

# Surviving With False Identities

## The Ingenuity of a Mother

**June 27, 1928** —Marie Midler is born in Warsaw, Poland to Eugenia and Michal Midler. She is the second of three children. Older brother Jezyk dies as an infant. The youngest sibling is a sister, Halina.



Jezyk with his mother, Eugenia.



Eugenia, Michal, Marie (with flag) and Halina, Poland, circa 1930.

Marie (2nd from the right), age 9, and Halina (left) with two friends.



**1929-1939**—The family moves to Pabianice, Poland. Michal is a dentist and is drafted into the Polish army in 1939 as a captain but is not heard from after 1941. It was later discovered that he died in the massacre of Polish officers in the Katyn Forest by the Soviet NKVD, forerunners of the KGB.

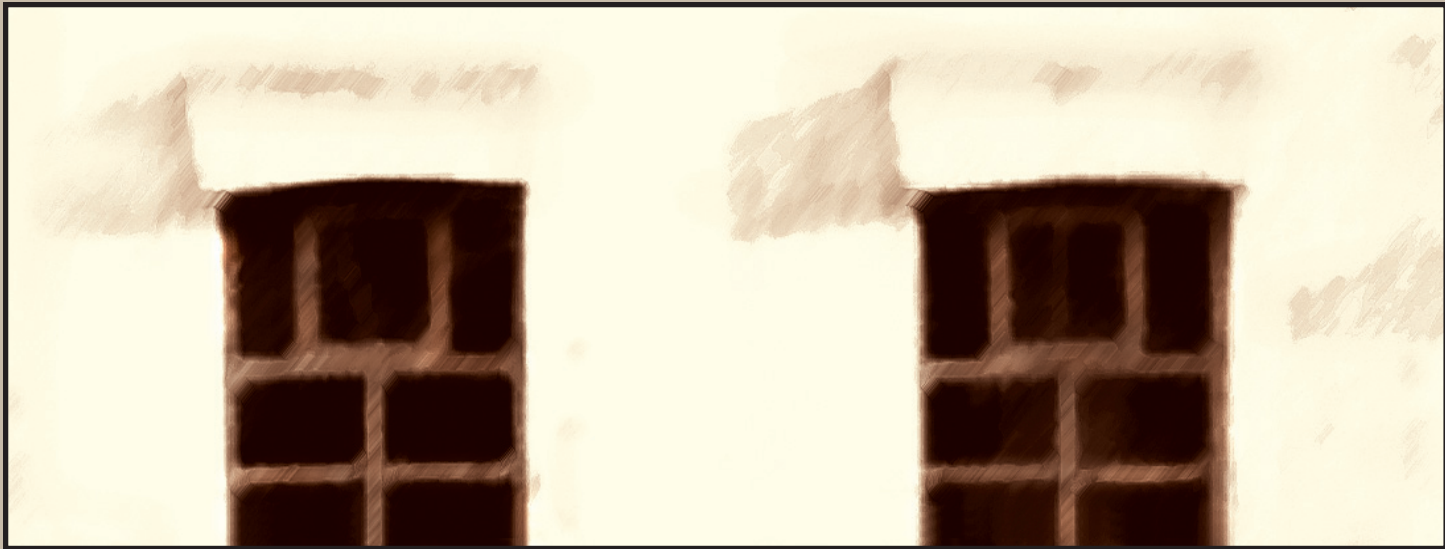
**1939-1940**—After Germany invades Poland, Eugenia, with her two daughters and in-laws move back to Warsaw, Poland, hoping to blend with anonymity in a larger city.



**November 1940-September 1942** —The family is forced into the Warsaw Ghetto. They manufacture military uniforms. Eugenia was able to smuggle valuable gold coins into the Ghetto by disguising them as coat buttons. As the wife of a Polish officer, Eugenia is able to leave the Ghetto occasionally with a pass that allows her to purchase food and clothing. However, it becomes more and more difficult for Eugenia to leave and then return to the Warsaw Ghetto.

Sketch of one of the gates of the Warsaw Ghetto at Grzybowska Street.

**September 1942-October 1942** —As more Jews are selected for deportation, Eugenia worries about her daughters. In one instance, Marie is not on the usual worker’s list, but appointed to another group. Fearing that this might lead to deportation to the concentration camps, Eugenia instructs Marie to rejoin her when the guards are distracted. When Eugenia is nearly prevented from returning to the Ghetto, the family discusses survival strategies and all three are smuggled out of the Ghetto with other workers.



Sketch of windows of a European factory.

**October 1942-November 1942** — After escaping the Ghetto, they use the smuggled American gold coins to obtain false papers. Posing as gentiles, they change their names to Malinowska . They stay for a few weeks with a friend on the Aryan side of Warsaw. However, there is an investigation of the friend, and fearful that the family will be identified as Jews, they quickly flee the apartment.

**November 1942-October 1943** — On the instructions of her mother, 14 year old Marie applies for work on a labor farm in Warsaw to avoid capture. However, Eugenia and sister Halina can only find work outside of Berlin in the forced labor factory of Boetzow-West. Here they work in the Oemeta Chemical works Schleifscheiben factory making dental drill bits. With her constant ingenuity, Eugenia is able to work out a trade to reunite her small family by trading a Russian girl who wants to work at the labor farm for Marie. The family then obtains factory ID’s for all three members.

**November 1943-April 1945** —The reunited family lives in the barracks outside of the factory. Although there are over 100 other workers in the factory, there are only 5 other Jewish people working there. The factory evacuates all workers on news that the Russians are coming. The family goes into hiding.

**April 28, 1945** —The family is liberated by the Russian army and travel by cattle car back to Pabianice, Poland. They find a furnished apartment that was vacated by a Russian girl of German descent.

Sketch of Russian soldiers liberating an area in Eastern Europe.

