***Number the Stars***

***Chapter 5***

***Brief Summary:***

The girls talk quietly in bed that night, reassuring each other that no soldiers would actually come to the door in the dead of night. Only half seriously, Annemarie tells Ellen that if they do come, she should tell them her name is Lise Johansen. Ellen asks about Lise's death, but Annemarie confesses she doesn't really know what happened - only that she had been hit by a car. Annemarie tells Ellen, that her parents don't talk about Lise, and have never once opened the trunk with her things since the day she died. Eventually the girls fall asleep. Ellen is worried about her parents, but Annemarie feels completely secure in the safety of her own home.

Hours later, the girls are awoken by a loud pounding at the door. Her mother turns on the lights in the living room, something she has not done at night since they started rationing the electricity. They overhear the soldiers asking Papa about the Rosens; they tell him their apartment is empty, and wonder if the Rosens might be hiding here. Papa tells them there's no one here but his own family, but the Germans start searching the apartment. In the darkened bedroom, Annemarie notices Ellen's Star of David necklace, and urgently tells her to take it off. Ellen, panicking, can't disengage the clasp, so at the last moment before the soldiers come through the door, Annemarie yanks it off her friend's neck, breaking the chain in the process. She conceals it in her tightly-closed fist just as three Nazi soldiers enter the bedroom.

When the soldiers ask Ellen her name, she tells them it's Lise. But the soldier is suspicious, because unlike Annemarie and Kirsti, Ellen has black hair. He suspects her last name is Rosen, not Johansen as she's told them. Thinking quickly, Papa pulls the family photo album off the bookcase and tears out three baby pictures: each photo has one of his daughter's names written on it, and there is a photo for Annemarie, Kirsti, and Lise. The baby picture of Lise shows that she had black hair. As the Germans examine this evidence, Annemarie realizes why her father had torn the pictures from the book instead of just handing over the album. In the album, underneath the photos, the girls' dates of birth were recorded; Lise would have been twenty-one now had she lived. Luckily, the Germans are satisfied by the photographic evidence. Before they leave, one of the officers tears up the photo of Lise and grinds the pieces into the floor with his boots.

***Brief Analysis:***

Annemarie's comfortable home and her peace of mind have been violated. No longer can she pretend to herself that her parents are omnipotent and can keep her safe from the Nazis. She is no longer a bystander in the events of the day; she has become an active participant. Her father's quick thinking saves Ellen that night, and perhaps it is from him that Annemarie inherited her own quick mind. She was quick to grasp the danger that Ellen's necklace posed because the Star of David would have identified her as a Jew. Upon realizing this, Annemarie didn't sit back to wonder and worry if it would be a problem; she literally took the problem into her own hands and solved it, just in the nick of time.

***Critical Study:***

Chapter V: Who Is the Dark-Haired One?

Annemarie and Ellen prepare to go to bed in Annemarie's room. Ellen asks if Annemarie thinks soldiers will come to search the apartment. Annemarie does not think so. Ellen jokes that if they do, she can practice her skills as an actress by pretending to be Lise. Ellen hopes to go to acting school. Ellen asks how Lise died, and Annemarie admits that is not completely sure. Lise and Peter were out together and then Annemarie's parents got a call about an accident. Her parents went straight to the hospital, and Lise died. Mr. Johansen was very angry. Annemarie notices the Star of David necklace Ellen wears.

A few hours after falling asleep, they wake to pounding on the apartment door. Annemarie peeks out the bedroom. A soldier is asking her parents if it is true that they are friends with the Rosens. He demands to know where the Rosens are. Mrs. Johansen answers that they must be sleeping in their home. The soldiers come in, looking for the Rosens. Annemarie tells Ellen to take off her necklace. The clasp sticks, but Annemarie yanks it off just in time. The three soldiers come in and order the girls out of bed and interrogate them. They want to know why there are two blond girls (Annemarie and Kirsti) and one with dark hair. Mr. Johansen grabs a family photo album and rips out three pictures. Each is a photo of a baby with the name below: Kirstin with blond hair, Annemarie with blond hair, and Lise with dark hair. The soldiers rip the photo of Lise and leave. As the soldiers leave, Annemarie realizes that she has been clenching Ellen's necklace in her hand. When she opens her fingers, the Star of David is imprinted on her skin.

Ellen and Annemarie are in Annemarie's bedroom talking about Mr. Rosen and his desire for Ellen to become a schoolteacher, and they then discuss Lise. How she died is something of a mystery. Ellen talks about wishing Lise was her sister, too. Then Ellen notes that "I wouldn't want the Germans to take my family away—to make us live someplace else. But still, it wouldn't be as bad as being dead." The girls go to sleep, but soldiers wake the whole house banging on the front door in the middle of the night.

The soldiers are seeking the Rosens, and they believe the Johansen family is hiding them. As the soldiers enter, Annemarie realizes Ellen is still wearing her [Star of David](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/symbols/#Star_of_David). Ellen can't get the clasp open, so Annemarie tears it free. When the soldiers come into the girls' room, Annemarie "crumpled it into her hand and closed her fingers tightly." The soldiers search the room, and then bring the girls and the Johansens into the living room. They question the girls, and Ellen says she is "Lise Johansen." The soldiers doubt her because of her dark hair. They suggest the Johansens "got her someplace else" and ask, "From the Rosens?"

[Mr. Johansen](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Mr._Johansen) gets a photo book and tears out "three pictures from three separate pages." The officers look at the photos, each labeled, and when they reach Lise's photo—a dark-haired baby—they tear it up, drop the pieces, and leave.

When they are gone, Annemarie sees she had "imprinted the Star of David into her palm."

***Critical Analysis:***

Their inability to find and take away the Jews they had located in the city undoubtedly frustrates the Nazi soldiers. They'd collected the names and addresses from the synagogues, and so they would have expected to be able to easily locate and capture the Jews. However, as the reader knows from history—and from this novel—the citizens of Denmark hid or otherwise helped almost all of the Danish Jews evade capture.

Also significant in this chapter is the soldiers' focus on "dark hair." The Nazis believed that blonde hair and blue eyes were superior traits. Many Danes, including both Annemarie and Kirsti, match this image. The reader may recall the soldier at the novel's onset remarking that Kirsti reminded him of his own pretty little girl. Ellen's dark hair draws attention. The soldier (correctly) suspects she could be a Jew.

The other indicator of Ellen's identity is the [Star of David](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/symbols/#Star_of_David) she wears. In some German-occupied territories, Jews had to wear a large yellow Star of David on their clothing at all times. In the center was written *Jude*, German for "Jew." Ellen's necklace identifies her as a Jew, and if this was revealed, she would be taken. This is Annemarie's first act of resistance: she hides Ellen's identity to keep her safe. In difficult times like this, ordinary people, including children, need to act courageously.

***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) get ready for bed, and, as they do, Ellen expresses how nervous she is at the idea of a soldier coming to the house. At the same time, she reveals that she has a plan—if anyone asks who she is, she would “just pretend to be [Lise](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama).”

***Analysis Part 1:***

Ellen’s choice to inhabit the “role” of Lise blurs the line between fantasy and reality, and both deepens and complicates the sisterly bond between her and Annemarie.

***Summary Part 2:***

As the girls brush their hair, [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) asks [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) how [Lise](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama) died—she says that though she remembers the funeral, she never knew what happened to Lise. Annemarie confesses that she doesn’t know “exactly” what happened to Lise either—she knows only that Lise was struck by a car while out with [Peter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/peter-neilsen) one night. As Ellen solemnly reflects on the day of Lise’s funeral, Annemarie notices a gold and gleaming Star of David [necklace](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/symbols/ellen-s-necklace) around her neck.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Annemarie doesn’t know all the details of her sister’s death, cluing readers in to the fact that she, like the little Kirsti, may have been shielded from the truth in order to remain safe, innocent, and untroubled.

***Summary Part 3:***

Together the girls get into bed and continue talking about [Lise](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama)—about her terrible fate, her secret trunk of things, and how beautiful she was. The girls talk about Lise until the girls fall asleep. Hours later, a pounding on the door shakes them from their sleep. [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) opens the door to see what’s happening while the terrified [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) remains in bed. Out in the hall, Annemarie can see her [Mama](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama) and [Papa](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters), holding candlesticks, greeting three Nazis. The soldiers ask them about the whereabouts of the Rosen family—their apartment is empty. The Johansens insist that no one is home but the members of their own family, but the Nazis insist on looking around the apartment.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Annemarie has never fully allowed herself to believe that she and her family would be targeted by Nazis—but now, as her worst fears come true, it is clear that she and her family are not the ones who will suffer most if their ruse is discovered.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) quietly shuts the bedroom door and flies back to the bed, urging [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) to take her [necklace](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/symbols/ellen-s-necklace) off. Ellen cannot undo the clasp, and so Annemarie grabs the chain and yanks it free. She folds the necklace into her hand just as the Nazis enter the bedroom and aim a flashlight at the two of them. The soldiers sweep the room but find nothing suspicious. They order the girls to get out of bed and follow them to the living room—Ellen and Annemarie, frightened, follow them.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Annemarie helps Ellen get her necklace—a dead giveaway of her Judaism—off just in time. Ellen is forced to sacrifice the truth of who she is and inhabit a fantasy in order to save her life.

***Summary Part 5:***

In the living room the Nazis demand to know the girls’ names. [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) gives them her own name, while [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) tells them her name is Lise Johansen. [Mama](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama), distraught, urges the officers to let the innocent children go back to bed. One officer, though, grabs a handful of Ellen’s dark hair, and asks why everyone else in the family is blonde. He asks if the Johansens got the dark-haired girl “from the Rosens.” Papa strides over to a nearby bookcase and pulls out a family photograph album, then tears out three pictures. He hands them to the German officer and points out the names written at the bottom of each—they are of Annemarie, [Kirsti](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/kirsti-johansen), and the real [Lise](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama), who had dark hair as a baby.

***Analysis Part 6:***

The Nazis come dangerously close to discovering the truth—but when Papa presents them with old baby pictures of Lise, they are stopped in their tracks. Fantasy and reality blur as the lucky coincidence of Lise having had dark hair as a child “proves” that Ellen is one of the Johansens.

***Summary Part 7:***

The officer tears the pictures into pieces and leaves the apartment, taking his cronies with him. [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) relaxes her right hand—she has been clutching [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen)’s [necklace](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/symbols/ellen-s-necklace) inside it the whole time. As she opens her palm, she sees that she has “imprinted the Star of David” into the soft flesh there.

***Analysis Part 7:***

In this passage, Annemarie finds that having nervously pressed Ellen’s necklace onto her palm has left an impression upon her. The symbolic moment shows how deeply Annemarie is affected by her friend’s close brush with capture—and points to the sameness and sisterhood between the two girls despite the differences in their lives.