

Maus I: My Father Bleeds History

Name ____________________________ pd. __

Study Guide

Chapter 2

1. What does the epigraphical picture and title of chapter two seem to foreshadow?

2. What is Vladek doing when Artie come to visit him?

3. How does Vladek become wealthy?

4. Why is Miss Stefanska, the seamstress who lives down the hall from Vladek, arrested? How does Vladek react to Anja’s connection to this arrest?

5. Examine the third frame on page 29, which depicts Miss Stefanska in jail. What is unusual about the position of the prison bars, and what does this symbolize about the situation?

6. Where do Anja and Vladek go when she is feeling suicidal after Richieu’s birth? How does Spiegelman visually emphasize her despair? What could she have been suffering from?

7. What does Vladek see for the first time while traveling to Czechoslovakia?

8. Why does Spiegelman place the swastika in the background of the panels that depict the plight of Jews in Hitler’s Germany?

9. Spiegelman portrays Jews as mice regardless of which country they come from. What are the non-Jewish Polish citizens portrayed as?

10. Why does Vladek believe Sosnowiec will be a safer place for Jews than Bielsko? How did this type of misconception hurt Jews?
11. Why must Anja and Vladek part ways at the end of this chapter?

12. What is unusual about Vladek’s left eye? Why didn’t he tell the young doctor about the mistake he made in the examination?

13. What is Artie’s response to Vladek’s story about almost losing his eye? How might this type of situation be a contributing factor in their weak father-son relationship?

List any words/things you don’t understand, or questions you have that we did not cover. I have a few listed for you.

Zylots – Polish currency
Kilos – kilograms; one kilogram equals 2.2 pounds
Pogrom – an organized government sponsored persecution/extermination of a minority group (especially Jews) including damage and physical abuse.
Tuchus – Yiddish for buttocks Ex. Get off your tuchus and do your chores.
Anti-Semitic – Having prejudice against Jews. The term dates back to the ancient Hebrew period, when the people of Moses and Abraham were said to have descended from Semitic people in the Middle East.
Richieu – pronounced (Ree-shoo) Vladek and Anja’s oldest son. Art’s older brother.
Bielsko – pronounced (Bell-sko) a city
Sanitarium – mental hospital