

6. "Mystery bores me. It chokes me. I know what happens and so do you. It's the machinations that wheel us there that aggravate, perplex, interest, and astound me."

Death's narration, p. 243

As narrator, Death employs the technique of foreshadowing throughout the novel to reveal, among other things, the fates -- i.e., survival or death -- of individual characters. Just prior to this passage, Death describes how Rudy Steiner dies at the end of the book. Marcus Zusak's employment of foreshadowing places emphasis on the events and "machinations" in Nazi Germany that lead the characters to their ends.

7. "There were the erased pages of *Mein Kampf*, gagging, suffocating under the paint as they turned."

Death's narration, p. 237

Max whitewashes pages of Hitler's propaganda book *Mein Kampf* and draws an entirely new story upon them: a brief retelling of his life, his family's persecution by the Nazis, and his friendship with Liesel. Just as Hans used the same copy of *Mein Kampf* to help bring Max to safety, Max boldly transforms Nazi ideology into compassion.

8. "Did they deserve any better, these people? How many had actively persecuted others, high on the scent of Hitler's gaze, repeating his sentences, his paragraphs, his opus? Was Rosa Hubermann responsible? The hider of a Jew? Or Hans? Did they all deserve to die? The children?"

Death, p. 375

Death compares the plight of the German civilians cowering in a bomb shelter with the certain death of the Jews trapped in Nazi gas chambers. Death's musings bring up the notion of collective responsibility for Hitler's crimes, and Death wonders how culpable these people are for the ongoing Holocaust. While they are all enmeshed in the process of killing millions of innocent people, some, like Rosa and Hans, quietly defy the Nazis by hiding a Jew, while others are defenseless children who cannot possibly be held responsible for crimes planned before they were even born.

9. "The word shaker and the young man climbed up to the horizontal trunk. They navigated the branches and began to walk. When they looked back, they noticed that the majority of onlookers had started to return to their own places. In there. Out there. In the forest.

*But as they walked on, they stopped several times, to listen. They thought they could hear voices and words behind them, on the word shaker's tree."*

excerpt from Max's story "The Word Shaker," p. 450

In Max's story, Hitler grows a forest of propaganda-bearing trees, yet a young girl ("the word shaker") plants an indestructible tree that grows miles high from a seed of friendship. She stays at the top of the tree until her friend ("the young man") meets her there. When they climb down, the tree falls, smashing a large part of Hitler's forest. They walk down the tree trunk, and although most of the indoctrinated people return to Hitler's forest, others quietly follow the two friends. Despite the violence against Jews in Nazi Germany, there were a number of Germans who disagreed, if only quietly, with Hitler's persecution. Max's story aims to encourage Liesel to be brave and willing to counter words of hatred with words of love; these final lines suggest that others would be willing to follow her if she took such a stand.

10. "I am haunted by humans."