

Posted Friday, 25 February 2011 Oral History 2009 Alice Kern



Alice Kern grew up in a Romanian Jewish community. She survived the concentration camps at Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen during the War, and later settled in Portland, Oregon after her recovery. As part of Oregon's Sesquicentennial, Cedar Mill Community Library recorded interviews with local immigrants to learn about their experiences coming to and living in America. This is one of our interviews from 2009.

0:00 (Theme Music plays - clarinet, violin, jazz style)

Mark: Hello again. This is the last in our series of oral history podcasts for this year, and it's a special story we have to share with you. In honor of Oregon's Sesquicentennial, the Cedar Mill Community Library has been recording the stories of immigrants or descendents of recent immigrants to Oregon. In this audio, you will hear Alice Kern, a Romanian Jew who survived the holocaust and the concentration camps at Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen to eventually settle in the Portland area. Hers is a story of hope and perseverance, and I hope you enjoy it and the rest of our series. It has been an honor to record all of these amazing stories.

0:37 Mark: My name is Mark Richardson, and I'm a librarian at the Cedar Hills Community Library. Today I'm here with Alice, and she's going to tell us a little about herself. So Alice, won't you tell us your name?

My name is Alice Kern - K-E-R-N.

0:52 Mark: Where did you come from, and what year did you come to Oregon?

I came from Romania. Actually, I was first deported to two concentration camps. Then I came to Portland.

1:09 Mark: What year did you come to Portland?

What year? 1948.

1:15 Mark: So originally you were from Romania?

Yes, the border of Romania and Hungary.

1:20 Mark: So was it the Hungarian portion of Romania?

It used to be. After the First World War, then the Romanians took over again, and it became Romania.

1:35 Mark: Tell us a little about why you ended up in Oregon and what the circumstances were. You mentioned the concentration camps.

I had a very fortunate, beautiful upbringing. My mother was very interested (in) my brother, who was about less than two years older. She just exposed us to all the amenities of life - theatres, movies, vacations. Not my father so much, because he was a very religious Jew. His belief was restriction. My mother made sure that he would take me for walks every Sunday morning. I was so proud of him - nice tall man, blue eyes, blond hair, and tipping his hat to all my teachers as we met them.

It was a beautiful era for me between. I was born in 1923, and stayed home until 1944. I had no idea there was a war. Actually, I just went to school. My life was dancing to music. And we never had a car, we never had water in the house, we had to go to the bathroom to the turd yard, someplace. But, we were happy, we were very content. My father was a very curious young man, so he travelled the region before he settled down and found my mother across the river, which divided us from Czechoslovakia. And he brought her over. She was a young girl, and he opened the first cheese shop in Sighet. He knew the peasants all around because he used to travel to see, in case for a business later on. They came to town, the peasants, and sat down on the street once a week, selling the cheeses. My father said 'Listen, this is not hygienic. You better let me have it in my store. I have some shelves with screens. I will buy it from you.' And so they did, they sold the cheeses. He made good on that. The first business. Then the sky fell.

4:45 *In 1944 Hitler called up the King. He would like to deport all the Jewish people and made dirty lies, and without the King answering, (the King) went into hiding. He didn't want to collaborate but he had a young son. By then, the Iron Guard in Romania started to be very strong. They were persecuted already, the Jewish people. We had to wear the yellow star, for everybody to see we were Jewish. I didn't care. I was proud to wear it. But, it was a depressing time for such a happy upbringing now to be afraid. I didn't know why I should be afraid because they never told us about the war coming or started in Germany. There was no war. Hitler just entered all the countries in Europe by saying, 'I have to deport you Jewish people'. Everybody let him do it.*

6:17 *In 1939, I think, the Italians came through my hometown. They were shipped to the Russian front. The route is north. Sighet was on the north then came Poland and Russia. They came through Sighet, my hometown. They saw the Jewish people humiliated, kicked off of the sidewalks. And many other things - standing in line. They gave the Hungarians authority, the Germans. The Romanians disappeared. And so, the Hungarians took the liberty to fight for their rights because Hitler promised to annex back Transylvania for them. And they took liberties. So, it was very, very hard to take, but as young girls, you know 19-20 years old, we didn't care. My parents had a hard time to cope with all this humiliation against the Jews. My father got a heart attack - he was 52 years old - and passed away. And I thought at that point, I died too, because I loved him, you know. So, no father. My mother was not very good in the business, but she was there standing from morning to evening. It got worse and worse.*

8:24 1944, orders came all over town. They opened ghettos. Luckily, my house fell into the ghetto area. My friends all came over, they each were set in different homes. My mother opened our duplex and in every room, a family moved in. They had to throw the furniture out to sleep on the floor, accommodating them. I'm still sleeping in a feather bed. We had one nice warm room, and the kitchen was ours. And then, they started to humiliate us by taking us one by one next door to search. And girls came back crying. They didn't know what was going on. When it was my turn, I had a little silver necklace with a Jewish star, and this Hungarian soldier with a turkey feather (said) 'You take that off and give it to me!' So I took it off and gave it to him. I mean it has no value. I still had my life. I was allowed to go back. My mother was there, and I always felt sorry for her because she was so good to everybody, and helping, and social, and family ways. Now she was sitting there like in a coma.

10:25 One early morning, 1944, I think it was still very, very early, they knocked on our gate. '(They said) 'Get dressed and go outside.' What should I take along? My favorite grand piano? I just grabbed a very nice cover from the couch, I went over... (Laughing) They let us bake a bread first. The bakery was next door. When this was done, we went outside, but we had two little children with us, so my mother, she was on one end, the children in the middle, and I was on the other side. We just clinged to each other. I had my mother; actually, that's how I felt secure. I started writing my book, down the street. I knew where everybody, where they lived. Every little pebble on the street I used to know. They deposited us in the synagogue, only for men, overnight. A storm broke out. No washing, no combing hair. No nothing. No food. Marching through this town. My favorite little town, where I grew up. I keep on looking to the left and to the right, etching it in my memory. I wasn't aware of it, until the railroad station. There was a long line with cattle cars - box cars without windows. They just delivered animals in it. They started to separate us in groups and forced us to get into those cars, and I think my mother and the two kids, we were the last one of that group. As we came, we had to really climb high. We dumped down right by the entrance. That was it. Where we go? What's going to happen? And, that was going on for three days and two nights. No food. No water. The other half of the wagon, somebody passed away. We heard some screaming or crying but you don't have time to listen. (Laughing) It was too scary, so you sit, you sit.

13:39 Then on the third day, the cattle cars opened - it was still dark outside - and we were told, 'Jump down!' My first instinct was, but my mother how can she jump; it was high. I pulled my hair down, I should look old. You know, I didn't want to look pretty anymore. And so, I jumped down. We get an order - 'Start walking'. Somebody called out my little nephew, Silviu was his name, he was thought wearing... my mother gave him to wear ...my brother's coat. It was way down to the ground. Somebody maybe he looked old enough so they sent him to the men's selection group. Right away men were different, going that way. We girls, women and children in one long line. So we walked ahead in the dark. This lady who shared with us the house, she broke out crying. She knows we were going to be killed. Boy, was she screaming. So a German soldier walked by, and said 'Well madame, we are not murderers.' At that time, I was facing an officer. The officer never talks. Motions right, left. And the people get the message. I looked at him, and like I say, I always used to philosophize about faces. He had a good, nice face. I thought, gee, the uniform... he was handsome, I wasn't afraid. But he motioned for me to go to my right, and my mother with the two little kids to the left. Not thinking, when they started

to go to the left, I just put my foot out and started to follow. No sooner, a soldier came; he almost stabbed me because I disobeyed this officer. This was the first time I faced the infamous Dr. Mengele. Of course, he sent hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people to the gas chambers right away. Women, children, pregnant women. He had an eye who to send to the right and left, see. So I went to my right, and here I discovered my best girlfriend from home, with her mother and with her sister. (She said) 'Come on, come on, let's walk together.' And they took me. From then on, were always together. That was Auschwitz, the death camp with the gas chambers and the crematoriums. But I never heard about it. Even later when they talked about crematoriums, what did I know? What were they talking? But they were there. I had to face it three times during the summer time because I lost lots of weight.

18:00 *But in 1944 the camp was all built up. There were previous German girls already there, Jewish and non-Jewish. They had to build the roads and the barracks. When we came, everything was clay and not a blade of grass or a tree or a bush. They placed us in a barrack with cubbyholes, but before that, we had to go into a hall and of course completely undressed. They shaved our beautiful curls, and then they threw at us a grey sack dress and some worn out shoes. As we were still standing there, a girl came by and threw my old shoes to my feet. She said, 'They are too small, nobody can wear it.' I had to wear my own favorite shoes for a long time until the weather turned awful - rain and mud - and we started to visit the graves. We didn't have much to do in the beginning in Auschwitz, but they knew - the supervisors, the German soldiers and the women - they knew, 1944, they knew they lost the war, but we had no idea. We never talked politics or anything. So they never came out. Only the women came to count us every dawn. The stars were still out. We had to stand outside, five abreast, to be counted. At lunch, again. At noon, again. And before we went home. We always had to be counted. They wanted to see (that) nobody should run away. No work. I thought it was even worse, because we were just sitting around. And then my girlfriend's mother decided. She looked at s poor us with bald heads, (and said) 'You know what, I better start teaching you cooking, so when we survive and go home, you know how to cook.' She kept us busy. Can you imagine for two thousand, five hundred people we were deported that day, two hundred fifty were selected to live, and two mothers, and one of my girlfriends' mothers? So, I was fortunate. I was fortunate. We stayed in this cubbyhole, feet-to-feet, hungry and thirsty. Of course, the Polish people had the upper hand. They had a little room for themselves, nicely decorated and they came by. This one, she was the supervisor, and walked up and down and cursed us. (She said) 'You are so lucky to be here. And while you were sleeping in your warm beds, we had to build all these barracks and the roads.' But later on, I found out they had food in those days. Now, when we came, there was no more food. So what we got early is at dawn - a drink of hot something - they called it "coffee". It was very, very sweet. And a slice of bread and off we had to go to work then, later on.*

22:47 Mark: **Were these Polish people also prisoners in the camp or were they the ones administrating the camp?**

No, no, they were the supervisors. They were accepted, they were accepted. The Germans never showed up anymore. In fact, when there were orders to select a barracks to be annihilated then they sent our own people - the Jewish men - to take us into the gas chambers. Those soldiers, they had parties with their women. They never wanted to come out again. That was almost the end of the war, and they knew that the Russians are approaching, so they were afraid, and disgusted, and didn't want to come out. OK,

they had no idea. In the meantime, we go to work nightshift, and then we came back once they tattooed our arm. They said to girls in their cots, 'We are going to just give you a number.' She said, 'You give me your arm.' So I stretched out my arm. And she poked in those numbers. And I thought, gee, she was an artist, because some other girls, they got huge letters and huge numbers, crooked, some got it up on their arms. So I thought, OK, that's ok with me, it didn't hurt, but it turned out that they lost our name. After that, the Zahl-Appell - the roll call - was never by name, just numbers.

25:01 Mark: Maybe you can tell us about getting out after you were in the concentration camps.

OK. In 1945, January, and we are ordered to get out and start walking. Snow-covered roads, everything frozen, girls had no more shoes, no food, no water. And they chased us from Auschwitz into Germany. So the Russians...we assume...as soon as we left the camp the Russians invaded. (Laughing) That's what we heard. What we left was so bad that it couldn't be liberated.

We walked to Germany and on and on, and it was depressing to see a large group of women, you know, and the people were on the street, they saw us. And only two soldiers, one in the back and one in the front. But they had the guns, so we couldn't fight them. In Germany, someplace, I lost all my friends. I don't know where they are so I could never double check where we were in Germany. But they put us in open cattle cars, and there a mass hysteria broke out because they were thirsty, and they had to drink their own urine, until a woman in a corner started to pray. And she said, 'Let's everybody pray', and then they quieted down. We all fell asleep. Next morning, I wake up - snow was falling on my head. I had a small spoon, I took it out, and I ate all the snow, from all over I could and so did the others. That was a lifesaver. Then we found ourselves in Bergen-Belsen in Germany. We heard that my best girlfriend was the supervisor of one of the cabins. She was the supervisor. When she heard that the transport was coming from where she used to be, she came running, and she said, 'Don't worry, I'll come and pick you up and take you to my own cabin.' I was always saved somehow. At this point, I was already with my aunt. She saved my life. She knew. She told me why my mother was sent to the left. If the children wouldn't have been there, she would have come with me to the right, but because Mengele didn't want to cause commotion, he sent her away with the children. Bergen-Belsen had no more crematoriums. At least no more gas chambers. We didn't have to be scared every moment that they are going to cremate us or gas us. Nothing to do. Nothing to do.

28:51 '45 January, February, March, the sun is shining and I stumble outside. I always used to love the sun. But now they got an order in that camp that the Allies are coming - the British, the Americans - 'You have to kill them all.' So how do you do that? They figured out there was a camp not too far away from ours infested with tuberculosis. They brought them over, and suddenly the girls are dying like flies - temperature, roaming around, and dying. Of course there is no doctor, no nothing. By then we had no more food, the last week of the war. No bread, so water? No water. And everyone is hysteric - they were thirsty.

30:10 That was already 1945, and I fell in a coma. I was very content. I was philosophizing maybe this is how people die because I couldn't hear, I couldn't see, nothing was hurting, but I was thirsty. My aunt really crawled out from the barrack and brought me a container of water. Everybody else was just crying

for water, but she couldn't walk anymore. The Nazis turned off the water supply, and the food supply was poisoned in the kitchen, because I was told by the liberators, by the Americans and the British. They could not understand. Why everything? No water? They turned off everything.

31:28 *I got a touch of TB. I fainted outside - just once - then my girlfriend, who was the barrack supervisor didn't let me go out anymore, and that was good. And then, when I fell in a coma, I wake up shooting outside, screaming and running. I opened my eyes, and I felt so disturbed, you know. I had such a peaceful sleep. The door opened, and a very handsome green beret hat peeks in. He shuts the door, but they come back and they speak English. So, I took some English back home... conversation. And they said, 'Don't worry, you are liberated. We'll take care of you.' And later on, I found out that these handsome young boys, they were the American Field Service men, they were always ahead of the marching groups of the soldiers. They built the Red Cross ambulance, and as they kept on penetrating Germany, all of the places, they discovered many, many other camps - nobody knew about it. And then, they eventually discovered ours which was tucked in deep in the woods, so they really saved my life too. We were liberated.*

33:23 *Now, it was a chaos there, you know. Some Swedish nurses show up. There is a young man in Sweden, Bernadotte, a Prince, he was sent to save the European Jews. He went to Hungary and falsified papers. Jewish people were already on the wagons to be deported, and he came running, showing they are not Jews and you cannot take them. He saved many lives. Now he sent the Red Cross nurses to Bergen-Belsen, and they told us that if you want to go to Sweden they are going to take us. But they took only the incapacitated ones. I couldn't walk, I couldn't eat, you know. I was less than fifty pounds by then, covered with lice. We looked like horrible walking skeletons. But they came, those young men with their stretchers and put us on it, and on trains and boats, and we wound up in Sweden. Plus, they cleaned us, and gave us clean clothes and food. Eventually it was allowed for a photographer to come in - it was a convalescent place - and he asked me to marry him. But he spoke German, and I spoke Hungarian (Laughing). I had a girlfriend and she was always in the middle. We used to take walks. That's about it. He said something in German to her, she translated to me - that was our conversation and our courtship. But it happened that I got better and they sent me to an army camp next to Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. It was horrible, horrible. It was like a shed, you know, it was very bad. But, somehow or another, I found my older brother in Paris who ran away, who escaped from the Nazi in 1938, on a bike, over the mountains to Spain. When I was in bed, I remember my mother showed me a letter from him, and I remembered the address - Doctor Copain, Madrid. And I called the nurse, 'Please send that to Madrid, and I'm looking for my brother.' And they found him. So he kept on encouraging me, 'Don't worry, I will come and get you. You will live with me' and so forth. But I didn't want to live with him because he was 14 years older and was very strict with us. (Laughing) And I said, 'No way, I want to be on my own.' And so, this nice German guy ... he was born in Austria ... he was taken eight weeks in Dachau, broke for life, and never wanted to talk about it. They were brainwashed never, ever should they say what happened there. He lost his father in the First World War He could never, never talk about it, he was so hurt. He was five years old. But I hear him talking about the Opera House in Vienna, and concerts. He could recite half an hour of poems that he used to recite when he was in grade school. Very intelligent man, and I always said if I were ever get married, I don't want a rich man, I want*

an intelligent man. (Laughing) and I found him. And whatever he saw in me, he found it. And we got married. He found out his brother lived in Portland.

38:50 Mark: What was his name?

Leo Kohn. K-O-H-N. They had a small grocery store on Hassalo Street someplace. Then they found out that his brother is alive, they were very close back home. 'We...You have to come.' We had to sell (our things). What did we sell? A few clothes. I gave away all my warm clothes for the Swedish, because my sister-in-law kept on saying, 'You don't need to bring anything warm - Portland is always summer.' That was in 1948. (Laughing) So I came without a coat, without a sweater. I left everything there.

39:47 Mark: What was your husband's name?

Hugo. He invented toys for the children. He was a good mathematician for the kids to help in physics... he knew everything. And yet, he could not advance. He wound up in a furniture factory here in Portland. For sixteen years, he was working, spraying furniture. And then, one day, he decided he knows enough and he went on his own without advertising. People came to him and loved him. He opened a little shop on S.E. 39th and Gladstone, and his name is still there. Somebody bought his name - Hugo Kohn - Furniture Refinishing. They even call today, 'Hugo Kohn, I have something to be refinished.' And those guys say, 'Sorry, he passed away.' (Laughing) See? Very intelligent, very, very special guy; anyway, but he also passed away three or four years ago.

41:09 Mark: About what year did you come to Portland?

1948.

41:13 Mark: (repeating) '48.

We settled first on the Coast. The children said, 'No, for us, it's too far, so you better come to town.' And they put us in Rose Schnitzer Manor, the old age, retirement place. It was very beautiful. We were only twenty-one people, one small building in those days. The population found out what a nice life we had and everything, then they started to build additions. That I didn't like. Some just died overnight, our best, you know, acquaintances. (I) told my husband, no, I can't take that. We couldn't eat all the food anyway. We spent all our whole Social Security just to live there. Yeah. So we moved out to Bethany Boulevard. A beautiful apartment. He was eighty-six, ninety-six...yeah, ninety-six. We went shopping one day and he collapsed. He was just living another month, force-feeding and everything, but he passed away.

42:52 Mark: When you got to Oregon in 1948, what were the biggest challenges that you faced while you were here?

I had twenty-one beautiful upbringing years. The Nazis could not destroy them. They just could not, and in 1948, I see people having homes, and driving cars, and have children. I could not have children yet for five more years because of this TB attack. I advanced. My husband, low-key, he goes to the factory and works hard. There he made minimum income. We never traveled, we never had money, we never had

savings account. Just going to parks with the kids. We raised four little girls anyway, later on. I just wanted to be like everybody else. That's how I was brought up, you know. Other survivors who were very young, they forgot what it meant to be, to have a nice life. They hated. They were angry. I was always happy, and I told even my children, I don't know why I don't have any reason to be happy every day. But I feel happy - I'm sorry. I never grew up somehow. (Laughing) I had my eyes and ears open. I heard once they are building three little, small homes in North Portland, and I told my husband. Well, before that, we kept on sharing homes, with American people we were told would be a good influence on us to learn the way here. I really didn't like it, so I called up and eventually we bought a small home in North Portland on Mears Street. We were very happy here, but very low-key life, see? We never could... If I said to my husband, I need a pair of shoes or a dress (he'd say), 'Oh no, not now, I can't afford it.' That was his motto - "we can't afford it". I grew up with everything in my life - even more than everything. So if he said we can't afford it, OK, he was older, he knew what he was saying, I just accepted it.

46:04 Mark: Was there a big Jewish community here - a lot of other survivors?

Yes, the community was here but they were shocked when they heard about survivors. They did not know where to place us. And, of course, the survivors - some are mad, some are angry, some are hateful, you know. Before I came to Portland, we settled down also in California, in Palm Springs. I went to the synagogue to enroll my youngest daughter. She was with us. They asked me there if I could help. I said, 'I don't know what to do, but I raised already four little girls, but I like music.' So, four organizations gave me a job to have musical affairs with them. Four! I said, 'Ok, I'll take it!', because I knew I could do it. Eventually I met, in Palm Springs, many survivors which were just mingling there. They didn't want to be known. No. I brought them together - for many years I was (Holocaust) Survivors' President there. Then we came to Portland. Nobody had organization about survivors, but I had four girls of mine, which they never knew what happened to me because I never was able to talk to them. In Palm Springs, it happened that a clergyman sat next to me once, and he wanted some information about daily routines in the camp. By then, I had a stack of papers because my memory came back. What do I write? In Hungarian. So I gave him the papers but a girlfriend of mine - she went to college - she started to translate it a little bit. And he called back and said, 'Alice, I found what I was looking for.' He published a book, and his wife edited it.

48:58 Mark: That's great. What was the name of the book?

Tapestry of Hope. My son-in-law called me up one day 'cause they kept on telling 'You have to call it Out of the Ashes and I thought, well, that isn't me. Yeah, even if I was there. (Laughing)

48:58 Mark: Once you came to the United States, did you have to deal with any sort of prejudice when you were here?

We heard about the Ku Klux Klan, yes, but I never had any problem with them. We heard about them. When my book was published, schools kept inviting me and churches and groups. I'm not angry and I don't hate. Sorry, I was not brought up like that. So, they never hurt me, but some were trouble because

they talked. They looked for trouble, so they got it. But, I heard about them. I was in Tillamook, I think, yeah, speaking in a school. The leader there, they are very strong, yeah, they said, 'Why do you call her to speak? Why don't you call us to talk to you?' You know, I heard a conversation. It was scary. I knew they were there. Then a woman told me that she sent her sons to day camp, and they came home crying because they were indoctrinated to be Nazis. They got boots and guns, and called their mother - 'Come and take us home.' But I always said, 'Look, I know people who committed crimes. I heard enough. But I cannot live to worry about that, because there are organizations and they will take care of them. I cannot.'

51:24 Mark: Did you or your family ever consider moving to Israel?

No, I never thought about it. I forgot for many years to go home. Only when I started to write, the reason was that I was debating with myself - did I ever say thank you to my mother for all the good things she did for us? That was my first reason to start to pour out thank you. But, no Israel. In Romania, you know, the people could not buy land. They could live there, but no land, so the Jewish people couldn't be farmers. So they settled in smaller towns, opened businesses, like my father, and they were very good furniture builders, and home builders. They made a good life. My girlfriend's parents, they were quite rich, they bought land so after the war, the children went to Israel. Yeah, but no...

52:50 Mark: But not you?

No.

52:52 Mark: Did you go back to Romania?

I was in Romania then in 1995, with my four daughters and a videographer, and we went to my hometown. I found the house. Somebody lives there. You are not supposed to talk because so many people were killed. But, I never recovered anything, anything. And I went again to my hometown because a church, a singing group needed a translator, languages German, Hungarian, Romanian and they paid my trip. And, I went again, and I found my father's grave. And I still would like to go again, you know. (Laughing) It's a very hard trip.

54:02 Mark: Yes, I imagine.

A very hard trip. But there is in my hometown, a young Romanian man, and he decided to write a book about the whole region that was deported. He wrote me an email; he sent lots of information like my older brother's friends... I remembered all those names. They were all for Israel, see, because they couldn't buy land, so they thought, well, they will go to Israel and build there. I don't think they ever did (Laughing) but it was a dream of those Jewish guys. So this nice Romanian man got hold of my book on the internet. I sent him my copy of the books, book and he was so taken, he said, 'I'm going to translate it into Romanian so people should know what happened.'

55:22 Mark: That's great. Maybe you can tell a little bit about the education system you went through in Romania versus what your daughters went through here.

Yeah. Well, we went four years elementary, and then eight years I went (to the) Lyceum. That's probably like high school. We learned language, history, geography, just about everything. I think they covered more than they do here. I couldn't finish the last year because the situation changed, and the Jewish girls could not go to school anymore.

56:08 Mark: OK. That's all of our questions...

I just want to conclude with my children going to school. Of course, my husband helped them a lot in math and everything, for a couple of years, and then everything changed again in the schools. He couldn't keep up with them. But they were always good students, good, very good, just like my husband, with brains. And they each went through college, got nice awards, and all I wanted them to have (was) a profession, because I never had a profession. And they are each professionals.

56:59 Mark: It's been a pleasure talking with you and really appreciate your positive outlook on life, and your love of music. It's a great story.

I couldn't be anything else other but what they made me. That's what they made me - to be content and happy, and help others keep on going, step by step. Well, thank you for being here.

57:29 Mark: Thank you.

(Jazz theme music plays)