



**Name:** Rita Prigmore

**Date of birth:** 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1943

**Nationality:** German

**Ethnicity:** Sinti

Rita Prigmore was born in Würzburg, Germany, in 1943. At the time, concentration camps were already working at full speed. Under the Nazi regime, the only way for Roma and Sinti not to be internalised was forced sterilisation. That's the option that was offered also to Rita's mother in order to save herself and her family

from a certain death in the camps. But when she went to the local hospital for the operation, they found out that she was pregnant with twins. They were two little girls, one of whom was Rita. Once they were born, Rita and her sister Rolanda were taken by SS guards and were submitted to experiments by Dr. Haider, pupil of the infamous Dr. Mengele. These involved for example injecting artificial colours into their eyes, trying to dye them from brown to blue: the aim was to reproduce the "perfect" Aryan race with blond hair and blue eyes. Rolanda died out of these terrible tests, while Rita managed to survive thanks to her mother, who took her away from the hospital. But some days after, the SS came back to their house and took Rita with them. She disappeared until the end of the war, when the Red Cross took her back home. Many members of their family were no more there.

Several years later, Rita met her husband, an American soldier, from whom she had her first son in 1965. The three then moved to Fort Washington, US. There, her daughter was born. During all these years, Rita often felt bad and fainted several times. But it was not until she got hospitalized because of a car accident that she discovered to have strange scars in her head. She did not know what it was, neither did her husband. After she knew about the accident, her mother went to the US and told Rita about the experiments she went through as a child. Thanks to the new x-rays, they could have proved those dreadful tests and obtain full compensation from the German state. So she went back to Germany into a suffering process involving many closed doors, a divorce from her American husband and, most of all, the distance from her children. At the end, Rita managed to obtain a small pension for her wounds, but the German government never acknowledged the facts.