

EXILE EPISODE 1

MANDY PATINKIN: This downtown arena is near capacity. Children march down the aisle, dressed in traditional German costumes. The mood is celebratory as 20,000 Nazis gather to rally for the cause. It's February 20th, 1939 and in a little over six months, Hitler will invade Poland, dragging the world into its bloodiest war yet. If this gathering were happening in downtown Berlin, it wouldn't be that shocking.

But this isn't Berlin. It's New York City - a bastion of American liberalism - in Madison Square Garden...where this so-called "Pro-American rally" takes top billing on the marquee before Tuesday night's NHL game.

A group called the German American Bund organized this rally.

(CLIP - GERMAN AMERICAN BUND RALLY)

FRITZ KUHN: *Fellow Americans, American patriots.*

MANDY PATINKIN: Their leader, Fritz Kuhn...

FRITZ KUHN: *We, with American ideals, demand that our government shall be returned to the American people who founded it.*

MANDY PATINKIN: For years now, another group - the American Jewish Congress - has been watching this movement with increasing alarm. They see the Nazis steamrolling across Europe as a threat to America - to its ideals, its values, to democracy itself.

So the American Jewish Congress does something incredibly bold. In the early 1930s, they recruit Jewish citizens to spy on American Nazis...regular people willing to risk their lives to prove that fascism in the U.S. is real.

Among the volunteers is one very unlikely heroine. A young Jewish librarian named Florence Mendheim.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "I am absolutely convinced that it would be well nigh impossible to appeal to the ethical or moral consciousness of these Hitlerites. They are absolutely devoid of any human sympathies and are the coldest lot of menace the world could produce."

(OPENING THEME)

MANDY PATINKIN: Welcome to Exile - a podcast from LBI, the Leo Baeck Institute, New York. I'm Mandy Patinkin. When everything is taken away, then what? From LBI's archives, untold stories of Jewish lives in the shadow of fascism.

Today, the double life of Florence Mendheim...Jewish librarian by day, anti-Nazi spy by night.

FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "There are moments experienced in this business of living when the greatest reality is to be found in the most unreal, hazardous setting. It appears that in order to live at all, one must live dangerously."

MANDY PATINKIN: On the night of April 15th, 1933 - six years before that Madison Square Garden event - Florence Mendheim is getting ready to attend her first Nazi rally. Florence is a book-loving librarian from a middle-class family in the Bronx. 30-something, single, and Jewish.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: Florence Mendheim was very beautiful.

MANDY PATINKIN: Michael Simonson is an archivist at the Leo Baeck Institute.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: In photographs that I've seen of her, she has kind of beautiful dark hair, very nicely dressed. She looks very slight, wispy, a little bit.

MANDY PATINKIN

Florence is probably wearing her dark, fitted wool jacket. Her blue eyes shaded by a hat, set at an angle. She's sporting a slash of red lipstick.

Florence is at a meeting of Friends of New Germany in Kreuzer Hall on East 86th Street - the heart of Yorkville, in Manhattan.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "I was extremely excited and distracted by the very atmosphere of conniving and plotting the whole place exuded for me."

MANDY PATINKIN: These are excerpts from her first report found at the Leo Baeck Institute Archives in New York. They're written to the American Jewish Congress, for whom she is spying.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: “I chose a seat in the centre of the hall with an unobstructed view of the speakers. I pinned the Nazi pin on my dress and we all stood up, giving three Heils for Hitler at the end.”

MANDY PATINKIN: But it’s not Florence Mendheim giving three heil Hitlers in the crowded hall that night. It’s her alias, Gertrude Mueller, German-American Nazi-sympathizer. Florence goes by a few other aliases during her time spying, including Anna Hitler. Clearly, she’s having fun with this.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: You know, I think the fact that she was there, she was wearing a Nazi pin, which she purposely would put on at the start of a meeting was probably enough to convince them, “Oh, she’s a real German. She’s not a Jew.”

MANDY PATINKIN: Florence - or should I say Gertrude - arrives in time to hear the last speaker from Friends of New Germany.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: “(He) proved to be a Jew-hating German minister, whose name unfortunately I was unable to obtain. He gave a real medieval anti-Semitic talk calculated to stir up and stimulate an even more complete hate for the Jews.”

MANDY PATINKIN: Friends of New Germany are a pro-Nazi, pro-Hitler, anti-Communist group founded in the U.S. in 1933. The group is made up mostly of German immigrants. At its height, it has anywhere from 5,000-10,000 members and bills itself as a social group - you know, where people get together to play cards and listen to music. They even host summer camps for kids. But the group’s real purpose is to spread pro-Hitler propaganda and anti-Semitic literature. They want Americans to see Hitler as an inspiration, not an enemy.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: In America, in the 30s, a lot of people looked to Hitler in a very positive light. Maybe he could end the depression, the economic crisis in this country - to a lot of Americans that sounded good, that didn’t sound dangerous.

MANDY PATINKIN: Florence’s mission that evening? Collect examples of Nazi propaganda, pay attention to the speeches, and more importantly, identify as many of the members as possible.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: You know, it was important because the leaders at these Nazi rallies were not using their real name.

MANDY PATINKIN: After the meeting wraps, the crowd gives three Heil Hitlers. Gertrude leaves right away. She has the jitters. Those “first time at a Nazi rally” jitters.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: “I may be able to cover any subsequent meetings more intelligently now that the first shock of contact with them has been experienced.”

MANDY PATINKIN: She signs her first - and subsequent reports to the American Jewish Congress - with still another alias, the letters KQX. To this day, only Florence knows what those initials mean.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: “May I beg you to be very cautious about withholding my last name...since my relatives in Berlin, of the same name, are fairly well-known through their business stores which display their names.”

MANDY PATINKIN: For the next few months, Gertrude Mueller begins attending regular meetings of Friends of New Germany, going deeper into this work.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: “April, 1933. And so I left the hall smiling brightly at the members filling the doorway...”

“May, 1933. It seems to me that the most important source of Hitler propaganda is...”

“June, 1933. I am developing an invaluable instinct for orienting around strange parts and unconventional hours. I will admit however that I do carry a police whistle.”

MANDY PATINKIN: By the summer of 1933, Florence has become a seasoned spy.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: “I was truly a wandering Jew on the Saturday night of June 17th.”

MANDY PATINKIN: She’s at Schwaben Hall, in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn, home to a large German-speaking community. Tonight’s a lively debate between two opposing German groups - the pro-Nazi Friends of New Germany and the German Reds, communists who were not fans of Hitler.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: “(After that)...we all stood up, giving three Heils for Hitler at the end.”

MANDY PATINKIN: So far, her spying adventures usually end with her heading straight home to write up her reports. But at the close of tonight's event, an attractive red-haired man approaches her...

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "(He) asked me sweetly whether I was always so interested in political matters, and what made me so?"

MICHAEL SIMONSON: She was probably doing her flirting and trying to get more information about them. And she hated actually flirting with them, you know. And you read the letters, it disgusts her that she has to pretend that she's interested in these Nazis, which she finds so completely repelling on every, every human level.

MANDY PATINKIN: Soon, another Nazi joins their conversation. He insists she comes with them to a late-night cafe.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "Imagine my feelings! I didn't stand a chance of going back alone. Indeed if I had, they would've all been duly offended and I'm certain suspicious at my break away."

MANDY PATINKIN: She's coerced into the car with three other Nazi men and a woman named Katie.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "I allowed myself to be abducted...in the wilds of Brooklyn past midnight. How great was the risk? What were their underlying motives?"

MICHAEL SIMONSON: I mean, she's really going into the heart of the beast. They could be very threatening, they could harm you, they could kill you.

MANDY PATINKIN: And the night is only beginning.

There's nothing about Florence's childhood to suggest the Mendheims were raising a future spy. Her parents were born in Berlin and emigrated to the U.S. in the 1880s. The Mendheims were a regular Jewish American family - close, educated, middle class, Kosher, and a little bourgeois - what was known in German as Bürgertum.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: And for a woman in that bürgertum world, there was a limited set of choices. In that society, even into the 1910s and 20s, marriages were arranged. This was not a Jewish thing. This was a German cultural fact, you know, with dowries and so on, people were expected to behave in certain ways.

MANDY PATINKIN: But Florence rarely did what was expected of her.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: And so in that way, Florence is really breaking the mold. She just didn't marry and took care of her brothers. And was in a sense, a mother to them.

MANDY PATINKIN: Not marrying didn't mean Florence was the stereotype of a spinster. She was outgoing - played sports, and in her late teens and 20s, she wrote dozens of plays and stories. Not sweet juvenalia. Her stories were dark and propulsive, filled with international intrigue. Some you could almost call bodice rippers with titles like "Runaway Girl", "Web of Circumstances", and "A Woman's Game."

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "Lotus appears suddenly. A young wicked gorgeous flower of a dancer. The moonlight flits through the flower-decorated canopy suspended overhead (and he) claps violently, passing his hand intimately about her waist, her lovely stem-like form."

MANDY PATINKIN: They often feature a strong woman at the center, an object of desire who lived a life of great mystery.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "Zenab, beautiful as the evening star, functioning in secret as the Priestess of Sin. It is worth any man's life to try and get within speaking distance of the little lady."

MICHAEL SIMONSON: They say a lot about her personality probably because they were very adventurous.

MANDY PATINKIN: She never published any of them...but not for lack of trying.

"Dear Florence Mendheim,
We are returning here with your story entitled American Plan. (It) has been found unavailable for our present needs.
Universal Pictures"

It is no surprise a girl who loved stories would become a librarian. But how does a librarian become a spy?

(CLIP - NEWS REEL)

NEWS ANCHOR: *As election day nears, Hitler's storm troopers parade through Berlin and the police have kept busy.*

MANDY PATINKIN: It's early 1932. Hitler makes several attempts at a power grab in Germany. Back in Berlin, Florence's Aunt Hulda wrote to the family often, especially to Max - Florence's father.

"Dear Max and my beloved children,
The complicated presidential election, which will take place next Saturday, is causing a lot of agitation. Should Hitler become president, chaos must follow. We Jews are very worried!"

And so were the Mendheims. They began to lobby for Aunt Hulda and other relatives in Germany to leave. Florence, meanwhile, is clerking at the New York Public Library. Working there was the equivalent of being "extremely online" today, with access to books, periodicals, newspapers...

BOB SINK: Librarians were very attached to their communities and to serve in their communities. As a group, they're very attuned to what's going on in the world because they can serve their users better if they know the context of it.

MANDY PATINKIN: Historian Bob Sink has written about the unique lives of New York Public librarians in the early 20th century. If you were a single woman of a certain age, being a librarian gave you a lot of personal freedom. Roaming the city at odd hours, moving from branch to branch, all that information at your fingertips - the perfect cover for Florence's dangerous pastime.

BOB SINK: Florence Mendheim is absolutely the only woman in my database of librarians over that 50-year period that were women that had secrets, but nothing like spying.

MANDY PATINKIN: By now, Florence was regularly attending meetings of the American Jewish Congress - an activist organization formed after World War I. Their goal was to advocate for Jewish people, in the U.S. and overseas.

(CLIP - RABBI STEPHEN WISE SPEECH)

RABBI STEPHEN WISE: *America stands here not to protest against, but to indict Hitlerism on the charge of betraying civilization.*

MANDY PATINKIN: Its leader, Rabbi Stephen Wise, was considered one of the great orators of his time.

***RABBI STEPHEN WISE:** I thank god tonight that we who are Jews no longer stand alone, we are not the only victims of Hitlerism.*

DANA HERMAN: I'm inspired listening to him now, I'm inspired by his words. I'm inspired to social action, to social justice, for civil rights, for doing what's right.

MANDY PATINKIN: Dana Herman is from The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati.

DANA HERMAN: And to hear someone like that, such a fiery, passionate speaker full of conviction, I can well imagine that someone like Florence would just be completely inspired and overwhelmed.

MANDY PATINKIN: The American Jewish Congress staged big rallies and called for international boycotts of German goods, at a time when the German economy was in shambles.

DANA HERMAN: This was in-your-face. You know, we know you're out there and you can see us too. And, you know, watch out because we're watching you.

MANDY PATINKIN: Not everyone was a fan of the American Jewish Congress, especially those who branded this kind of activism as warmongering...as an attempt to pull America into a conflict against Germany.

And to some Jewish Americans, the group was rocking the boat at a very delicate time. Jewish refugees were coming from an increasingly anti-Semitic Germany and hoping for easier entry into the United States. Many Jews in America didn't want to be seen as troublemakers.

Meanwhile, the Mendheims continued to plead to their relatives in Germany to come to America. What they got instead were increasingly grim updates.

“Dear Max and my beloved children,
As you have read in the newspapers, we are going to get the horrible Hitler government after all, it is a very difficult situation.
Signed, Aunt Hulda.”

So when Rabbi Wise, leader of the American Jewish Congress, recruited spies to infiltrate Nazi groups...Florence Mendheim put up her hand.

DANA HERMAN: She felt like she had a role to play. She did not feel insignificant. She felt she had a real purpose.

MANDY PATINKIN: And that purpose? Become Gertrude Mueller, German-American Nazi sympathizer.

That June night in 1933, after the debate at Schwaben Hall in Brooklyn, Florence - or rather, Gertrude - finds herself crammed in the back seat of a car full of Nazis...on their way to a late-night coffee shop. They cross the Queensboro Bridge into Manhattan.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "I racked my brain during that ride to think of all the questions I wanted answers for. The truth of the matter was I was burning up with excitement. Can you imagine that night?"

MANDY PATINKIN: The group is heading to Cafe Hindenburg, in the heart of the Yorkville neighborhood on the Upper East Side - home to many German-speaking immigrants. Florence knows the neighborhood well. Last year she was assigned to the Yorkville branch, perhaps at times helping Nazis check out books.

These days the neighborhood is rife with tensions. German-speaking Jews have to think twice about which establishment they'll be welcome in. Their regular grocer might now have a swastika on the door. The place crawling with Friends of New Germany.

Yorkville has also been ground zero for the aggressive boycott of German goods, led by the American Jewish Congress. In retaliation, Nazis vandalized Jewish stores in the neighbourhood, reportedly using diamonds to cut swastikas on their windows. Florence and the group of Nazis finally reach their destination.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "All eyes were focused upon us instantly. When we were finally seated, I deliberately had recourse to my vanity case...to busy myself with its mysteries. What in the world else could I have done? I was so darn high strung I didn't dare let them glimpse it in the brightly lit café."

MANDY PATINKIN: Finally a waitress comes by...

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "I refused to order a thing. I, being kosher, ordered coffee. I didn't feel like having their cake and eating it too, literally speaking."

MICHAEL SIMONSON: The fear, of course, was that they would discover that she was declining because she was kosher and she was going to now be found out. They would figure it out.

MANDY PATINKIN: At that point more Nazis arrive. Tables are joined together. There's a lot of teasing and gossip. It must have crossed her mind that someone might recognize her from the Yorkville library. But Florence, as Gertrude, keeps up, asking questions, but not too many questions. Trying to fit in, but not too hard. She makes small talk with Katie, the Nazi who joined her in the car full of men, all the while assessing her.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "(She was a) medium size, interesting, pale, stubborn, semi-blonde from Austria - a genuinely stupid Aryan, the kind they deserve."

MANDY PATINKIN: It's 2 a.m. by the time the evening wraps. The group drifts out onto the sidewalk.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "They all shook hands with each other and with me, and this is what they said. As they shook each individual hand, they said..."

MANDY PATINKIN: "Stirbt ein Jude"...a Jew dies.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: Yeah, that's just crazy. I thought that maybe they said quietly, Heil Hitler to each other but she says this was their greeting.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "(The words) went through me like a knife blade. These young, stupid, masochistic and sadistic devils who had appeared almost innocent of all evil designs in the cafe, returned in an instant to their original destroyer's role, during such an innocent act as shaking hands. It staggered me."

MICHAEL SIMONSON: You have to be kind of a daredevil. You kind of have to somehow be able to rise above the fear. Cause it's not a game. She's the one they're talking about killing.

MANDY PATINKIN: Normally this is Florence's cue to find the nearest subway and pretend to head to an address on the Upper West Side, where she told them Gertrude Mueller lives. The place was just a cover, where Florence would receive letters addressed to one of her aliases. But tonight, the Nazis insist on taking her home.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: I mean, this is a scary situation.

MANDY PATINKIN: Florence draws a blank. She can't remember the exact address. But she doesn't want them to see her hesitate. Approaching a familiar intersection, Florence calmly, casually, tells them to stop the car, that she can walk from here. To her great relief they let her out.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "I said a pleasant good night and walked naturally around the corner and up the block. It would have been too terrible if they had wanted to drive to the house."

MANDY PATINKIN: Out of their sight, she recognizes the building - her cover address - and ducks into the lobby. It's the middle of the night. She's alone.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "I remained in the back of that damn hallway."

MANDY PATINKIN: Are they still there? Watching? Waiting?

MICHAEL SIMONSON: She was always in danger and who knows what would happen if she was discovered?

MANDY PATINKIN: It's late. And Florence knows she can't lurk forever in the lobby of a building where she doesn't live. She makes a run for it...

FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "(I) cautiously made my way out into the open street going quickly to Central Park West, where I vanished into the subway."

"(I arrived) home at 3:15 a.m. or thereabouts, only to find my father and two brothers wide awake and justifiably anxious. Two-thirds of them were absolutely furious and the other one-third came to my rescue. Bless him."

MANDY PATINKIN: Between the odd hours she kept, the worry she could be followed, and the boxes and boxes of Nazi material she stored at home, Florence's family did not support her being a spy.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: Dangerous for them. Dangerous for her. Worrying about her all the time. But I also wonder if it wasn't a little bit that Florence to them seemed off-the-wall with this Nazi spy stuff. I mean, who even does this kind of stuff? You know, at that

time, there's probably some sense of propriety about it, like a woman shouldn't be doing this.

MANDY PATINKIN: Despite that night's close call and her family's admonishments, Florence presses forward, taking on more missions.

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "These meetings fascinate me. I sometimes have to remind myself that I am there on grim business."

DANA HERMAN: I think she in some ways enjoyed the work that she did. In the larger story of women's work in this area, right, it gave them a sense, a real sense of activism, of purpose, of having a role in this larger story that, you know, was very personal to them.

MANDY PATINKIN: Florence decides to sign up as a volunteer at the headquarters of Friends of New Germany in Yorkville. She's getting closer and closer to the inner sanctum of American Nazism. One of her tasks is to translate statistical reports from Germany, summing up all of the opportunities German-Jews were supposedly taking from beleaguered Aryans.

Meanwhile, Florence makes mental drawings of the office layout. She notes the windows and exits, in case the place is the target of a raid or in case she becomes the target herself...

VOICE ACTOR - FLORENCE MENDHEIM: "At one time I was the (focus) of about eight pairs of loving Nazi eyes. I typed fast and furious without ever giving any of them a tumble beyond greeting them with a "Heil" as they came in.

MANDY PATINKIN: In the archives that remain of her reports, there's a mysterious letter. It's by another Jewish spy, going by the alias "Mr. Martin". Mr. Martin describes being pulled aside by a Nazi leader after a meeting, to deliver him a warning. Mr Martin's writes in the letter that the Nazis told him quote: "There are several spies in the hall."

Mr Martin continues in his letter: "They know of one in particular, pointing to a certain woman...she is a Jewish spy."

It's strange that another spy's report is in Florence's file. Did the Nazis know she was a spy among them? The Nazi leader goes on to tell Mr. Martin: "If they expose her she will

be replaced and they will have to do the work all over again. They are allowing her to remain there until they are ready to do away with her.”

This report was written about a year after Florence ups the stakes and begins her clerical spying. If the Nazi leader is talking about Florence, did she know that people were watching, ready to “do away with her”? Either way, she kept going. And at one point, she’s optimistic about her work - that it’s having an impact - when Congress finally takes notice of the growing hate movement in America.

In 1934, the House forms a Special Committee on UnAmerican Activities - focusing on how Nazi propaganda is entering the U.S. The American Jewish Congress is one of the groups that inform the U.S. Congress about the activities of the American Nazi organizations. We don’t know for sure but Florence’s reports are probably a part of the evidence the U.S. Congress examines. Dana Herman of Cincinnati’s American Jewish Archives thinks so too.

DANA HERMAN: I imagine it did inform some of the reports and the data that they used in those hearings. I think it just served to reinforce what they were hearing, what they were finding out, I think was really vital to the total operation, to the overall operation of it.

MANDY PATINKIN: In the end, the hearings go nowhere. All that risk, all that daring for Congress to merely deem the Friends of New Germany “loud” and “racist”. But not a threat to national security. Even Nazis are protected by the First Amendment.

Friends of New Germany were eventually disbanded, but in name only. They reemerged soon after as the German American Bund - bigger, stronger, and this time, you had to be an American citizen of German descent to join.

Florence Mendheim was probably heartbroken. And certainly disappointed with how it all turned out, with Congress’ hearings, with the rise of a stronger American Nazi movement. She couldn’t stop them nor could she convince Aunt Hulda to leave Germany.

“Dear little Florence,
After much deliberation, I must tell you that I will not be able to come to you. I won’t be strong enough to endure such great upheaval. I put everything in God’s hands. He will continue to help me. 1939”

Aunt Hulda, in her late 60s, was eventually deported to the Lodz Ghetto in Poland.

Another relative, David Mendheim, a Berlin shopkeeper, was deported along with his wife to the Chelmno extermination camp. And another relative, Feodora Mendheim, was sent to Auschwitz. None of them survived.

It seems that in 1938 or '39, Florence Mendheim stopped spying. We don't know when exactly or why. Did she finally get caught? Or did she get out just in time? Through the years, she rarely talked about this chapter of her life, and when she did, no one believed her.

(CLIP - GERMAN AMERICAN BUND RALLY)

FRITZ KUHN: *First, a social just white, gentile-ruled United States.*

MANDY PATINKIN: That February night in 1939 in Madison Square Garden, German-American Bund leader, Fritz Kuhn, was almost done with his anti-Semitic rant...

FRITZ KUHN: *You all have heard of me through the Jewish-controlled press as a creature with horns.*

MANDY PATINKIN: When suddenly a lone Jewish protester named Isadore Greenbaum marched to the front of the stage and began to yank the cables on Fritz Kuhn's microphone. It took a half dozen Nazi thugs to subdue an angry Greenbaum. They kicked him, stripping off his clothes. The police arrested him, charging him with disturbing the peace.

We don't know if Florence was inside the arena that night - as her alias Gertrude. But if she was, all she would have seen was a veritable sea of Nazis, cheering on the violence against Greenbaum. It might have felt like a final defeat.

But if Florence Mendheim was standing outside Madison Square Garden that same night, she would have seen a much bigger crowd - by some reports, 100,000 people - all protesting against the Nazis. Certainly this was a victory for brave activists like her and for all of the women who risked their lives to push back against the Nazis, not just in America but throughout the world...whose daring feats are barely recognized by history.

DANA HERMAN: She was really a hero and a courageous person who acted when many people did not.

MICHAEL SIMONSON: And so I would hope it would inspire people to use whatever their talents are to work to stop this kind of violence and this kinds of terrible, racist totalitarian movements in the world.

MANDY PATINKIN: That same night, a judge admonished Isadore Greenbaum for storming the stage. He's quoted in the New York Times as saying: "Don't you realize that innocent people might have been killed?"

Greenbaum replied: "Do you realize plenty of Jewish people might be killed?"

Greenbaum knew what Florence Mendheim knew - in her role as a librarian and as a spy - that hate is a deadly force. That it must be stopped before it spreads. That words, indeed, matter.

(CLOSING THEME)

MANDY PATINKIN: The Florence Mendheim Collection in the Archives of the Leo Baeck Institute in New York contains: her reports and correspondence with the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue and the American Jewish Congress, American pro-Nazi and white supremacist propaganda she collected during her spy work, her personal letters, and some of Florence's unpublished novels. Go to www.lbi.org.

VOICE ACTOR - TEASER: On the next episode of Exile...

Alice Urbach is the Julia Child of Austria - until the Nazis take over. But Alice's cookbook is too lucrative for her German Publisher to burn. So they slap a German name on it.

KARINA URBACH: She must have been flabbergasted, realizing this is my cookbook. And then finding out from the shop owner and he said, "Oh yeah, yeah, this is the cookbook everybody wants." And of course, it had this name, this Rudolf Rösch on it.

VOICE ACTOR - TEASER: Decades later, Alice's granddaughters fight to get her name back on the cover where it belongs.

KARINA URBACH: He said, "Name and shame them." And that's exactly what I did.

VOICE ACTOR - TEASER: The story of Alice Urbach's and her infamous cookbook... on Exile.

VOICE ACTOR - CREDITS: Exile is a production of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York and Antica Productions.

It's narrated by Mandy Patinkin.

Executive producers include Katrina Onstad, Stuart Coxe, and Bernie Blum. Senior producer is Debbie Pacheco. Produced by Lisa Gabriele. Associate producers are Hailey Choi, Jacob Lewis, and Emily Morantz. Research and translation by Isabella Kempf. Sound design and audio mix by Philip Wilson. Theme music by Oliver Wickham. Voice acting by Isabel Kanaan.

Thank you to Outloud Audio, WNYC Archives, the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives at Hebrew Union College, UCLA Film & Television Archive, the New York Times, and eFootage.