

The book thief summary



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak is based in Germany during the beginning and during World War 2. The narrator starts the novel by describing when he saw the Book Thief in action and all the times he has seen them doing their work. Then, he goes into describing a young girl named Liesel and her biological families struggles. Liesel is a young girl when her birth mother and brother are traveling to Molching, Germany.

During their travels Liesel has a traumatic experience when she witnesses the death of her brother Werner. Liesel is traumatized by the sight of her brother dying and having to bury him when they get off the train. After her brother is buried, she sees a book that was left by one of the gravediggers. Without hesitation, she steals the book in remembrance of her brother.

When her and her mother arrive in Molching, she is introduced to her new foster family the Hubermans. At first, there was tension between the family and their new member but as time went on the awkward stage diminished. At the beginning of Liesel's journey with her new family, she struggled to cope with her brother's death. She experienced embarrassing interactions with her new foster father, Hans Hubermann, when she wet her bed many times due to nightmares of the traumatic observation of her brother's death. Hans Hubermann makes Liesel feel at home and teaches her many important life lessons. Her new foster father, however, is not warm and teaches Liesel bad life lessons on how to go about treating others.

As Liesel transforms and becomes comfortable to this new life she has, she meets lots of new and important people. She immediately becomes best friends with a boy in her neighborhood named Rudy Steiner. Rudy is a persistent boy who puts his heart on his chest with Liesel. Constantly, he

bugs and tries to pressure Leisel into kissing him and shows her so much love. Liesel makes her intentions with their relationship very clear to Rudy but because of how stubborn he is he does not give up his dream of having Liesel. The two grow up together walking to school and going about life together. As time goes on the war becomes more intense and escalates into huge problems for their country. Liesel begins to realize and form her opinion of the politicals in her country and the people in it. She is a very independent girl and learns from Hans to not be afraid to stand up for what she believes in. The people of her town support Hitler, but Leisel does not. During one of the towns book burning in celebration of Hitler's birthday, Leisel swiftly steals a book. This book is the second book she has stolen, and the second that the narrator talks about in the beginning.

Just as Liesel becomes comfortable with her new setting with a whole new family, her world is again rocked. Max, a Jewish German boy, escapes from Hitler and his men and leaves his family to die. Filled with guilt, but a stronger will to live, he battles many mental struggles. Max is hidden in a closet with severe malnourishment and health problems from the harsh conditions he is forced to live in while he is in hiding. When Max gets a map from a friend and travels to Molching to find the Hubermanns he is hidden in the basement. Due to the huge heart that Hans Hubermann has, and his pre existing relationship with Max's family he takes Max into hiding and keeps him safe in the basement. Throughout Max's time living and hiding with the Hubermanns he continues to have severe mental battles with his guilt towards leaving his family to die and now putting a family at major risk.

However, he continues to stay hidden in their basement because he has such a strong will to stay alive.

As Liesel is curious about this new young man living in their home, she soon discovers that they have common interests in writing and reading. Later on Liesel faces losing a job with the Hermanns, which she is furious about because of her family's pre existing financial struggles. Liesel recognizes the Hermanns financial stability and sees it as unfair. With anger filled in her heart, she gets her friend Rudy to help her start stealing books from the Hermanns beautiful library that she is fascinated with. Frau Hermann, the man of the house, realizes that Liesel has been stealing their books. To get Liesel's attention he leaves her a note with a dictionary and thesaurus telling her he knows what she has been doing. As the war progresses Liesel and her family have to take cover in her neighbors bombshelter where Liesel spends the scary times reading to the children.

The Hubermanns have to leave Max in the basement who has fallen into a coma due to an extreme illness. Liesel is mortified by the sight of the Nazi's displaying the Jewish slaves and prisons down the streets of their town to Dachau, a concentration camp. After Hans heart gets the best of him, and he feeds an old Jewish man some bread, he and the Jewish man are beat. He now realizes that he has drawn attention to himself and now Max and his family are no longer safe. With much tension and fear from Hans he is surprised to hear that Nazi leaders came to his village to recruit Rudy to be a future Nazi leader and not take Hans away for betraying the countries beliefs. After a couple days go by, the Hubermanns and the Steiners get news that both Alex, the father of the Steiners, and Hans are being drafted

into the war. When Hans goes into war he faces disagreement with one of the other soldiers he is with. Hans is then in an accident and survives but is discharged and sent home because of an injury. During one of the prisoner parades in her town, Liesel sees her friend Max among the prisoners. In great sadness, Liesel tells Rudy about hiding Max in her basement.

At the end, Frau Hermanns wife gives Liesel a blank journal for her to start writing in because of her love of books. During her writing in her basement, another bomb hits her town killing all of her neighbors, Rudy, Hans, and Rosa. When she is finally found and rescued she sees Rudy's corpse lying in the rubble. She finally gives Rudy's corpse the kiss he had always begged for. When she is being taken away to go live with the Hermanns she leaves her unfinished book called, "The Book Thief." When Death comes to collect the souls of the dead he finds the book and takes it with him for safe keepings. After what feels like a lifetime, the concentration camps are liberated and war is over. Max is then released into the world and goes immediately to find Liesel. When they find one another the reunion between the two is passionate and heartbreaking.

The narrator explains that Liesel grows up and moves to Australia and lives a fulfilling rest of her days. When it becomes her time to leave the earth, Death brings her unfinished book with him to show her.