



# RESCUE ✧ RETURN ✧ RESTORE

*June 2023*

## That is All I Have

By Alicia H, Ezra volunteer in Poland

She is cheerful with open arms eagerly waiting to give a hug. Her laughter brought joy to the small hotel room. As she sits on the bed and with excitement, she calls her son who is in Slovakia to share about how people care to know her story.

After ending the call she points to the carry-on Minnie mouse suitcase and says:

*"That's all I have".*

With hesitation for a moment she then begins to share.

*"I was born in 1941 in Crimea. I am already old...  
I am a holocaust survivor. We are few people...  
I already survived one war.  
In 1943 I was in Russia, which was occupied by Germans."*

At the time of Zina's birth there was war between German and Russian occupation in Crimea. After sharing her weighty words with strength, she spoke about how later on she married her husband who was from Russia.

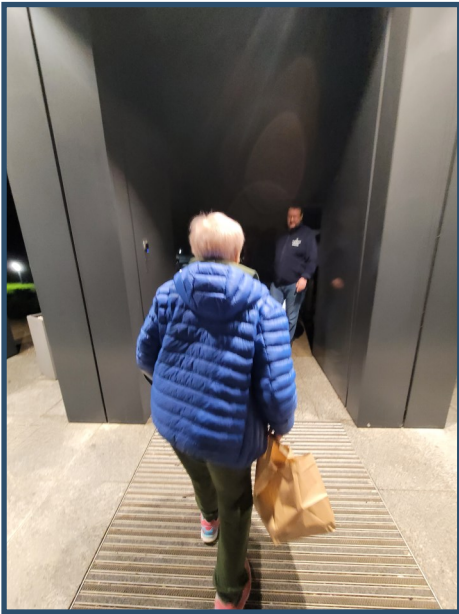
Then grinning with pride said:

*"I was running, I was dancing Jewish dances!  
I am proud to be Jewish.  
I have never changed my name or surname.  
I was proud and I am still proud."*

Before the war started in Kharkiv, Ukraine she was living alone. When Russia began attacking and bombing in Kharkiv she fled.

*"I had to leave."*





She left Ukraine with only what she had on. She escaped to Slovakia. Her son who lived there brought her to Poland. She waited in Poland as documents were being prepared for her move to Israel.

*"I already have family there in Israel. I have nephews I want to meet.*

*I have Holocaust survivor status in Israel.*

*I believe it will be good for me there!"*

Zina points up, shrugs and expresses her thoughts about making Aliyah.

*"When the war started maybe it was the help of God, maybe not but it has helped me avoid the war. I can hope that I will find my way.*

*I always wanted to go to Israel, but my husband didn't want to go.*

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*After he died, I decided to make Aliyah.*

*I still have a lot of energy.*

*I love life. I love people. That is who I am.*

*I think everything will be okay.*

*God has given me a beautiful life.*

*Now I am happy.*

*We will see what will be in Israel".*

The day Zina had been dreaming and hoping for her entire life had arrived. When asked the morning of the flight how she felt about making Aliyah she said:

*"I have not slept; I am too excited!"*

With her Minnie-mouse suitcase and a handbag she gets on the bus to the airport. Before checking in she was joking around, laughing, and chatting away. Once the time came to say goodbye, she gave one last hug and went to the gate with cheerful anticipation. As I left, I took one last glance and thought about her hope that lies ahead. She has seen war twice and now she will get to see her dream of making Aliyah a reality.

Zina arrived home on Israeli soil in May 2023.

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