

# The Book Thief

The Book Thief is a historical fiction novel by the Australian author Markus Zusak, set in Nazi Germany during World War II. Published in 2005, The Book Thief became an international bestseller and was translated into 63 languages and sold 16 million copies. It was adapted into the 2013 feature film, The Book Thief.

The novel follows the adventures of young Liesel Meminger. By personifying "Death" as a tangible being who narrates the story, the novel presents a unique perspective into the world of the victims of the war. There are many tangible themes throughout the entire story.[1]

Narrated by Death, the story follows Liesel Meminger, a young girl living with foster parents, Hans and Rosa Hubermann, in Nazi Germany during World War II. While adapting to her new home, she is exposed to the horrors of the war and politics. As the political situation in Germany deteriorates, her foster parents conceal a Jewish man named Max Vandenburg. Hans develops a close relationship with Liesel, helping her learn to read and write. Recognizing the power of writing and sharing the written word, Liesel not only begins to steal books that the politicians are seeking to destroy, but also writes her own story, and shares the power of language with Max. By collecting laundry for her foster mother, she also begins a relationship with the mayor's wife, Ilsa Hermann, who allows her to read books in her library.

Hans brings suspicion on his household that he might be a sympathizer with political adversaries of Germany in the war. Max leaves the Hubermanns' home soon after out of fear that the suspicion could endanger him or the family, but eventually returns. With death forever circling, bombs fall on Liesel's street, killing her friends, family, and neighbors. Liesel, working on her manuscript in the basement at the time of the raid, is the sole survivor.

Many years later, or in the words of Death, "just yesterday", Liesel dies as an old woman in the suburbs of Sydney, Australia, with a family and many friends, though she has never forgotten Hans, Rosa, Max, her friend Rudy, and her brother. When Death collects Liesel's soul, he gives her the manuscript she lost in the bombing. She asks him if he read it and Death says, "Yes." She asks him if he understood it, but Death is unable to understand the duality of humanity. Death's last words are for both Liesel and the reader: "I am haunted by humans."