***Number the Stars***

***Chapter 11***

***Summary:***

### ***Will We See You Again Soon, Peter?***

* Annemarie and Ellen are surprised to discover that the coffin holds clothes and linens, not a person. But the adults seem to have expected this. (Adults always seem to know what's up, don't they?)
* Peter takes charge and hands out all the clothes, giving some to each visitor. The clothes are mismatched—definitely not what you'd call high fashion—but no one seems to care. We get why.
* Mrs. Johansen brings out a sweater (one that Kirsti really loves) for the baby, Rachel. Peter also insists that the baby take some sort of drug so she stays asleep. Rachel's mom protests, but she's overruled.
* Peter also deals out the linens until the coffin is empty, and Mrs. Johansen give everyone some snacks.
* Then Annemarie eavesdrops on a secret conversation between Peter and Mrs. Johansen. Here's what goes down: Peter hands Ellen's father a small object and gives him the task of taking it to Henrik. He says it's absolutely vital that it get to him. Ellen's father takes it, no questions.
* Peter, still taking charge, splits the group into two. He says he will take first three people to wherever Henrik is, and that Mrs. Johansen will follow with the Rosens after waiting a while.
* Peter then says goodbye to Annemarie—the parting seems extra meaningful somehow.
* And with that, Peter and the three visitors leave. The others stay behind.
* Everyone is on edge, and for good reason. When there's a noise, Mrs. Johansen goes to investigate, and luckily comes back to say it's no big deal.
* Annemarie thinks about how the Rosens' status in the world has changed, and yet their personalities—who they are—have remained totally the same. True that.
* She also figures out what's about to happen to the people her family is helping: they are fleeing the country for Sweden, and Henrik is getting them there.

***Brief Summary:***

The casket is filled with warm clothes. Peter dispenses them to the assembled group, explaining that their journey will be very cold. The jacket he gives Ellen is patched and worn, and when she sees it, Ellen realizes just how much her life has changed. Resolutely, she puts it on without a word of complaint. Mama wraps the baby in one of Kirsti's sweaters. Peter insists to the baby's frightened parents that he must give her a few drops from the medicine bottle he has in his pocket. Meanwhile, Inge gives everyone a package of the food Annemarie had helped her prepare earlier in the evening. Then Peter gives Mr. Rosen a package to carry to Henrik, telling Mr. Rosen only that its contents are vitally important. Peter announces that he will lead the first group, instructing Inge to wait twenty minutes and then follow with the Rosens. He warns her to take the back pathway so she will not be seen, and to return to the house immediately after she's delivered the Rosens to Henrik.

As they wait the requisite twenty minutes, Annemarie looks at the Rosen family. In their hand-me-down clothes, they look quite shabby. Annemarie remembers how dignified and nice the family always looked, especially on the Sabbath when Mrs. Rosen would light the candles. Mr. Rosen's job as a teacher always lent him additional dignity. She knows without having been told that her Uncle Henrik will be taking the family across the sea to Sweden; she also knows how frightened the Rosens must be, especially Mrs. Rosen, who is afraid of the ocean. But she sees the way in which the family holds itself now, shoulders straight, posture proud, and Annemarie realizes there are other sources of pride besides material possessions and job titles.

***Brief Analysis:***

Annemarie has witnessed tremendous courage in this room full of frightened people. The fleeing Jews carry themselves with dignity in the face of the fearful unknown, and Annemarie realizes that dignity and pride are internal factors, not dependent on our wealth or possessions. She realizes that her friend, Ellen, showed more dignity by accepting the worn-out jacket than had she rejected it. She also sees the brave way in which her mother and Peter carry themselves and watches as her mother still finds it within her to perform a small act of kindness by giving Kirsti's precious sweater to the baby. This is a valuable lesson for any young child to learn, although it is sad that Annemarie has to learn it this way.

***Critical Study:***

There is nothing in the casket except blankets and clothing. He distributes the items to the people gathered, saying they will need them for protection against the cold. Annemarie watches Ellen put on a jacket. She knows Ellen has never worn anything so shabby before. Peter can find nothing for the baby, so Mrs. Johansen gets one of Kirsti's favorite sweaters. Peter makes the baby take some drops so it will be quiet, saying they cannot take any chances. Mrs. Johansen passes out the food and Peter hands Mr. Rosen a paper package. He tells him it is very important that he give it to Henrik at the boat. Annemarie realizes that Mr. Rosen does not know what is in the package and does not ask, because it is safer not to know.

Peter leaves with everyone except the Rosens, telling Mrs. Johansen to follow in twenty minutes. For the first time, Peter calls Mrs. Johansen by her first name, Inge. Annemarie takes this as a sign that Peter has a place in the "world of adults." Peter says goodbye to Annemarie and departs. The old man stumbles on the way out, but Mrs. Johansen says he is all right; if he hurt anything it was just his pride. Annemarie thinks about that word. She looks at the Rosens, all bundled in worn clothing. She thinks of all the good things and times they left in Copenhagen. It has become clear to Annemarie that Uncle Henrik is going to take the Rosens and the others to Sweden in his boat. She remember that Mrs. Rosen is scared of the ocean and that there will be other fears to face, too. As she looks at the Rosens, she sees that they are sitting up straight. They have not changed so much from the way they were before. Pride, Annemarie realizes, can come from other things than the material goods the Rosens left behind.

Annemarie realizes that she and Ellen are being divided. Though she has never felt any difference between herself and her best friend, Annemarie must now accept that they are on different paths. With Annemarie's acceptance of their differences comes an acknowledgement that there are multiple worlds within the one larger world they all live in. Annemarie's observation, that her friendship with Ellen is not "broken," but has changed, points out one of the sad effects of the war. Whatever happens to Ellen and her family, their happy lives have been changed forever.

When the soldiers come to the house, Annemarie compares their arrival to "a recurring nightmare." This is not the first time that Annemarie associates events having to do with the war with an alternate reality. To her, the soldiers' arrival has all the makings of a nightmare: it is potentially so terrible that it takes on an unreal, dream-like quality. Annemarie also knows now that they are in real danger. Each encounter Annemarie has with German soldiers increases the discomfort she feels in their presence. This is her fourth encounter. The others happened on the way home from school, when soldiers came to search the apartment, and on the train to Uncle Henrick's. With each encounter, Annemarie understands a little more about what is happening. When the soldiers come to the funeral, she sees once again why it is so important not to know too much. Annemarie is able to answer the officer's question, but she realizes that it was easier to sound convincing because she does not really know what is in the coffin.

Lying is examined in the scene when the soldiers come to Henrik's house. Annemarie knows that she is lying to the soldiers, but she does it because she must. Children are often taught that lying is wrong. Annemarie is learning that the rules she has lived by are not as straightforward as they seemed. The distinction between right and wrong is not clear cut. Annemarie's talk with Uncle Henrik earlier in the evening established that sometimes a lie is necessary, particularly if it is used to protect a loved one or yourself. It is difficult for Annemarie to accept this, but she begins to see how it can be true. When the soldiers come to their house, the only protection the people have against the guns and threats are lies. Mrs. Johansen saves them all by telling a lie about her aunt's death.

The psalm that Peter reads aloud brings up fears and doubts for Annemarie. The psalm is not comforting to her; rather, it illustrates how vast the world is. Her logical mind cannot believe anyone could "number the stars one by one." (Lowry chooses to use this line as the title of the novel. Her choice indicates how much the novel focuses on Annemarie's emotional travels through the story.) Annemarie is overcome by the largeness of the world. The place that seemed manageable and safe during happy times feels overwhelming in wartime. The world feels immense to Annemarie because she has so little control. She also feels that it is a cruel world. The events that have made Annemarie perceive the world as too big are negative ones. Because of this, she associates the world's bigness with badness. Annemarie learns that outside appearances are not always as important as what the appearances hide. The coffin appears to be normal, but it hides supplies for the endangered Jews. Mrs. Johansen's comment about the old man's pride sets Annemarie thinking about exactly what pride is. She is not used to seeing her best friend dressed in old, used clothing. At first, Ellen and her parents' appearance make Annemarie think that they have had to leave their pride behind. Ellen has had to leave her dreams of the theater, Mr. Rosen his books, and Mrs. Rosen her home and rituals. But as Annemarie studies the Rosens, she comes to see that all three are as composed as ever. Annemarie discovers that pride is not located in physical objects or places. The old man still has his pride, too. Pride, Annemarie finds, is what you carry in you.

These chapters also evaluate the importance of possessions. Mrs. Johansen demonstrates that possessions are not the most significant thing in life. She gives one of Kirsti's most prized possessions to a woman she probably has never seen before. Realizing that possessions are not crucial is another part of growing up. Children place value on the things they can touch, but as they grow older, ideally they learn that abstract possessions are more valuable. The woman's baby is brought up several times during the course of the night. In this case, the baby symbolizes hope for a better future. Presumably, Mrs. Johansen gives the baby one of Kirsti's sweaters because that is all she can offer. But the big sweater on the little body represents the fact that the child is escaping, and will live long enough to grow into the sweater.

Through his interactions with Mrs. Johansen and Henrik, Peter is established as an adult. Annemarie has always thought of him as her older sister's fiancé. She says that she once thought of him as a brother. Now Peter is on the same level as Annemarie's mother. Annemarie's own progression is reflected by Peter's passage into adulthood. Peter addresses Mrs. Johansen by her first name because now they are peers.***Critical Analysis:***

Inside the casket are blankets and clothes, which [Peter Neilsen](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Peter_Neilsen) begins to distribute. There is nothing for a baby, so [Mrs. Johansen](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Mrs._Johansen) gets Kirsti's red sweater and gives it to the baby's mother. Peter asks the baby's weight, and—against the mother's protest—measures a liquid into a dropper and gives the solution to her to give to the baby so the baby sleeps and won't make noise by crying. Annemarie's mother gives each person a package of food containing apples, cheese, and bread. Peter gives a package to Mr. Rosen, telling him it must get to [Uncle Henrik](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Uncle_Henrik). Mr. Rosen puts it in his pocket, but he doesn't ask what it is.

Peter takes the first group, the old man and the young couple with the baby. He instructs Mrs. Johansen to wait 20 minutes, and then bring the Rosens. After he says his goodbyes, he leaves. A bit later the old man stumbles on the path outside, and Peter helps him. Mrs. Johansen notes that all the old man injured was his pride, which causes Annemarie to ponder pride and what it means.

The chapter further humanizes the people who are fleeing. There are young families and the elderly. Neighbors and the Rosens are there. These are not strangers, not simply faces or names who are leaving Denmark. They have lost everything material—homes, businesses, and possessions. They are accepting the help of strangers, risking their lives to go to a new country, and yet they are not defeated. They accept warm clothes and food, much as they accept the help of the Resistance to escape the Nazis.

Despite all of these dangers, they stand with strength and courage. They have not lost their pride, nor their hope or faith. [Lowry](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/author/) represents the victimized here as resilient, stubborn, strong people. This is done, in part, by way of the Rosen family. It is also done here in this section of the novel by developing characters' personalities that are still barely known to readers, such as [Peter Neilsen](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Peter_Neilsen) and [Uncle Henrik](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Uncle_Henrik). These two men are caring and sensitive, as well as committed and brave, risking their lives in the face of great danger. Mr. Rosen wonders what Peter has given him in the packet but knows he should not ask or look to see what it is. All those getting on Uncle Henrik's boat to escape to Sweden know the risks involved. Lowry's writing makes this clear.

***Significance:***

Peter opens "[Great-Aunt Birte](https://www.gradesaver.com/number-the-stars/study-guide/character-list#great-aunt-birte)"s coffin, revealing that it is full of coats and blankets. He distributes them to the people in the room. He explains that they will need the extra layers because it is cold where they are going. One couple has a baby, but there is no infant-sized coat. [Mama](https://www.gradesaver.com/number-the-stars/study-guide/character-list#mama) solves the problem by giving them [Kirsti](https://www.gradesaver.com/number-the-stars/study-guide/character-list#kirsti)’s red sweater. When Peter sees that there is an infant, he gives the baby girl a few drops of a drug so she won’t cry. The girl’s mother is upset at this but reluctantly allows Peter to drug her child - they cannot take any risks.

As everyone gets ready to leave, Peter gives Mr. Rosen a packet to take to [Uncle Henrik](https://www.gradesaver.com/number-the-stars/study-guide/character-list#uncle-henrik). He explains that he will take the first group of people to the harbor, where Henrik will ferry them across to Sweden on a fishing boat. Twenty minutes later, Mama will do the same for the Rosens, and so on, until all of the refugees have reached safety. Annemarie notices that the Rosens look very different from how they did in Copenhagen––dressed in rags, stripped of their jobs and their possessions. However, they still carry themselves with pride.

The tense moment between Peter and the mother of the baby reveals some important lessons about teamwork. The mother does not want Peter to give her baby daughter a sedative. However, Peter insists that the drugs are necessary to prevent the baby from crying. He knows that if the baby makes noise during an inspection, all of the refugees’ lives will be in danger. Although it might appear that that Peter is being rude to the young mother, he is actually taking necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the group.

Towards the end of the chapter, Annemarie notices that despite everything the Rosens have gone through, they still carry themselves with pride. In Copenhagen, it seemed like the Rosens’s pride came from material things, like their candles, their jobs, and their apartment. However, they still manage to keep their pride even after the Germans have taken all of this away. Through the Rosens, Annemarie learns that dignity comes from a person’s own beliefs and sense of self—not from material possessions or achievements.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

[Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) and [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) peer inside the casket together—there is no one in it, and instead it is stuffed with folded blankets and clothing. [Peter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/peter-neilsen) begins quickly passing the contents of the casket around to the people in the room, warning them that their journey will be cold. Ellen and her family pull shabby, patched coats and jackets around their shoulders, and [Mama](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama) begins getting together even more spare clothes for the other “mourners”—Danish Jews about to make their escape.

***Analysis Part 1:***

As the full details of what’s happening around her become clear to Annemarie, she realizes just how much was—and is—at stake. Had the Nazis opened the casket, the entire operation would have been blown, and countless lives would have been destroyed.

***Summary Part 2:***

One of the “mourners” is a woman with a baby, and [Peter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/peter-neilsen) gives her child a few drops of tasteless liquid that will put it to sleep—the group “can’t take a chance” that the baby will cry. [Mama](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama) passes out food, and then Peter removes a paper-wrapped packet from his own coat and hands it to [Mr. Rosen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters). He tells him to deliver it to Henrik “without fail.” Mr. Rosen accepts the packet with a puzzled look. Though he doesn’t seem to know what it contains, he doesn’t ask about it. [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) realizes that the members of their group are “protect[ing] one another by not telling” each other things that will frighten them, distract them, or keep them from being brave.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Peter is serious and methodical as he prepares the group of Jews for their long journey. He knows that any small slip-up could result in the ruin of the entire operation, and is determined to safeguard the group as well as possible in order to ensure the success not just of their escape, but the escape of groups still to come.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Peter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/peter-neilsen) heads out with the first group, and instructs [Mrs. Johansen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama) to set out with the [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) and [Mrs. Rosen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters) and follow him after twenty minutes have passed so that there is less of a chance they’ll all be seen. Peter tells [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) that he won’t see her again tonight—after he drops his group at the boat, he has “other work” to do tonight. He hugs Annemarie and Mrs. Johansen, too, and then heads out with his group.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Peter is brave, but also skillful. It’s clear that this is not his first journey, or his last. His determination, bravery, and willingness to use his privilege to help innocent Jews survive the war are evident, and make a strong impression on Annemarie, who is desperate to be brave and helpful too.

***Summary Part 4:***

Just a few moments after they all set out, a noise comes from outside. [Mama](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama) looks out the window and says that [Mr. Rosen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters) has simply stumbled—he is not hurt, she says, though she jokes that perhaps his pride has taken a hit. As Annemarie looks at the frightened [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) and [Mrs. Rosen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters), huddled together on the sofa and bundled up in rags, she wonders what “sources of pride” the Rosens, and the other Jews, have left. They have nothing of their own with them.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Annemarie realizes for the first time just how much the Rosens are losing, and how persecuted they are their fellow Jews really are. Annemarie wonders how they can be brave or hopeful in such a miserable time.

***Summary Part 5:***

[Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) has intuited what is going to happen to [Mr. Rosen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters) and [Mrs. Rosen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters), though no one has explicitly told her: [Henrik](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/uncle-henrik) is going to smuggle them across the narrow sea to Sweden. Though the Rosens seem frightened, as she looks at her neighbors, she is surprised to see that their shoulders are straight despite all the fear that lies ahead of them. Annemarie realizes that they have “other sources, too, of pride, and [have] not left everything behind” after all.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Annemarie at last realizes that perhaps the Rosens’ hope comes from the fact that so many people in their extended community are committed to helping them see freedom. Pride comes from more than material wealth or even personal bravery—the love and support of others can help one feel pride and hope even in the darkest of moments.