***Number the Stars***

***Chapter 7***

***Brief Summary:***

Ellen is in awe of the beautiful house by the sea. For a few moments, the girls are able to forget their troubles as they wade in the chilly ocean. The girls giggle and laugh, and Annemarie points out Sweden to Ellen, as her Uncle Henrik had once pointed across the water and explained to Annemarie that the land visible from the shore is the country of Sweden.

When they return to the house, Mama's anxiety is evident. She wants to know if the girls encountered anyone on the beach, but they assure her that the only sign of life was the kitten Ellen picked up and brought home. Mama insists they stay in the house from now on, but as compensation, she promises them a nice supper. The girls, who have been used to eating nothing but potatoes for months, will get to enjoy fresh fish and applesauce tonight.

After dinner, Ellen asks Annemarie what she did with her necklace. Annemarie assures her she's hidden it somewhere very safe, and promises to keep it for her until it is safe for Ellen to wear it again. It was a gift from Ellen's father, and tonight, Ellen is very worried about her parents' safety and whereabouts. The girls lie in bed awake. They hear Uncle Henrik return to the house, but Annemarie notices that the conversation between Henrik and his beloved sister is not, for once, peppered with their usual laughter.

***Brief Analysis:***

With a nice meal, full bellies, and all the comforts of home, a sense of normalcy has been restored to the girls' lives. Yet even as they enjoy Henrik's beautiful seaside home, they feel the continual unease brought about by their precarious situation. Annemarie is more comfortable than Ellen, because Henrik's house is familiar to her and holds many pleasant memories. Ellen's thoughts are with her absent parents and her fears for the future. Even Annemarie is not fully comforted by her pleasant surroundings because this visit is different than any previous visit, and she can sense the anxiety in the adults around her.

***Critical Study:***

When they get to the sea, Ellen says it is her first time so close to the ocean. Her mother is afraid of the ocean, Ellen explains. A leaf floats up to them and Annemarie remarks that it could have come from Sweden, which is visible across the water. Annemarie scans the water for her uncle's boat, but they cannot find it. They go to Henrik's house. Mrs. Johansen asks if they saw anyone and warns not to speak to anyone. The girls want to know if there are soldiers here, too. Mrs. Johansen says there are. After supper Ellen and Annemarie go up to bed in Mrs. Johansen's childhood room. Ellen asks Annemarie what she did with her Star of David necklace. Annemarie says she hid it carefully and will keep it for Ellen until she can wear it again safely. Ellen wishes she knew where her parents were. As they fall asleep, Annemarie can hear her mother and Uncle Henrik talking downstairs. It reminds her of earlier visits to the house during the summer, only now there is no laughter.

They arrive at [Uncle Henrik](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Uncle_Henrik)'s house and encounter a kitten. Ellen reveals to Annemarie she has never seen the sea, only the harbor in Copenhagen where they live. She tells Annemarie her mother "is afraid of the ocean," and that she thinks it is "too big for her. And too cold!" They play at the edge of the ocean, where Annemarie finds a leaf that she says "may have come from a tree in Sweden." She points out Sweden, a small strip of land way out in the ocean in the distance. When they rejoin [Mrs. Johansen](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/character-analysis/#Mrs._Johansen), she is worried they might have been seen. "I'm afraid there are soldiers everywhere," she says.

Ellen asks about her [Star of David](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/symbols/#Star_of_David) necklace. Annemarie assures her is hidden until it is safe for Ellen to wear it. Ellen tells her the necklace was a gift from her father, and they listen to Annemarie's mother and uncle talking downstairs. Annemarie notices that everything now feels different from the way it was in the past. The narrator describes the mood: "In the earlier times, she [Annemarie] had always overheard laughter. Tonight there was no laughter at all."

***Critical Analysis(Ch 5-7):***

The vastness of the ocean, the sense that it is overwhelming and incomprehensible, is akin to the attempt to understand the war or anti-Semitism. Especially for a child, it seems impossible to grasp. The world seems huge, foreboding, and cold. There are soldiers everywhere. Yet, there are also currents of hope. The leaf they see "may have come from a tree in Sweden." In Sweden, which they can see in the distance, there is safety for the Jews. Sweden is not occupied. It stands as a beacon of hope, a reminder that the war is not everywhere, that hate is not everywhere.

The acts of the Danes in rescuing their neighbors represent hope, especially as readers discover how many people looked the other way as Nazi Germany slaughtered millions of Jews and others. [Lowry](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Number-the-Stars/author/)'s choice to write a historically accurate text allows a ray of hope into this dark discussion.

Again, Ellen wants to know about her necklace. It's important to her especially because it was a gift from her father, and so it carries an important personal significance beyond faith.

Acting is vital to Ellen's narrow escape. During the course of the night, each member of the Johansen family and Ellen must do some acting. Ellen must play the part of the third daughter. All of them must pretend to be calm. Mr. and Mrs. Johansen must pretend that there is nothing wrong and that they do not know where the Rosens are. When the soldiers come, they must pretend that an ordinary night in their home has been interrupted. Annemarie has a role as well. She must keep her friend from being too afraid. In a way, this is a role reversal: Ellen is taking Lise's place for the night, but it is Annemarie who must act like the older sister. Before going to bed, Annemarie helps Ellen feel better by assuring her that nothing will go wrong, though Annemarie is not positive this is true.

Annemarie also protects Ellen by pulling off Ellen's necklace. The imprinting of the necklace in Annemarie's hand stands for a transformation in Annemarie. For the first time, Annemarie takes action against the Germans. With this, Annemarie assumes new responsibly. She has taken a step away from the passive role of a child. Though Annemarie is not herself Jewish, she has become involved in helping Ellen, which puts her in danger. By pulling the necklace off her friend she is taking matters into her own hands, literally and figuratively, and imprinting herself with her good work.

Lise plays an important role in Ellen's safety. The photograph is what convinces the soldiers that Ellen is the Johansen's daughter. Because Lise had dark hair as a baby, the soldiers stop being suspicious of Ellen's dark hair. When Ellen and Annemarie talk about Lise before going to sleep, Annemarie cannot really explain how her sister died. The real cause of her death is foreshadowed when the soldier rips and crushes Lise's baby picture on the way out. Though Lise's death was awful, in some way she did not die in vain, for Ellen is saved only because Lise died.

The departure from the city is the beginning of a difficult adventure for Annemarie, Ellen, and Mrs. Johansen. Again, Annemarie is aware that she does not fully understand what is going on, but for the moment she does not question it. At this point, the role of knowledge, or lack of knowledge, enters into Number the Stars as a theme. Annemarie begins to see that things are not always what they appear. She realizes that her father is speaking on code over the phone, and also that he is speaking about Ellen. However, she does not pick up on everything. Mr. Johansen tells Henrik that he is sending "a carton of cigarettes" and that more will come later. Though Annemarie guesses that Elle is the carton, she does not focus on the fact that there must be other people coming, too.

Not realizing what she does, Annemarie establishes a new relationship between herself and Ellen. Without Mr. Johansen around to reassure Ellen, Annemarie takes on this responsibility. Though Annemarie may not consciously know she must take on more responsibility, her tone when talking to Ellen shifts. She becomes a figure of authority, though the girls are the same age. She points out Sweden to Ellen. When Ellen asks where her necklace is, Annemarie states what she has done with it and does not consult her friend. She tells Ellen that she has put it somewhere safe, but she does not say where. Without meaning to, Annemarie does for Ellen exactly what her parents have done for her: she gives Ellen enough information to satisfy her, without telling the whole story.

Mrs. Johansen emerges as an important figure. She asserts herself for the first time, deciding that she will make the trip to her brother's without her husband. Mrs. Johansen's childhood is contrasted to the childhoods of the three girls. As they walk through the woods, her stories illustrate a pleasant and safe life. Her faithful dog and the days spent roaming the countryside speak of an innocence that cannot be preserved during war. Though Ellen and Annemarie can play outside, they must be aware of strangers. Even in the country, they cannot be carefree. Despite her wish that her daughters could be unaffected, Mrs. Johansen realizes that this is not possible, at least in the case of Annemarie. Kirsti, though, is young enough to be oblivious and experience pure joy at the visit. Her innocence is contrasted to Annemarie's growing sense that awareness is important. Kirsti thinks that kings and queens live in the castle they see. Annemarie wants to correct her sister, but Mrs. Johansen stops her from doing so, saying it is all right for Kirsti to "dream". She divides Annemarie from the other children with this remark, implying in her statement that Annemarie can separate dreams from reality.

The visit to her mother's old home brings back memories of happier days for Annemarie. She remembers pleasant times before the war, times which she associates with early childhood. In her mind she has an image of the children tucked into bed and adults laughing downstairs, child neatly divided from adult by the line of the staircase. But things have changed. Now it is more difficult to separate the adults from the children. Annemarie is not sure where she belongs, and this makes her feel unstable. Happier times are associated with younger life. In part this is because her existence was happier before the war, but it is also because as a young child, she had a clear sense of her place in the world.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

As [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen), [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen), and [Mama](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/mrs-johansen-mama) approach [Uncle Henrik](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/uncle-henrik)’s house, Ellen is stunned by how beautiful the farmhouse and surrounding meadow are. Mama and [Kirsti](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/kirsti-johansen) go in to rest, but Annemarie and Ellen enjoy a run through the meadow and a walk down to the shore. Ellen says she’s never been so close to the “real” ocean before, as her mother is afraid of the sea. Annemarie points out across the water at the “misty shoreline” of Sweden. Soon, Mama calls them both into the house, and asks Annemarie if she or Ellen saw or talked to anybody. Annemarie says they did not. Mama warns them that while they’re here, they must stay away from people, even though the neighborhood is small and quiet. Ellen asks if there are soldiers here, and Mama replies sadly that there are soldiers “everywhere.”

***Analysis Part 1:***

Even in the idyllic and beautiful countryside, far away from the busy streets of Copenhagen, Mama knows that there is danger lurking in the shadows—and tries to impress this sad fact upon the girls so that they don’t act recklessly and risk Ellen’s safety.

***Summary Part 2:***

After dinner that evening, [Ellen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/ellen-rosen) and [Annemarie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/annemarie-johansen) head up to the bedroom they’re sharing—the same bedroom that once belonged to Mama when she was a girl. Ellen asks where Annemarie has put her [necklace](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/symbols/ellen-s-necklace). Annemarie assures her that it is hidden in a secret place—and will stay there until it is safe for Ellen to wear it once again. Ellen sits down on the edge of the bed and laments that she doesn’t know where her parents are, or how they’re doing. Annemarie comforts Ellen, and as the girls get into bed, Annemarie listens to the sounds of her mother’s conversation with [Uncle Henrik](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/number-the-stars/characters/uncle-henrik) wafting up from downstairs. Normally, when the two are together, they are constantly laughing and joking. Tonight, though, there is “no laughter at all.”

***Analysis Part 2:***

Annemarie attempts to comfort Ellen by assuring her that her necklace is safe, but Ellen is distraught about everything happening to her in the present moment. Ellen’s necklace is a symbol of her identity, and in missing her necklace Ellen is also missing the days when she could freely be herself, without the threat of imprisonment or even death hanging over her head at all times.