



LOLA BIBERSTEIN

The fifteenth day of trial

Presiding Judge: The Court calls the next witness, Lola Biberstein.

(Witness Lola Biberstein stands up.)

Presiding Judge: Will the witness please state her personal data?

Witness: Lola Bieberstein, 52 years old, married, Jewish, no relationship to the defendants.

Presiding Judge: I advise the witness to speak the truth in accordance with Article 107 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Making false declarations is punishable with a prison term of up to five years. Do the parties wish to submit any requests regarding the mode of hearing of the witness?

Prosecution: No.

Defense: No.

Presiding Judge: Therefore, the witness will testify without taking an oath. The witness has been summoned at the request of the defense to present the activities of defendant Alice Orłowski. Does the witness recognize her? The witness has been summoned in relation to the allegation that Orłowski helped prisoners during her stay in the camp.

Witness: I do not know much about it. Orłowski spread terror in the Płaszów camp. My daughter worked there in the laundry and claimed that Orłowski treated prisoners working in the laundry in a completely different way than the rest of the female prisoners. She demonstrated some human feelings towards my daughter. One day, a woman who had stayed in Auschwitz for a long time arrived at the camp. My daughter asked her whether her brother in Auschwitz was still alive. She told her that he was dead for sure, because she had seen his clothes being loaded onto a train to be taken away. My daughter fell into despair and started crying. Then, Orłowski came in and asked my daughter why she was crying, but she wouldn't tell Orłowski at first. Then, she said that her brother had died in Auschwitz. Orłowski promised her to find out if her brother was alive. After a few weeks, my daughter



got a message from Auschwitz to say that her brother was not dead. It was a time when Orlowski showed her human side to my daughter.

Presiding Judge: Did she provide any help to other female prisoners?

Witness: She treated laundry workers very humanely, but I heard she would often beat prisoners outside in the camp.

Presiding Judge: What does the witness mean by outside in the camp?

Witness: Outside the laundry. I personally do not know how she behaved, but I heard that she sometimes beat prisoners at the roll call square. I remember that everybody was happy when Orlowski arrived and came into our block during my stay in Birkenau. It seemed to us, the women who had stayed in Płaszów, that somebody very close to us had arrived, somebody we knew. Maybe it was caused by the fear we felt in the camp, because we were still unaware of the situation in the Auschwitz camp. Orlowski took a hundred women from Birkenau to work in her *kommando*, which proves that her behavior was not so bad towards women who worked with her.

Presiding Judge: Are there any questions?

Prosecutor Szewczyk: When did the witness work under Orlowski's command and where?

Witness: I never worked under her command, but my daughter did. My daughter is currently abroad, which is why I have been summoned.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: When did the events described by the witness take place?

Witness: At the end of 1943 in Płaszów, and at the end of 1944 in Birkenau.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Is the witness sure? Orlowski herself claims she never worked in Birkenau.

Witness: She was in Birkenau and she selected a hundred women to work with her in Budy.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Orlowski herself states she worked in Budy and Rajsko.

Witness: As my daughter told me, when Orlowski arrived at Birkenau and came into her block, she asked my daughter to choose a hundred women to work with her in Budy. Each of



the female prisoners wanted to leave with Orłowski. Then, another female *Sturmmann* called my daughter out of the barrack and beat her badly. It was a problem of rivalry, because it was my daughter whom Orłowski asked to select those women, and not that guard. We were not taken to Budy at that time.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Did the witness stay in the Płaszów camp for the entire year of 1944?

Witness: For the entire year.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Can the witness say anything about Orłowski's activities from her own observations?

Witness: No, I cannot.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: What was her reputation among female prisoners?

Witness: She was the terror of the camp.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: We know that guards would spare their own workers and take their anger out on other prisoners. I wanted to emphasize it, because Orłowski, according to all witnesses, was the terror of the camp.

Witness: I was accustomed to the situation in the Płaszów camp, which is why it seemed to me she was better. We feared other people, who were worse than she was.

Defense Attorney Walas: Did defendant Orłowski grant any favors to the witness' daughter without expecting anything in return?

Witness: Yes, she did; unselfishly and voluntarily.

Defense Attorney Walas: Did defendant Orłowski steal during searches? Can the witness say anything about it?

Witness: No, I cannot.

Defense Attorney Walas: Has the witness heard what reputation Orłowski had among the prisoners in Budy?

Witness: The women were very pleased with Orłowski. She was known as a good person.



Defense Attorney Walas: Is it possible that those women survived the camp thanks to her?

Witness: Yes, it is.

Defense Attorney Walas: What kind of barracks were there in Płaszów?

Witness: They were wooden.

Defense Attorney Walas: Were there any stairs in front of the barracks? If yes, were they wooden or stone?

Witness: They were diverse. Some barracks had stairs; others didn't have them.

Defense Attorney Walas: What were the doorsteps made of?

Witness: They were wooden with a stone underpinning.

Defense Attorney Walas: Has the witness heard if Orłowski killed someone in Płaszów, especially a child? There would have been a lot of talk about it in the camp for sure?

Witness: I never heard of it.

Defense Attorney Walas: How can the witness describe Orłowski? Was she a regular guard or was she particularly cruel?

Witness: I can say that she was not the worst person in Płaszów. Sometimes she beat us, because, I think, she was told to do so. When she was alone with female prisoners, she seemed humane.

Defense Attorney Walas: Did Orłowski beat prisoners for violating rules or on a whim?

Witness: If a prisoner didn't stand straight in the row, Orłowski would beat her. She might have reacted that way out of irritation.

Defense Attorney Walas: Around what time did Orłowski come to Auschwitz?

Witness: I don't know exactly.

Defense Attorney Walas: What season was it?



Witness: I don't remember. It was in 1944.

Presiding Judge: Are there any questions?

Prosecution: No.

Defense Attorney Walas: No.

Presiding Judge: The witness is excused.