

Analysis of extremely loud and incredibly close

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The excerpt is about the nine-year old Oskar trying to cope with the loss of his father, caused by the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He considers himself an inventor and the story starts with him describing crazy inventions, like a singing teakettle and swallowable microphones that amplify ones heartbeat.

While he thinks that, Oskar and his family are actually in a limousine driving to Oskar's Dad's funeral. His Grandmother and Mother are also in the car, together with the driver, but it is not clear what point in time the action of the whole story is actually taking place, because Oskar is constantly telling stories from his life, the first one being a conversation with his dad about taking over the family jewelry business, quickly followed by another memory of one of the rituals Oskar and his dad had together. After this he describes how he once sent a letter to Steven Hawking, because he was fascinated by the image of the tortoise carrying earth on his back in Hawking's book.

Before Oskar starts to tell the reader about how his father died, he reports about another one of their rituals they had together. He actually spends a lot of time telling how it all happened, including his father's voice messages recorded shortly before his death, also describing his feelings with images.

He wonders why his father had not said " goodbye" or " I love you" in his messages and wants to stop inventing to find out how his father died. The story ends with the last message, which is not understandable anymore because fractions of it are missing. Oskar is the Narrator and Protagonist of this story and because he authentically thinks like a nine-year old child, the reader is struck by all the events and thoughts Oskar is processing in a high density. The author did particularly not filter or evaluate all of Oskar's thought-content, it is very pure and at first the whole text might seem messy

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and is demanding to read, but soon the reader can detect recurring themes and images that are consequences of the boy's trauma. It is especially hard to read, because there is no formatting for sections with direct speech, the sentences are just separated by quotation marks – like when someone actually thinks. The first page gives a quite good impression of the intensity of the trauma: In the first lines Oskar wants to invent teakettles that speak in his dad's voice and he thinks about a birdseed shirt to “ make a quick escape”, with which his father would have indeed been able to survive.

Oskar talks bout wearing “ heavy boots” in p. 1 l. 32 and that playing the tambourine helps. Later in the story, on p. 5 l. 56 he then talks about how writing letters helps against the “ heavy boots”.

Apparently the “ heavy boots” are his way of describing a feeling that dampens his mood and makes every step harder, also an effect of the trauma. Further symptoms are not being able to sleep (p. 5, l. 44) and having a “ hole in the middle of him that every happy thing falls into” (p. 9, l.

3) On p. 1 l. 45 Oskar starts talking about a random fact about death, but after the thought is finished he changes the subject, just to interrupt again by starting the next sentence with “ anyway...” (line 54) and revisits the subject from before. This is something that occurs multiple times throughout the text and is an example for his very bubbly thought process. He also uses French expressions sometimes for no apparent reason, which just adds to the weirdness.