt: Close the door properly.
Fritz: When we get home, GAK plays against...
K: Today?
F: Yes.
K: Oh yes, against Salzburg.
F: No, not against Salzburg,
K: Ah, no, Salzburg plays for second place.
F: GAK plays against Carinthia.
K: Yes.
F: and Salzburg plays against Pasching.
K: Yes, but also for the second place.
F: No, no, that's not it. Austria plays against Bregenz.
K: Oh, well, Austria, they will even lose against Bregenz...

Fritz- Interview: Upon arrival in Casablanca at the train station, I couldn't speak much of their language yet, I thought, whereto should I go now? I remembered that I'm Jewish and so I asked for the next synagogue. I went there and found other Jews who helped me and gave me a place for the night - there were others just like me, it was in a school - it was in the summer, they gave me a mattress, they gave me food, they didn't give me money then. And so we could sleep there.

Fritz: Hello, hello.
Edith: Hello Fritz, hi. We dragged you here in this heat, huh?
Fritz: I'm not supposed to bring a book.
Edith: Thank you, no, no book. I offered Kurt a book to read, he's reading it and keeps shouting over it, though I liked it so much.
Fritz: How are you?
Edith: I ate it up.
Fritz: Are you nervous?
Edith: What, nervous? No, absolutely not.
Kurt: Well, what do you say to our visitor?
Edith: Well, well.
Fritz: Do you know that the game is on right now?
Kurt: What game?
Fritz: The soccer match.
Kurt: Which one.
Fritz: GAK.
Kurt: Yes?
Fritz: Well, turn it on.
Edith: Would you like to sit down here?
Fritz: We'll watch for a little while.
Edith: Alright. It is much cooler in here.
Commentator: ...the interplay and it is no wonder - for 400 minutes the Austrians have not scored one goal during the championship. The last one by Janocko...
Kurt: 0:0

AN OPEN HOUSE

Kurt-Interview: Because of a young woman who had connections to a Jewish aid organization, "HICEM", I met the Coriat family. There I stored my luggage, I could move around like a free man. They were even so nice as to accommodate me in their apartment. I could change my clothes, take a bath, and among others, I met a very shy girl who was the grandchild of Sigmund Freud.

Sophie- Interview: My mother got in touch with the "HIAS" and they helped her establishing and also introduced her to the Coriat family, one of the Spanish families who took care of immigrants. They ran a small fashion shop. My mother moved into a small apartment and approved of the Coriat family to take me in as their foster child. One of their daughters was getting married and so I could take over her place in the family, also her bed, in the same room with her sister, that was Flor Coriat, I think she was about 2 years older than me. She and I developed a deep friendship.

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Flor: Are these from Morocco?

Seller: Yes.

Flor: Where from?

Seller: From Oujda.

Flor: Oh...

Seller: Do you know Oujda?

Flor: Yes, I've lived in Morocco. How much are these?

Seller: 4 Euros all together and this one I give you for free.

Flor: Thank you very much.

Flor-Interview: My parents took in refugees. They used to live in Venezuela where the people are very hospitable. There it was very common to take in people, it's much more liberal there than in France, where all houses were locked up. Then they moved to Morocco where the people too are very open-hearted. And then the refugees arrived. The first one was Kurt... Kurt was not allowed to work then, so he didn't have any money. So, we put up a camping bed behind the piano and we said: "Nobody touch this, this is Kurt's room".

Kurt-Interview: At my first invitation to dinner, we sat down at a table that had a tabletop made of glass. They served a dish called "Dope", that's the French goulash. I sat there in my white suit and could eat at the table and I had to behave like a civilized person, and not like a prisoner. And while trying to cut the meat on my plate, the plate slides off that glass table right onto my white suite. That's how I introduced myself to the Coriat family.

Titel: Albertina Square

Sophie-Interview: Well, she was the most important; really, Flor was the dearest friend one could have had during these days. I arrived there as a stranger and she took me in like a sister. We were very warm to one another; we hardly ever had a fight or anything. She was a very dear foster sister who introduced me to all of her friends and so, overnight I found myself within a new circle of friends. It was a rather joyful time!

Kurt-Interview: The kind of friendship I was brought to experience - Coriat family and let's say Fritz Koenig - is crucial for the rest of your life and the course of life and how you react to others from now on. For a beaten refugee who returns to his home, it is absolutely impossible to build up this kind of friendships again. They can only be acquaintances, in this state and after these experiences you will never find that kind of friends ever.

Commentator: And again Janocko but the ball goes by again. Still 0:0 here and we switch over to Ried where the same risk is at stake. Yes, here in Ried the score is still 0:0, corner kick for Ried...

Edith: Yes, hello. Well, I hope so, I called before but I only got your answering machine. So, are you coming? Alright, good, we are waiting to welcome you. Yes, bye, bye. They're on the way.

Edith: So, I called and they are already on their way.

Fritz: On the way from where?

Edith: From Nussdorf.

Kurt: They live in Nussdorf.

Edith: On the other end of Vienna.

Kurt: It's the daughter of the Coriat family where I had lived.

Fritz: I see.

Kurt: Their daughter can't come because she works at the UN. They don't have a holiday today.

Edith: But her husband is coming, he's from Berlin, and Sophie Freud and her mother and father.

Fritz: How many people?

Edith: They are 4.

Fritz: That's not a lot.

Edith: Right.

Fritz: You are used to masses, aren't you?

Edith: I didn't complain at all. So, there will be 4 more.

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Fritz: I don't think I know them.

Edith: No.

Fritz: They don't even know what they've been missing.

Edith: Well, we will see.

SURVIVAL IN CASABLANCA

Fritz- Interview: There were other refugees, Germans too, they were immediately put into a camp in the middle of the desert or sent to the Foreign Legion if they were not too old or fragile for the job. This didn't apply to me as a Czech; they gave me an identity pass, indeed with the restriction not to get paid for employment. As if I would work for free. That was an unpleasant circumstance. However, I could live very well from the black market. One only needed connections with other immigrants who sold sugar, coffee and oil, and that was how to keep one's head above water. The most important thing was to know people who need it and who could pay for it. One didn't have to fear the police. Every third day I entered the Medina with "Heil Hitler". The Arabs liked Germans and so they also offered me cognac and so forth, cheaper than to any other person.

Fritz- Interview: It was not so easy to have a girl friend because the Jewish women as well as the Arab women were chaste and so we were forced, or perhaps volunteering, to visit brothels. There were several of them in Casablanca that were highly frequented. I always went to the same one and so I met a lady, her name was "Madou". From my side I developed a big amount of sympathy for her but I believe, or actually I'm certain, she fell in love with me. After a while she told me that I won't had to pay any more, on the contrary she gave me all of her tips to spend on myself and that was quite a lot! I went to the coffee house to play cards or dice. I wasn't exactly a fancy man. It brought me enough money so why should I do anything else. I went swimming, there was a beautiful beach in Morocco, I went to nice dinners and I didn't worry about anything else.

Kurt- Interview: The cloaked women, men with tassel shoes... that had an immense effect on me but I could not enjoy it for very long because the government had decided that we refugees could no longer run around in Casablanca like free people but were collected and put onto a train that brought us to Casba Tadla, Camp South, it was called. It was in fact a military base in a valley in the high Atlas. It was so hot, unbearable for any European, in August!

We wet sheets and hung them up so we could better bear the heat. At night we were surrounded by hyenas, well that wasn't the worst but the general situation, the uncertainty, that was beyond all bearing because we didn't know how this would end, where would we go next?

Kurt: This is crazy! Hopefully nothing has happened to them!

Kurt- Interview: It took about 3 weeks until I got sick with malaria. When the commander entered our room to look after me and I kept babbling "set the rook forth", well, I played a lot of chess and the straight line of a rook between me and the commander would have prevented him to come right at me. But I was in a condition that I blame the fever for. The rook didn't help me either and this nasty guy came closer and closer and then explained that they didn't even want me at home and neither here. That's all he did to cure me of the malaria. After 8 days I was released weighing only 56 kilograms.

REUNION AT HINTERBRUEHL

Edith: You come late, but you came!

Rainer: So - here we are! Hello!

Edith: Hello, Sophie, great to see you! What d' ya think of this setup in our garden?

Sophie: Well, well... it's over the top!

Edith: Hopefully the table keeps steady.

Flor: Hello. How are you?

Edith: Fine, thank you, very well. And you?

Flor: I'm fine, thanks. Hello my friends!

Raph: Hello! How are you?

Edith: I'm fine.

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Kurt: Oh, it's already 5 o'clock! Flor, my dear!

Flor: How are you?

Kurt: Well, well. Look at this here...

Edith: Have you already been introduced? Kurt is so busy saying hello...

Kurt: Koenig. Koenig! I add: Dachau and Buchenwald!

Kurt: That's definitely no bagatelle.

Flor: What is it?

Raph: Dachau and Buchenwald.

Kurt: To me he's a monument!

Raff: Of course!

Fritz: Did you have a good journey?

Sophie: Yes, it was alright. You can speak in German with me.

Fritz: Excuse me?

Sophie: With me you can speak German! So we won't have to tax our brains!

Fritz: No, for me it's not taxing.

Sophie: I do have to concentrate. For me speaking French has become very taxing.

Fritz: I just don't hear so well anymore...

Sophie: Me neither. Me neither. I've become hard of hearing.

Kurt: Especially for you... They blossomed about two days ago.

Flor: Look, there are still some buds.

Kurt: Oh, yes.

Flor: They are wonderful. How long have you had these?

Kurt: Ever since I've lived here.

Flor: That can't be true!

Kurt: And everybody neglects them, they spit at them, they hit them, crash the car against them...

Sophie: Really?

Kurt: And every spring they bloom again!

Flor: And look, down here!

Kurt: Yes...

Sophie: It is beautiful!

Flor: Great...

Sophie: Let me explain something to you – but in German.

Kurt: Yes?

Sophie: My brother knew about a book that he wanted to give me and he had looked for it, a book that doesn't exist anymore...

Kurt: Namely?

Sophie: ... and he found it and sent it to me. Now I have read it. It's about someone who survived in France for these 4 years.

Kurt: Ginette...?

Sophie: But you do read in English, do you?

Kurt: Of Course!

Sophie: And now I give this book to you!

Kurt: Well, this is...

Sophie: Alright.

Sophie (Interview): The law was not so really against the Jews, like in France. The Jews were not put away or murdered. But, for instance, the Jewish children could not go to school anymore. They were not allowed to visit the Lycée anymore. So, I had private lessons.

Flor (Interview): When Army General Petain gained power a lot of people believed France was saved. Even my father, who was not very political thought: France was saved! This caused an even deeper divide between the Arabic, the Jewish, and the European population. The majority was pro-Petain, they were right-winged, xenophobic. They felt just "like home" and began to act like it...

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Edith: Well, sit down please.
Kurt: Take the place in the shade.
Flor: Alright, but I don't want to sit on the top of the table.
Kurt: This sunny place perhaps?
Raff: There is no sun.
Kurt: Take this one!
Raff: No, this is the chairmans' seat.
Kurt: No, no, you are the chairman!
Raff: I am not the chairman, you are.
Kurt: Later. Now sit down and shut up.

Commentator: ...here GAK is cheering because this goal adds up to the score!...
Fritz. All's well that ends well!

Fritz: Kurt! GAK has won, you were right!
Kurt: Yes, because they have the better team...
Fritz: 2:1
Kurt: It's the better team they must win!
Fritz: ... they scored at last. GAK is now playing in the Champions League and Salzburg is...
Fritz: ... Salzburg is playing in UEFA-Cup.
Kurt: Well, that is something.

Fritz (Interview): In 1941, some Germans landed, about 20, who were referred to as the German Commission, later their number increased up to 100. They settled down at Hotel Anfa and started their business, details of which I then didn't know. After 8 days, a French Captain came up to me, he introduced himself as Callier. He said he was sent by the Second Bureau and requested me to work for France. I was to find out the Germans' intentions in Casablanca, since I was a native German speaker.

Flor (Interview): There was the alleged German Commission. They had the order to search for Jewish capital. They collaborated with the French. They investigated only but besides that they were not seen on the streets.

Kurt: Let me tell you a little story. It was him who introduced the "Heil Hitler" gesture to Casablanca. Because he worked for...?
Fritz: The Second Bureau.
Kurt: Right, for the Second Bureau. And so he could hail for a taxi where a normal citizen could not. When the taxi driver recognized him to "be someone"... the taxi would stop next to him, Fritz would gesture and was let in.
Fritz: Well, you know, at the time it was weird. If I entered the Medina and gestured "Heil Hitler" the Arabs sold me the cigarettes for the regular price.

Edith: Kurt, what do you want? Coffee or tea?
Kurt: I don't care.
Edith. So, you'll have a tea.
Kurt: Yes, I'll take tea.
Edith: Fritz, what would you like? Coffee or tea?
Kurt: He can't hear you.
Edith: Fritz! Coffee or tea!?
Fritz: I'll have coffee.
Edith: Have a seat.
Fritz: That's fine. Thank you.
Edith: And you take some tea, Kurt, please?
Fritz: Thank you, that's enough.

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Fritz (Interview): But it was so primitive the whole thing. I neither got an allowance nor anything else. I had to follow the German Consul General - he went by car, I had to follow on a bicycle. This of course was only possible because the distances were only very short. The bicycle I had to rent and I had to pay for that from my own money! So, altogether it was a funny situation. I personated to the Germans, like before, as soccer player who was in France at the breakout of the war and was then detained and so I could of course not serve the German Army.

Kurt: Fritz and I were in prison together, in... Les Milles.

Kurt: Aix-en-Provence! That's where I met him, and you know how? He played for a soccer club, and you know for which one? FC Nimes!

Kurt: He even gave autographs.

Fritz: At the time that wasn't so difficult. Back then, Austrians were considered good soccer players. Just like today everyone believes that Austrians are good skiers. That's not true of course. But they thought I was a professional and so they hired me. The same in Morocco, I played soccer there, too

Kurt: Later on we met again...

Fritz: We lost each other but met again in Casablanca.

Kurt: Yes, in Casablanca!

A TRUE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Sophie (Interview): Well, I didn't feel threatened in Casablanca. But eventually rumors emerged of what was happening in Europe in these concentration camps. My mother heard about these rumors and she started to get afraid for me. She had a noble, Christian gentleman friend, Mr. Dupret, who was the head of the Library of Casablanca. And one day she announced that if something should happen, Mr. Dupret would marry me... But I was absolutely not in the mood to marry this man, so I started to cry. However, since he was present, he said "No, it would only be a fake marriage." So, my mother had actually pondered how to protect me. It was obvious that the situation was serious and life was in danger. But we got on with our lives; it was such a pleasurable life then, the young people acted as if everything was alright, they had parties and so on...

Flor (Interview): During the war there were neither buses nor gasoline. But there were big coaches, pulled by horses. So, we went on these vehicles to the beach. There we had a picnic; we fooled around on the shore, went swimming or fishing... I did a lot of fishing, I loved it a lot.

Sophie (Interview): There I actually had 9 months of adolescence, for the first time I had a very ordinary juvenile life, not exactly ordinary but at least for me it was different from the years in France. All of Flor's friends came to visit every now and then; they had an open house for everyone, something I had never before experienced. Well, for me who used to live quite isolated it was very adventurous. There was Kurt who came on and off from some sort of camp; he was a very smooth young man. And then I lost my heart to another young man. He was a French sailor, he was not a Jew or an immigrant, and he just ran aground for a while.

Flor (Interview): I know that Roger was with us and Sophie was very fond of him. She asked, "Do you think Roger suits me well? Do you think he likes it?" She was really in love with him. And he was in love with her, too. Sophie was a girl, how can I say, she had a very characteristic kind of face, just like her grandfather. But she had a wonderful body. When she wore a bathing suit everyone turned around for her. She actually looked like a model.

Sophie: What do you think? I like them more like this than in a cake...

Flor: You know what I did when I was a child? I put them behind my ears. Oh, delicious! I have to stop or else I can't have any Couscous.

Sophie: Didn't you tell me you were not supposed to eat raw vegetables?

Flor: Occasionally.

Sophie: From time to time a little bit.

Flor: But one may not hyperbolize. You know, it must be beautiful when this tree is in bloom.

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Kurt: Well, put the rest here, too...

Edith: No, no, I do have a second platter outside.

Kurt: I see.

Edith: Now, take this and put it onto the heating plate outside.

Sophie: I was already worried we might not have enough to eat.

Kurt: Well, isn't that good?

Sophie: Cherries from the tree...

Kurt: Well, you can't have'em any fresher, can you?

Kurt (Interview): We came into a big mural-camp at the coast of Sidi El-Ayachi. With the fear of starving, I volunteered to cook. I got certain benefits for that, I received an authorization to travel to Casablanca for a few hours to buy food. The available means for cooking were very limited. One day I managed to cook mixed hamburgers; I have to add, with a small hand-operated meat chopper for 450 persons. But for one day I accomplished to put a decent meal on the table. And I can still see it in front of me as I asked an old Jew, Mr. Landesmann, how he liked the meal. He said, "It was good, just a little bit raw, it was...!"

Flor: Ah, here it comes.

Kurt: You thought there was no soup? Well, here it is!

Raff: Fine. To me soup is like a beverage.

Sophie: It is so much work to cook something like this!

Kurt: Raph is the best! You know what he said?

Edith: He was waiting for the soup!

Kurt: He said I had forgotten the most important, the Couscous! So I said I have only got 2 hands.

Edith: Well, they are a big help to us. Sophie just left with the Couscous, no, with the vegetable.

Flor (Interview): After Sophie left, a big vacuum remained. Of all the people that lived at my parents' I was most associated with Sophie. She was my age, a little bit younger. We belonged to the same group of young people. The others were older, around 30 or 40 years old. We were very happy for her when they received their new visa; it was a very happy moment. "Mister Coriat, Mrs. Coriat, we got the visa! We will soon leave!" That was really a big chance for them and we were so happy for them! And when they reached one of their destinations, they always sent us messages of where they were the time and how they had accomplished life so far.

Sophie (Interview): So, we stayed in Casablanca and one day, actually by the efforts of my mothers' sister, we received a renewal of our visa which was not such a simple task. Life would have been different if we hadn't got that visa renewal. But we got it by chance. And so, from then on it was not a question to my mother that we would stay for good there this time. But then there was this really sad good-bye and Flor and I promised to meet in Paris in 5 years. It wasn't 5 years but also not so much longer until we did meet. To part from Casablanca was hard but new adventures lay ahead...

It's a funny story when I came to America with all of these photographs on me. And besides I also made friends on board the vessel with a group of Polish workers who immigrated and who admired me a lot... The American immigration officers interviewed me for hours and asked things I didn't even understand. But then my mother told me, "Oh, they believe you are a prostitute!" Because I had all of these photographs that showed men - but it was very harmless!

LIKE FREE PEOPLE

Edith: Kurt! Have you already fetched the drinks?

Kurt: No!

Edith: What would you like? Stay seated, just tell me!

Sophie: She asks for the drinks.

Kurt: Yes, but would you like red wine? From Morocco? Okay.

Raph: Come on, sit down here! Ah, an excellent one!

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Flor (Interview): The Americans landed on November 8th. At this time I stayed with my aunt in Tanger who had a mansion with a great view over the Gibraltar bay. At seven o'clock in the morning my aunt woke up my cousin, my sister and me. "Come on, look out here, you will never believe this!" So, we went onto the balcony. And the sea was totally covered with boats; one couldn't even see the ocean anymore. It was one boat next to the other! And they were crossing the Strait. The American meant lots of joy and deliverance to us.

Fritz- Interview: The Germans could all flee, from the Commander to the last man, including all diplomatic personnel! And so my mission and the mission of Callier were done, at least for Casablanca. I received a certificate to attest me under the name of Fritz Koenig to have executed valuable services under the name of the French Army; being a Czech citizen, of course.

Kurt (Interview): From that day on the world changed for us. We no longer were slaves, we were free people. The tanks arrived in front of our prison door, pushed inside and said that we are free! And all of the sudden I was a free man and even got a Harley Davidson 1000. Friends came up to me at 2 o'clock in the morning and together we went all the way to Anfa where the Gestapo used to reside, and from there we went down to the beach and dwelled..., we lived like victors!

Edith: Watch out! It's very hot!

Sophie: Fritz hasn't got any! During the war in Nice we used to eat chickpeas.

Flor: Thanks, only a little bit, please!

Sophie: Chickpeas with turnips – all the time.

Raph: Oh, we used to eat turnips, too.

Kurt: Raph, tell me, does it taste like it should?

Raph: Yes, very well. It tastes very, very good.

Kurt: Did you already take chickpeas?

Sophie: Yes.

Kurt: No, I mean Mr. Koenig!

Edith: Oh, Fritz doesn't like that.

Sophie: No, he doesn't like chickpeas. He has had too much of chickpeas in his life.

Flor: Sophie, doesn't this remind you of something?

Sophie: I remember the Couscous.

Flor: Oh, the Couscous?

Sophie: Yes, the Couscous of your mother, that one was extraordinary good. All my life I have to think back to the Couscous at the Coriat house.

Raph: These were the good times, during the bad times!

Kurt: That is true! Would you like more soup?

Flor: No, thank you!

Kurt: Look!

Flor: No, really, thank you.

Fritz: Bettelheim, was he German?

Sophie: I think so.

Fritz: After Crystal Night we were about 20.000 at Buchenwald. So, it is a pure coincidence to meet someone you know from there. What the people don't know, we even played soccer there although only for 3 weeks on Sundays.

Kurt: Where?

Fritz: At Buchenwald.

Kurt: Oh, yes? "Buchenwald I can't forget you 'cause my destiny is you..."

Sophie: Well, well, the children used to sing that.

FAR AWAY FROM CASABLANCA

Fritz (Interview): What counts is always how it ends. This remains the permanent impression. If you are doing well in the end then everything is fine, then you'll forget the hard days or the unhappy days. And since I was doing very well in the end, I have only the best memories of Casablanca. Of course I had bad times there but you push them away or forget about it; that's life.

CASABLANCA

Of the Good Times During the Bad Times

Kurt (Interview): A family like the Coriats you will not find another one in the world! I also introduce them to my wife when I went back to visit them, and they had not forgotten about me. They welcomed me with "In the end you have come home, my son"! These are the things I can never forget about. And these are the memories of Morocco and Casablanca...
I even went so far as to put my whole family into a bus and went with them on a round trip of Morocco because I wanted to show my children and grandchildren where their grandpa had lived.

Sophie (Interview): Now, Casablanca is a colorful pleasant memory. But today, life is far away from Casablanca. I went back once to visit Flor, in 1972, I believe. So, it is the personal relationships that remain at last. But one has to take care of them, they don't remain by themselves.

Flor: I'm so happy you like it!

Sophie: Yes, I like it a lot! I do not exactly have a present for you but I would like to show you something. It's the photo album.

Sophie: If you find a photograph that you like to have, I would be pleased if you take it!

Flor: This is you. And this, what was his name?

Sophie: Roger!

Flor: Roger, the one who was gorgeous! Who is this? I don't know her.

Sophie: Of course, this is Olga.

Flor: Olga? That can't be true! I have to tell her, we sometimes speak on the phone.

Sophie: Do you believe Olga would like to have this picture?

Flor: I believe so. It is a good picture. Well, I will take this one.

Kurt: Good day, mate. Well, I have seen you walk faster before. Though, I neither move like a gazelle either.

Fritz: It is so hot one gets tired just from sitting. Hello Kurt.

Kurt: Have you noticed this?

Fritz: They are wonderful.

Kurt: But smell on them! Well, what do you say?

Fritz: Say, do you really want to travel with the caravan?

Kurt: Well, I would like to but...

Fritz: No, that's nothing for you. The responsibility is too big.

Kurt: But.... I've driven for 40 years without causing a car accident.

Fritz: And I have smoked for 40 years and now I may no longer. That's no good. There are some things you may not do anymore.

Kurt: Just look at...

Fritz: Kurt, you can travel on your own but you cannot take your wife with you!

Kurt: Pardon me!?

Fritz: You can go alone on the caravan but without your wife. The risk is too high!

Kurt: No, no...

Fritz: Be rational!

Kurt: But it is indeed the most comfortable way of traveling - it's my own hotel...

Fritz: Sell it!

Kurt: Selling!! No! I have Mathias, I have...

Fritz: Well, then give it to your grandchildren!

Kurt: No, to give it... - I will wait a little while before I give it away!

Fritz: Our future is in bed not in a car. That's the way it is, believe me!

Kurt: The future in bed?

Fritz: Yes, trust me!

Kurt: well, that's just like you!

Fritz: Well, I mean, just sleeping, nothing else.

Kurt: I see, well...

CASABLANCA

Of the Good Times During the Bad Times

Fritz: Say, where is your wife?

Kurt: She's preparing a snack for us. You do want something to eat, don't you?

Fritz: I didn't come because of it. But also on account of that. Alright, let's go have a snack. And how are you besides? Are you in good health?

Kurt: Yes, just tired. I'm always tired.

Fritz: Well, when I get as old as you I will probably be tired, too, in about 10, 12 years...

Kurt: What year were you born? 1918?

Fritz: 1917. But late in 17, very late!

Fritz- Interview: Nowadays I don't go there every week anymore. We have both become much older and let's say more invalid. If we have lunch, after the meal he takes a nap in bed and I fall asleep on the sofa for about an hour. Then we slowly have a cup of coffee and I go back to my place. It's not very exciting, we only chat about the old days, and the present days are not worth chatting about because nothing is happening. We both have a very simple ideal in the future: We want to live to see the European Soccer Championship to take place in Vienna; I think that is our only wish for the moment. So, this is in... I think in 2008, so that's 5 years from now. I don't know if we will live until then, it would be nice though. If we don't live until then that's simply bad luck! Or the Championship is in bad luck. However!

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Fritz: You know what I'm thinking about?

Kurt: No?

Fritz: Of all our acquaintances...

Kurt: Yes...

Fritz: Of all with who we went along for so many years, who is left besides you and me?

Kurt: I don't know anybody.

Fritz: Ralph is no more...

Kurt: Well, and the well-known ones, what do I know, like Langnas. He died many years ago.

Fritz: And Wolf? Has he too...?

Kurt: Who? Heinz Wolf?

Fritz: Yes, him.

Kurt: He died 2 years ago in Paris. But considering all of the friends: Who is left for you? The old guy from Schmelz...

Fritz: Yes, the 92 year old. But you know, we went away but they all stayed and remained the same. But we have developed.

Kurt: We changed totally. And in certain ways, that was good for us.

Fritz: It was... if we hadn't had that many troubles...

Kurt: Yes, if we hadn't had the troubles...

Fritz: ...it would have been a good time, a good experience for us.

Kurt: Indeed it was a very, very good experience.

Fritz: Anyway. What I like best here, there are no bugs, no mosquitoes or anything...

Kurt: Thank goodness!