

MAUS, A Survivor's Tale:
My Father Bleeds History -
Reading Journal

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Key Facts

Title

MAUS I, A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History

Note: "Maus" is the German word for mouse

Author

Art Spiegelman

He was born in Stockholm, Sweden. His parents were Polish Jews and Holocaust survivors who had been sent to Sweden as refugees following the end of the Second World War. The family immigrated to New York City, UAS in 1951.

Spiegelman studied art and philosophy at Harpur College, but did not graduate because he experienced a mental health crisis that forced him to withdraw from school. In 1971, Spiegelman moved from New York to San Francisco, and began to establish himself as a comics artist. He published work in several underground magazines. In 1977, he married Françoise Mouly. The couple founded *Raw* magazine in 1980. By this time, Spiegelman had begun to interview his father about his experiences in the wartime Poland and Germany, and to draw comics based on their conversations. He published the first of the comics that would eventually become *Maus* in the second issue of *Raw*, in December 1980. Over the next several years, until the magazine ceased publication in 1991, he continued to publish segments of *Maus* in each issue. The comics were published in novel form in 1986, and a second volume, which continued Vladek and Anja's story through Auschwitz and Dachau, was published in 1992. Both volumes met with critical and commercial success.

Text Type

Graphic Novel, Memoir

Date of publishing

1980-1985

Setting

Poland and Germany (1930s and 40s); Rego Park, Queens (1970s and 80s); Catskill Mountains (1979); New York City (1987).

Perspective

First Person (Vladek and Artie); Third Person (Limited to Artie)

Antagonist

German soldiers and hostile Polish civilians are obvious antagonists for the Jews who are struggling to survive amidst persecution. However, the story also explores the many ways in which Jewish people — and others who were who suffered alongside them in concentration camps and in war-torn Poland — harm and undermine one another in moments of desperation. Though Vladek and Anja are beneficiaries of amazing acts of kindness and humanity, and often do their best to help others in return, Maus shows clearly how danger and privation breed selfishness and callousness.

Themes

Characters

Artie

The

Vladek

Francoise

Mala

Anja

Lucia Greenberg:

Vladek's first girlfriend. She run after Vladek for a long time and finally got him as boyfriend. However, Vladek didn't view her as girl for marriage and refused her because she didn't have money.

Richieu

Orbach

A friend of Vladek's family. Lived in Lublin. Saved Vladek from the tents in 1948.

Rabbi

Someone Vladek met at the camp in 1947. Came through the camp together but didn't hear from him anymore after he went off the train from Warsaw.

Tosha (74)

Anja's older sister.

Wolfe

Tosha's husband

Bibi

Tosha and Wolfe's little girl.

Herman, Helen (Artie's uncle and aunt)

They have two kids: Lolek and Lonia.

They were visiting the NY world's fair when the war came and luckily survived.

Mr. Ilzeck

Used to be one of Vladek's customers. When the war came, he was doing secret businesses and exchange money with Vladek for his cloth.

Vladek's mother

Died of cancer.

Vladek's father

After his wife died, lived in the house with his daughter Fela and her four small children.

Fela

Vladek's sister, lived with Vladek's father after his wife passed away. Has four children.

Plot Summary

PROLOGUE

Date: Oct 02, 2019

Pages: 1-6

Synopsis:

Hearing Artie's friends discarded him, Vladek told childhood Artie that friends cannot be trusted.

Perspective: Childhood Artie

Theme: Humanity

Thoughts:

This prologue is a reveal of Vladek's personality and his life values. It left the reader with doubts that will be explained later in the book.

Quotes:

"Friends? Your friends? ... If you lock them together in a room with no food for a week... then you could see what it is, friends!..." (6)

ONE/THE SHEIK

Date: Oct 03, 2019

Pages: 9-24

Synopsis:

Vladek talks to his son Artie about his romance at youth, about how he fell in love with Anja, who then becomes his wife, and discards Lucia, his old girlfriend.

Perspective:

Artie in reality, and Vladek in memory.

Theme: family and relationship

Thoughts:

Vladek is really what the chapter calls him — "the sheik". We can see a lot of flaw in his character, or more broadly, the flaw of human beings. The argument at the end between Artie and Vladek was also interesting for me. They represent two perspectives: should we describe the objective historical fact or is this book more about the flawed human nature and the influence of the war on humans?

Quotes:

"I want to tell YOUR story, the way it really happened." (23)

TWO/THE HONEYMOON

Date: Oct 12, 2019

Pages: 25-40

Synopsis:

Anja was involved in a communist conspiracy. In 1937, Richieu was born. Soon after Anja recovered from her depression, the Nazis came, and the war started.

Perspective:

Artie in reality, and Vladek in memory.

Theme: family; trauma; jewishness.

Thoughts:

A lot happened right before the real war started.

Quotes:

TREE/PRISONER OF WAR

Date: Oct 14, 2019

Pages: 41-70

Synopsis:

Perspective:

Theme:

Thoughts:

I got very related to Artie in terms of his father's over frugality. I used to blame my grandma for being a little bit miser about everything. She could wear a t-shirt for over ten years with so much mending but not to buy a new one. She also went through a really tough period of time in Chinese Famine in 1980s. Now with the story of Vladek, I come to understand why she is like that — and I come to understand the trauma on both Vladek and my grandma too.

Sometimes the power of a literature is that, even though you haven't gone through the things in the work at all, you can relate. It reminds you of something in your life by sharing the author's own story. That is the power of literature.

Quotes:

"I'm not going to die, and I won't die here! I want to be treated like a human being!" (54)

“International laws protected us a little as Polish war prisoners. But a Jew of Reich, anyone could kill in the streets!” (61)

“Always I saved... Just in case!” (63)

“Even though everything was very tough — and it was REALLY very tough — we were happy only to be together... Not so like it is now with me and Mala. I tell you, if Anja could be alive now it would be everything different with me!” (67)

“You always tell me the same things. There’s nothing I can do.” “But I haven’t with whom else to talk!” (67)

“Look, Dad. You can’t do this to me. I’m over 30 years old. I choose my own clothes!”

“I can’t believe it!”

“...I just can’t believe it...” (69)

FOUR/THE NOOSE TIGHTENS

Date: Oct 19, 2019

Pages: 71-94

Synopsis:

Perspective:

Theme:

Thoughts:

Quotes:

“With money you can always get anything!” (75)

“I’ll NEVER give up my baby. NEVER!” (81)

“Ilzecki and his wife didn’t come out from the war... But his son remained alive; ours did not... And ANYWAY we had to give Richieu to hide a year later.” (81)

“but if Fela decides to go, of course I’ll go with her.”

“can I have another cookie?” (89)

“My daughter! How can she manage to ALONE - with four children to take care of?” And, what do you think of? He sneaked on to the BAD side! And those on the bad side never came anymore home. (91)

FIVE/MOUSE HOLES

Date: Oct 22, 2019

Pages: 95-128

Synopsis:

Perspective:

Theme:

Thoughts:

Quotes:

SIX/MOUSE TRAP

Date: Oct 24, 2019

Pages: 129-159

Synopsis:

Perspective:

Theme:

Thoughts:

Quotes:

Places:

Vladek:

Czestochowa, Poland —> Sosnowiec, Poland —> sanitarium in Czechoslovakia (1938)

—> camp

—> lublin, 1948

Plot Analysis

Prologue

Date: Oct 02, 2019

Pages: 1-6

Summary

In epigraph: "The Jews are undoubtedly a race, but they are not human."

Artie goes back to his childhood in 1958. He recalled an incident when he was ten or eleven years old. He was going roller skating with his friends. Artie's skate came loose and fell behind. None of his friends waited for him but laughed at him instead.

Artie was heart-broken and went home. His father was sawing. Artie was sniffing while helping, so his father asked for the reason. Artie told him and he stopped sawing. He stared at Artie and said cynically that if Artie got locked with his "friends" without food for a week, he would see what "friends" are.

Analysis

Use anti-semitic images to attract anti-semitism.

All the characters are drawn with mouse heads, implying all are jews.
The kids are depicted so that the scene seems innocent, but what happened is somewhat cruel, creating a sparkling contrast.

The father is portrayed as indifferent and practical. He doesn't seem to be bothered when seeing his son crying. Instead, he gives a harsh comment on what friends really are, which is very pessimistic and too much for a kid of ten years old.
This whole prologue uses childhood anecdote to reflect and explain the personality formed when Artie grows up later in the book.

One - The Sheik

Date: Oct 03, 2019

Pages: 9-24

Summary

The title: the Sheik

Artie has grown up now. He is visiting his father in Rego Park. He remarks that he hasn't seen his father for a long time and they are not very close. Vladek gets angry when Mala uses a wire hanger instead of a wooden one.

When Vladek is pedaling for his heart, Art asks about his father's story for his comic book. In the middle panel, there is a number written on Vladek's arm. After some resistance, Vladek started his story. He was a textile-guy. He was very handsome at that time and there were a lot of girls who run after him. He took Lucia to dance.

Even though Vladek clearly showed no interest in Lucia, Lucia was always around and even insisted going to his apartment. Vladek seems to be awkward to acknowledge that he got more involved with Lucia. In the next panel, just after having sex, Lucia hoped to get engaged with Vladek, but he quickly changed the topic and noted that the girl has no money.

Vladek met his cousin at the train station and got invited to live in their house. The cousin recommended him Anja, a clever and wealthy girl. When the next day Vladek met Anja, the cousin talked with Anja in English and went away soon. Anja said he was nice and handsome. Vladek told Anja afterwards that he understand English and Anja was a little embarrassed. But they had a nice chatting afterwards and began phoning each other.

Analysis

Sheik is a Slang referring to a man held to be masterful and irresistibly charming to women.

In several panels, the author reveals several traumas: father's aging and diseases, mother's suicide, unhappy remarriage. Also, Vladek seems to very welcome his son but is very ill-tempered towards his second wife.

The number on Vladek's arm is what he get at during the Holocaust. It is the symbol of the indelible damage that the Holocaust brings to the survivors.

There is an allusion to Rudolph Valentino, a famous actor, and the 1921 American silent film *the Sheik*.

The nature of this relationship gets gradually revealed when Vladek kept refusing Lucia. He clearly didn't plan to marry Lucia at the beginning of the relationship. Also, Vladek is presented as a mammonist because even though he thought Lucia's family was nice, he looked down upon them because they were poor. He views marriage more as an exchange of money.

Through the train ticket and the conversation with his cousin, we can feel that Vladek was very close to his big family. Both Anja and Vladek presented their best selves and had a nice time together. Vladek shows that he was knowledgable and Anja behaved decently. When she got embarrassed knowing that Vladek understood her personal comment on him, she cleverly turned the topic.

Anja sent Vladek a photo. He framed it and when Lucia saw it, she got extremely angry, but Vladek just coldly told her that he and Anja were going to get engaged. Lucia threw herself at him and begged him to leave Anja.

Artie remarks that Anja was not as attractive, and Vladek admits. He loved talking to Anja because she was intelligent and sensitive, as described by the director from her school. Vladek invited Anja to his house, but Anja politely refused by saying that her mother was too conservative to let her to that. Instead, Anja invited Vladek to her family for dinner.

Before dinner, Vladek peeked at Anja's closet to see how tidy she was, but found some pills. He took some and got a friend examined it. He didn't want to marry Anja if she was sick. The pill turned out to be nothing serious and they got married in 1936.

Lucia once again found him. Regardless of Lucia's begging on the floor, Vladek slammed the door indifferently. He stopped hearing from Lucia since then. Anja received a letter saying Vladek had a lot of girlfriends. To comfort Anja, Vladek addressed Lucia as "an old girlfriend who won't leave me alone" and "nothing to me." In the end, Vladek got one department and a gold watch as wedding gifts.

After telling these stories, Vladek warned his son not to put them on his comic book, because he realizes that it is not proper or respectful. Artie promised not to write about it.

Vladek had fallen in love with Anja regardless of his girlfriend Lucia. He was much more considerate with Anja when he carefully bought a frame for the photo she sent him. Anja wore nice coat in the photo, also indicating her wealth.

There was a huge contrast between Anja and Lucia in terms of visiting Vladek's apartment. Anja was much more demure and met the expectation of a good woman at that time. Also, Anja got great education and reputation, which can be seen through the conversation with her director.

Despite his love for Anja, Vladek was still very aware when he saw the pills she took. He was rational enough to not marry a woman if she is sick or cannot do housework well.

Vladek once again discarded Lucia. He didn't view her as a girlfriend but rather a pet. But he received punishment for that. In the end, Vladek got what he wanted: Anja and her family's wealth.

It is clear that Artie doesn't keep his promise and put all these stories on the book. It also shows that Artie and his father has very different views regarding the book: Vladek wants to present the real objective story, yet Artie wants to real human nature through the Holocaust.

Two - The Honeymoon

Date: Oct 12, 2019

Pages: 25-40

Summary

Artie goes frequently to his father's to hear his story. Vladek is busy counting his pills. To him, "I must fight to save myself." And "doctors, they only give me 'junk food'."

Vladek says Anja had a communist friend that always came to see her. Soon Anja got into trouble because she was involved in conspiracy.

Anja hide the secret document in a seamstress's place. The police searched the whole neighborhood and found it. The seamstress was arrested.

When Vladek heard the news, he planned to break the marriage. He said to Anja, "if you want me you have to go my way." So Anja stopped.

The seamstress got out from the prison after 3 months. Anja's father paid her a good fortune. He also helped Vladek to operate a whole textile factory.

Soon Richieu was born in 1937. Mentioning that he was a little premature, Vladek goes on to recall that Artie was very premature. He mimics how Artie would walk in childhood, yet spills his bottle of pills. He got irritated.

Analysis

This shows Vladek's stubbornness. He would rather take medicine himself than trust a certified doctor.

The anger and disdain on Vladek's face shows his hatred toward communism. Anja was between the two groups and even though it was not depicted in the book, we can still feel how ambivalent she was.

Even though Anja protected her secret for the sake of the communist party, she did great harm to the innocent seamstress, illustrating a sense of helplessness and tough choices in life.

Vladek is so dictatorial that he didn't allow his wife to have a different thought from him. Still, facing this kind of moral lemma, Anja made another tough choice: discard her communism party whatsoever, and continue with Vladek.

Anja's father is very supportive of his son-in-law.

Here by intersecting reality and memories, the author juxtaposes the joy at Richieu's birth with the cruel death in reality. This reveals the cruel and irretrievable nature of the war. The fact that Vladek mimics Artie shows he used to be a caring father who had carefully observed his child. This contrasts sharply with his behavior now. His emotion is so unstable now that he blames his son when he himself accidentally spills his pills.

After giving birth to Richieu, Anja experienced severe depression. She cared about nothing and didn't want to live. Vladek decided to accompany Anja to a sanitarium in Czechoslovakia.

On the train to the sanitarium, Vladek saw the flag of swastika for the first time. It was 1938. Other people on the train started to talk about tragedies involving Nazi at other places and they prayed Nazi would be thrown out of power here.

The sanitarium was a beautiful place with everything needed. With Vladek's praises, Anja would only respond "un huh." Vladek kept comforting her and told Anja the joke of his father getting the pillow in the war, and Anja was "so laughing and so happy."

After three month them went back, the factory got robbed. Thanks to Anja's father's help, another factory was built and they were well-off again. However, Nazis' frequent riot and slaughter made them plan to move out, as they thought the German would only want part of Poland.

The bad news came when the government asked Vladek to join the army. Before leaving, Vladek let Anja take the dolls with her, which turned out to be a wise choice. Anja and Richieu went farther away to a safer place, while Vladek went to the front. At this point, Vladek spills his pills again. Vladek starts to complain about his cataract and the irresponsible doctors. After hearing father's story of his glass left eye, Artie seems to be exhausted and stops this interview.

Anja's depression corresponds to the medicine she was taking for her nervousness. Also it indicates Anja's fate afterwards — suicide.

The foreshadowing of the tragedies. The first encounter is filled with fear, as we can see from the depiction of the mice's facial expression as well as the sense of oppression and coldness shown by the huge flag outside the train window, occupying half of the page.

At that time, Vladek seemed to be a completely different person. He was so caring and understanding compared to his sensitivity and testiness now. Back then, Anja loved him so much.

The easiness father-in-law took this robbery fully demonstrated the family's great wealth. The unrest was the forewarning of upcoming disaster. The relationship between Jews and Polish seemed to be less stable. Also, Jews was too naive about German's ambition.

As a jew. Vladek was astute enough to let Anja take the doll for future sell. Also, in the picture Jews and Polish were together in the army fighting against the German, so at that time, the relationship was good. The second spilling pushes the tension to its climax — we still don't know what happened in the war, and there seems to be another outburst coming. Artie didn't say anything during Vladek's long description of his eye disease. He shows little interest and only wants to go back. His selfishness can be seen clearly here.

Three - Prisoner of War

Date: Oct 14, 2019

Pages: 41-70

Summary

Artie is visiting his father again. At dinner, Vladek blames him because he hasn't finished his food. They start talking about how strict Vladek used to treat him. Vladek still complains about Mala, but Artie interrupts with impatience.

Artie is shocked that Vladek went on to the frontier after just a few days' training. Vladek explains that he used to be in the army. He goes on recalling that his father didn't want his son to join the army because of his suffering. He put his sons on horrible starvation diet to escape recruit. The first year Vladek escaped but the second year he couldn't bear it any more and joined the army.

In the war against Germany, Vladek shot at a moving tree and killed someone. By speaking German, Vladek didn't get beaten by the Nazis but got marched and ordered to find dead soldiers. He found the soldier he killed. He got sympathetic but at the same time thought he "at least did something."

Afterwards, all the Jews were asked to stand out. The soldier shouted to them, "it's all your fault, this war!" They were then ordered to do clean a stable in one hour, which is impossible to do. At the same time, Vladek is blaming Artie to drop ashes on the floor, "you want it should be like a stable here?"

Analysis

Vladek is illustrated as a miser and strict - even inhumane - father. This hints at the deep tension within the family. The great care Mala shows to Artie and their harmonious relationship suggest that the main cause of unhappiness within the family is Vladek.

The way Vladek's father helped his sons to avoid recruit was cruel, but he had no other choice. He valued life more than anything else. Vladek was absolutely influenced by his father. He had grown up from the young man who'd rather face death than bear temporary torture to someone who knows the importance of long-term benefit.

Vladek demonstrated his strong interpersonal skills. He knew how to empathize with the German, which was an essential quality for him to survive the war and imprisonment.

The Jews didn't say anything even though the war had nothing to do with them, implying their cowardice. There is a parallel drawn between the war and the reality when Vladek urges Artie to clean the ashes. Vladek is just like the soldier in the war, implying the trauma the war has brought him.

The living condition was horrible in the bigger camp they moved to. They didn't have enough cloth nor food. Despite of coldness, Vladek bathe in the cold-autumn river. He didn't get frostbite wounds as a result.

He also mentions that "I was very religious, and it wasn't else to do." He received a package from home also.

Later, they got a notice saying there was an opportunity for labour assignment with much better offers. Others deemed it as a trick, while Vladek signed up, saying, "I'm not going to die, and I won't die here! I want to be treated like a human being!" Other people, seeing Vladek registered, followed.

They got much better treatment even though the work was very tiring. Vladek was much more positive than others. Still, some people went back to starve regardless of the help that Vladek was trying to offer.

One night, Vladek dreamed about his grandfather. He told Vladek, "You will come out of this place - FREE! On the day of parishes truma." Artie was confused about religious the term.

It turned out that the dream came true. Vladek remarked that Parshas truma "is a very important date" for him.

One distinction between Vladek and other prisoners' was his full consideration for long-term benefit. He would be willing to bathe in cold river everyday because he knew that otherwise he might face much worse consequences.

Vladek was always very astute. He didn't smoke cigarettes, so he traded them and made good use of them.

This was the biggest difference between Vladek and others, and the main reason why he survived the war: he had a much stronger desire to survive. While others had already pessimistically determined they would die, Vladek had decided to survive, and live like a human. He was not satisfied to the unpleasant present and was always longing for the better.

Another important characteristic that kept Vladek alive was his optimism. He also cared a lot about other people and was always willing to help. That seems to be a completely different person compared to him now. The trauma the war had on him was irretrievable.

Grandfather absolutely gave Vladek more confidence and determination. Artie's ignorance towards parishes truma implies his distance to his family, his origin, and his culture.

Vladek detailedly recounts all the important things happening on that week, including Vladek's performance. Even though he was deeply affected by the trauma, he still holds deep love for his son.

However, the train didn't stop until Lublin. From the Jewish authorities, he learned that Jews sent here were being killed. Luckily, he got registered as a cousin of his friend and got free next morning.

Vladek went to Orbach's house and they shared food with each other. But soon after Vladek returned home, he didn't hear from them any more.

Vladek managed to pass the border by cottoning up with a Polish train man. He pretended to be a Pole and said bad words about the Nazis. Vladek went back home. His mother had a cancer, and his father's beard got shaved by the Nazis. He gave Anja and Richieu a big surprise by going back.

Vladek again starts to show nostalgia towards Anja and complain about Mala. Vladek and Artie start an argument again. Artie can't bear this anymore and planned to go home, but he can't find his coat. Vladek threw it away and thinks it is "a shame my son would wear such a coat." Artie gets irritated.

Even though the Jewish authorities didn't know Vladek at all, they were willing to help. It was this kind of helping each other among Jews as well as other races helped them through the war.

Another nice characteristic of Vladek - always save something. It has become an annoying habit now when they have enough to eat. It also shows the cruelty of the war — among most of the people Vladek met, they were never seen again.

Vladek again showed his great interpersonal skills. He clearly knew what kind of men would a Polish train man have empathy with, and he pretended well. The situation back home was not very promising, but in the war, people are usually more easily satisfied: being together with families is their greatest joy.

Vladek is too nostalgic and always compares his present to past. He never thinks positively now — another sign of the trauma. The way he treated Artie is too controlling and autocratic. He still sees Artie as a child rather than an adult — as a lot of parents does. Artie's anger again escalates the tension between the family and shows the misunderstanding of each other.

Four - The Noose Tightens

Date: Oct 19, 2019

Pages: 71-94

Summary

Vladek blames Artie for being late and not able to help him repair his roof. He doesn't want a handyman because that cost money. He is not satisfied even when Artie bought a tape recording at \$75.

A big family were living together at that time. At the dinner table, they started to talk about the disasters Nazis brought them: not enough food, danger of death... yet no one else in the whole family seemed to care about the future and still wanted to live the way they used to live.

Vladek went to secret markets to make money, and sent half of them to his family. In consideration of safety, he later went to work in a tin shop, in which he learned skills useful later in camps.

A friend of father-in-law came and cheated them to take out the furnitures, but the officials came and took the furnitures without paying anything.

One time Vladek encountered a slaughter and Ilzecki saved his life. He also offered to hid Richieu, but it didn't happen because Anja didn't want to. It turned out that Ilzecki's son came out of the war alive.

Analysis

Vladek's thriftiness has already exceeded the common point. Ironically, even though Artie doesn't understand why his father doesn't even want a handyman, he is also proud of himself buying the tape recording at a cheap price.

The family was big and still had some momentum to move forward because of the great fortune they had accumulated over time. But without the foresight and sensitivity Vladek had, they could not go very far.

Vladek was resourceful. He knew a lot of people and was an excellent businessman. He was also wise enough not to send all the money to his family. He was calm and knew clearly the nature of his family members.

The dark side of human nature can be seen in this friend. The worst thing in a war is allies' betrayal.

Vladek started his endless hiding from now on. The jews were shot of no reason. Also, the great reaction the family had on giving up Richieu was understandable but not wise.

Artie says nothing to comfort his father, but rather redirects to topic and asks him to make it chronological.

The family moved to a much smaller house. One other day, four people got hanged. Vladek gets emotional when thinking of them again. However, Artie changes the topic again to Anja and her notebooks.

Vladek then had some jewelry and food business. Afterwards he did carpentry as well.

There came the news that older jews had to be taken away. The grandparents first hid, but finally all got forced to be sent away, right to Auschwitz, the gas.

After the grandparents, it was for everyone to go. Vladek's father came for his son's advise and brought some cookie to Richieu. He said that his cousin might be able to help him, but if Fela goes, he would go anyways. At that moment, Richieu came and asked for more cookie.

At the stadium, almost everyone came, and they were split into two groups: the strong labor, and the weaker ones. Mr. Spiegelman was first taken to the good side, but Fela got sent to the bad side, and he sneaked over, to the bad side.

Artie either has no idea how to comfort his father so he simply shows his coldest aspect to hide his embarrassment.

The Germans were making an example of those four. The guilt Vladek had has lasted for such a long time, implying the trauma. Artie emotionlessly redirected the topic again and asks for Anja's diary. He address Anja by her name instead of calling her mother.

Even though Vladek was not a risk-taker by nature, he wanted to live. He had no choice.

It was a shock when the police was jewish. They were betrayers, but also, they just only wanted to live themselves. Everyone was struggling to survive, but they never knew which step was the correct one.

Everyone was worried, but lost. They chose their way blindly, and the consequence of the wrong choice was death, but more likely, they would die anyway. The detail that Vladek's father would go if Fela go shows that the power of love and family connection can exceed the fear of death. When Vladek and his father were talking about this life threatening situation, the appearance of Richiue and his innocent request for more cookie invokes great sympathy towards this group of jews.

The death of Vladek's father and sister were so sudden. A stamp in the hands of a jew can now decide another jew's life.

Mala's mother managed to go through that, but got killed. Artie wants to find his mother's diary. Mala starts to complain about Vladek's magpie mind, but Artie seems to be happy to see his father's collections. In the end, Mala's anger scared Artie away.

Mala has another story to tell, but Artie is not interested. Artie's interest in those useless collection highlights the similarity between the father and the son. The anger of Mala implies that the similar kind of trauma she had like Vladek. This tells us that the trauma is on everyone going through the war, but not a single case. Artie again shows his indifference when he chooses to escape to home instead of staying and comforting his stepmother. Besides, Vladek's behavior of collecting so many useless things highlights his nostalgia to the past.

Five - Mouse Holes

Date: Oct 22, 2019

Pages: 95-128

Summary

Analysis

Six - Mouse Trap

Date: Oct 24, 2019

Pages: 129-159

Summary

Analysis