

Tape made on May 30, 1975 - Durango, Colorado

When I was in Russia I used to live in a big nice house. We have really beautiful country down there. We used to go to school there and we have a really nice school. We have to dress up in uniforms for any school. Each school has a different style of uniforms. One fellow was put in jail and when they put him in jail he wasn't guilty. Then he wrote a song; a Russian song, to tell the people that he wasn't guilty. Then Katherine sang the song in the Russian language, just as he wrote it.

When we decide to go to Bethlehem, Palestine we were riding on a boat. The people were singing a song in Russian. Katherine then sang this song in the Russian language.

Katherine and Mary talked about cooking, **including a recipe for lentil soup with Swiss chard.**

When I used to live in Russia we used to have a house for the summer time, a house way close to the beach. It was a big nice house. We used to go to the beach and swim. We have a beach and we enjoy it very much. But in the wintertime we have someone to stay there to take care of it for us and to keep the place in order. My father had a business making lots of things. Then she talked about the town in **Arabic**. **We had a summer house on the beach, near a port, so we can take trips on the boat. The caretakers took care of it after summer when we went back to town. It rained and snowed a lot. Mentions a town called Siska(?) And Kiev, the town where I lived had excellent schools and highly educated people. My father sold wholesale zaatar (a spice mixture) and incense and other things. But he didn't sell retail. People come to buy things from him to resell. Kiev is a very civilized city. When you go to school you all have to wear a special dress, with a pinafore. The apron was brown for weekdays and on Sunday, it was white.**

**We all lived in a building, everyone had their own apartment. There was a midnight curfew the night my sister in law went into labor and no one could go to get the midwife to help her. The doors were barred and the doors were locked, so he opened a window and they came back through the window. The midwife could leave the next morning through the door after the baby was born. There were mountains and caves nearby that people used to go to live in the open air. They would go for the summer. (She names the places.) And they have lots of fruits and vegetables over there in Russian and they tasted a lot better than what we have here.**

**My father, when he lived in Russia, there was a lot of trouble there. They had to escape, so they ran away to the monks. They made papers for them so they could go back to Palestine and escape the fighting that was happening in Russia. They had a lot of money when they left, most of it was paper money. When we tried to spend it, nobody would take it because Russia was at war. But they told us to keep it because after the war, it might be worth more. My father lost every cent he had. One of my brothers brought the money back. He said, 'I have money here – boxes of it.' He kept it as a souvenir from the time that we were there. My father had a lot of land and he had to sell the land for the family to live. Saleh, Incula and Mitri, they all had many children – and we all lived off the money from the sale of the land. Saleh and Incula found work, but it wasn't enough to live on, because the business wasn't making it.**

More discussion followed in Arabic about the family, their business and other topics.

going to Hadley's with Julia, Joe, Kathy and J.A. and other things. Much of it was in Arabic. When I want something I don't care how much it costs but I do not want to waste things like they do in Mexico. That's the way I was trained; you can't train me now.

Thank God, everything is alright, no complaints. I would really like to go to Mexico. Mary suggested to Katherine that when she went to see George that maybe he could take her to Mexico. The Katherine said, when I go to Mexico I would really like to see the family. Incula, he really takes me around. He takes me to Monterey. He take me to Saltillo, Coahuila and San Pedro de las Colonias, Coahuila where we used to live, where Julia was born and you know Torreon and so many places I used to know. You know how long since I have been there? You know you forget.

When I went down to San Pedro it wasn't so good lately. You know why that town, they used to plant cotton all around the fields and they used to sell it and make good money. The people have the stores and they make very, very good business. The Mexicans when they make money they like to spend for the things what they need. They used to do very good business there. It was a small town but it was all right.

First they used to live in Saltillo and I don't know something came up. I don't understand what happened, they were broke. Chon and his father and the family were broke. So they borrowed money from the Syrian people in Saltillo and went to San Pedro. They opened up a little business and they did very well. They sell everything and I don't know just what. They used to go shopping and buy things for the store. Each time they go to buy things for the store and every time they go there they brought back presents for the family. They bring something for each one. The last trip they went, that was when the accident happened to Julia's father.

When we were first married we lived in San Pedro. They came down and we get the marriage in Saltillo. The people in Saltillo they work very nice together (Arabic discussion).

Oh Boy, I don't know, things seem like a dream. You know you can't believe it. They sold the place in San Pedro; nobody lives there anymore. Well Mitri he move, I don't know where. I think after his brother, my husband, passed away the business went down. Then like I say, maybe they stopped the cotton planting. When I left they were still growing cotton and doing business all right. After a while they don't plant the cotton. I went to see it after I went to unknown town. I continued to live in San Pedro for 6 or 7 months, something like that.

After a while my mother and father asked my sister Jamila to take me back to (unknown) town. There was a better living there but no, I used to live there and it isn't good. (Arabic discussion) Don't bother at all.

But like Victoria said, she says, when her son passed away she felt bad but not as bad as after you left. She says she cried after you left, but every time you go around her she cried. She says please stay here. When I could still see them, I think my son is still living. Oh yes, she was very, very nice. I never argue with her. I never bother to say things. Norcuvella (not sure of spelling) came in once in a while taking the orders and all that. Like I say, I was setting down and Julia and Chon were playing. I don't know what they were fighting about. Chorella came down and they give me heck. Hollered and stuff, I just set like she is not talking to me, no fooling. One of the cousins that is now dead come in and says what happened, why is she mad? I says I don't know; the kids are fighting, and she thinks I have to do something, kids will be kids. You know everybody there was nice to me in Saltillo and they were talking about everything. You can't see people like that.

He, Suleiman, saw my picture and knows who I am, that's a fact. They mentioned that him, her first husband, passed away and she have a family and all that stuff. They were with Jamila then. I had left Saltillo, just a short time. Then he told the people he wasn't married.

His wife called and when she brought the baby, with the little girl in her hands, they said set down. We will take the baby and show it to him. He felt embarrassed but he didn't say nothing. I had the address before he came but they couldn't do anything about it. He didn't tell the people; they told me about it. When we were married we went to Mexico. I was like a crazy nut helping, selling and doing things because the language he didn't understand at all. I have to be in the store and back to the house. George was born in the house. I had to take care of George, put him in the bed like I did you. Give him the bath and change him. Then I go to the store. One time I was giving him a bath and his uncle came to stay with us. He took the train out to the store. (Arabic discussion) I take care of the customer, wrapped George up in a towel, put the blanket on him and then I went down and finished what I have to do like I did in Jerome, Arizona with you, Every day I am in the store at 8 o'clock. I am up at 6 o'clock. I used to call him, fix the bed and give him his breakfast. Trying to fix something for lunch, give you a bath and give you something to eat and put you to bed. At 8 o'clock I go to the store. About 10 or 11 o'clock, maybe you wake up but you play. You don't holler and you don't cry, you get used to it. I go and give you food. Other people would try to feed you and do for you, but you said, "I don't want it. I want my Mommy". No fooling, I go down and I feed you and I ate a little bite so quick. I change your diaper and put you in bed. The neighbors used to see the diapers every day when I put them on the line. He was surprised why I put the diapers on the line. He didn't hear no noise, no crying. He told me that when I was down with you closing the store. I told him that it was because that is what I did all the time. You know, I had to set you down and I had to work. Do you think he made the money, no? He came from New York, he didn't know about business. He was there for only a short time because he can't make it. (Arabic discussion) They gave him the things wholesale but in the Los Angeles business was slow, too bad and no good. The salesman gave him the idea to go to South San Francisco. You know the salesmen go around. He talked to the salesman to see if he knew of a good place for business. They give you that and you buy more merchandise from them. It's good for them. So he told us about that and it was good. There were lots of Mexicans and Italians and very little American people, very seldom and Greek. Well Jerome, Arizona was a really good place and we make good money. The town made us move when the mines stopped and the Mexicans don't have enough money. So that is why we had to move someplace. (Arabic discussion) That's why the salesman gave him the idea to go to South San Francisco. Once before we start a business. You know that we used to do a grocery store in Los Angeles. (Arabic discussion) A long discussion that was mostly in Arabic about when they were in Mexico, Palestine, South San Francisco and that period of time. When you, Mary, came back from Palestine on the boat I met the boat. Your father stayed in South San Francisco to take care of the business.

*(The following is a translation of a part of two tapes made by Katherine Farhat. The person who did the translation in June, 2006 is Bashir Anastas, a friend of Kathy Kenny's. Bashir Anastas is from Bethlehem, Palestine. Kathy is a granddaughter of Katherine Farhat. I am placing this translation between translation that I made of these two tapes earlier.- Henry Bond)*

*Katherine Farhat Tapes, May 30, 1975 side B and August 8, 1971*

*Arabic translation by Bashir Anastas*

*(order of statements changed by Kathy Kenny to approximate chronology)*

*My father left me, and my sisters Jamile and Nah'me in Palestine for a year while he went to Russia. When my father left for Russia, I learned French in school in Bethlehem. We joined him and lived in Russia until 1913 or 14, when we went back to*

*Palestine.*

*{In Russia} There are mountains with grottos where people like to go to spend the summer. There were figs and olives and vegetables, which tasted much better than here. There was a lot of problems. They started killing people. They (Saade family ? ) tried to escape, and went to a priest who made some papers to allow them to escape. They had a lot of money - paper money. They were hoping that the money would regain its value, but they lost every cent. She asked him, "Where did you get the money?"*

*When we returned to Palestine, we had a hard time surviving. My father had a lot of land. He was forced to sell to provide for the family. There were a lot of mouths to feed. The land helped them survive. My brothers Mitri and Incula found work, but did not make much money.*

*When the war started in Mexico, the Carransitas came and took people's things. We lived in a big house, but we moved to a smaller one because we felt safer.*

*The Kabandes came to Saltillo before they went to San Pedro. The people in Saltillo were very nice. They stick together. They loved and helped each other; when they see someone in need, they take care of them.*

*My husband (Emelio Kabande) was killed when he went to Mexico City to shop for his store. Coming back, the train was stopped at the station in Saltillo. His brother Mitri decided to leave the train and get coffee. Someone caused an accident, many people died. He died in 1916, about 6 months after the girl was born. My daughter Elena lived only 5 or 6 months. She got the stomach flu. The doctor told me to feed her boiled rice, but I don't think that's good for any child.*

*After Emilio died, my mother and father asked Jamile to come (from Long Beach) and take me back with them. They thought I wasn't living well. But I was happy with my life. My sister in law Victoria said that she felt bad when her son died, but when I left, she cried and cried.*

*My father and mother wrote a letter to Jamile. They (Jamil and her husband Jamil Afana) came down. Jamile dressed very plain, although they had money. I used to sell them in Mexico to make money. I didn't realize it at the time.*

*I was 21 when I remarried (Solomon) Farhat. We came to Long Beach in 1919 and I met him. When we married, we went to Mexico. Over there you make better money. I had to be in the store and take care of George. Every day, I am in the store at 8 a.m. One time I was giving him a bath; his uncle came to stay with us. He said, Katina, come and talk to these people, we can't understand them.*

*You think he make the money? He came to New York and stayed a very short time because he couldn't make it. He wanted to do like his relatives - go out and sell. That's what he wanted to do. He started losing money. He was making a bit, but not enough. But a salesman gave him the idea to go to South San Francisco. Lots of Mexicans, Italians, and Greeks. Not too many American people.*

*Once, before we started in the business, he wanted to open a restaurant. He found a grocery store that was for sale, with a butcher shop. The butcher used to help me. In Mexico we had a maid and baby sitter; but in the US we were our own servants.*

*I can't believe what happened to me. Why did we go to Mexico? Because he was married and he was afraid I would file a suit against him. He used to write his cousins, and that's how they knew where he was. Charley Farhat, his cousin, was living by himself. I used to cook and wash for them. People don't appreciate it.*

*{After her return from Palestine in 1934) I went to New York to pick Mary up. He wasn't with me; he needed to stay for the business. When I came back, I didn't have any money. The Genso (?) brothers met me at the boat and helped me to the train. I didn't have money to pay for the train, but they gave me the money. My cousin Olga was mad that I didn't come to her; she said "We wouldn't tell anyone." They were ashamed that I was divorced.*