

The Tin Drum Notes & Analysis

The free *The Tin Drum* notes include comprehensive information and analysis to help you understand the book. These free notes consist of about 135 pages (40,329 words) and contain the following sections:

- Author Information
- Plot Summary
- Characters
- Places & Objects
- Chapter Notes & Analysis

These free notes also contain Quotes and Themes & Topics on *The Tin Drum* by Günter Grass.

The Tin Drum Plot Summary

The Tin Drum is the fictional autobiography of Oskar Matzerath, who at the time of his writing is thirty years old. He is writing from inside a mental institution in Düsseldorf, Germany, the reasons for which remain unknown to the reader until the end of the book. Oskar is, for all intents and purposes, a gnome; when he was a three year-old, he received a toy tin drum from his mother Agnes and decided voluntarily to stop growing, and to never become a grownup. At the same time, he developed a high-pitched singing voice that he could use to break glass - he nurtures this talent and uses it to many ends - defending his drum (which he is never without), breaking and entering, inscribing, and for the effect it has on an audience. As Oskar gets older, the events in his life impel him to grow - at the time of his writing, he measures four feet one inch, and in the middle of writing his book, he grows to four feet two inches.

Oskar's autobiography is also the biography of his family and its history, starting around the turn of the 20th century and extending until after World War II. He begins with his grandparents' generation and relates his story to the present day. His grand parents were Kashubes, a group of people who are neither ethnic Poles nor Germans, but hail from Kashubia, a province in northwest Poland. From them, Oskar inherits an "incendiary spirit." His grandfather Joseph was wanted by the police for setting fire to several sawmills. Oskar's grandmother, Anna, hid Joseph and then married him.

His grandparents moved to Danzig, a Polish port city, where Agnes, Oskar's mother, and Oskar were born. Anna started a family tradition of owning grocery stores and food delivery businesses; the first part of the story revolves around the clique of storeowners in a section of Danzig.

Although Oskar's mother marries a man named Alfred Matzerath, she has a lifelong adulterous love affair with her first cousin, Jan Bronski. Oskar calls both of these men his "presumptive father." Alfred is a card-carrying Nazi, and Jan is a sickly Polish National too weak to pass his army physicals.

Oskar does not go to school, and is self-educated, although he claims to have been borne with all of his intellectual capacities intact. His two great intellectual influences are Rasputin and Goethe. His mother died before World War II began. Oskar weathers the war years in Danzig, which is the first city invaded by Germany in the war. He is present for the invasion of the Polish Post Office, where Jan works. Jan is later executed for his grudging role in the defense of the post office.

about family and

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Agnes

With both Agnes and Jan dead, Alfred marries Maria Truczinski, who is Oskar's first love. Alfred marries her because he thinks he got her pregnant, but unbeknownst to either Maria or Alfred, it was Oskar that had impregnated Maria. She gives birth to Oskar's son, Kurt, who spurns Oskar from the day of his birth and will not comply with Oskar's wish for him to be a drum-wielding three-year old like himself.

During the war, Oskar takes up with a performing troupe of midgets like himself, led by his mentor, a midget-clown named Bebra. Oskar performs on his drum and breaks glass with his voice for legions of German soldiers on the front lines during World War II. He falls in love with Roswitha Raguna, an Italian somnambulist and midget like himself, but she is killed by artillery fire during the allied invasion of Normandy. After that, Oskar returns home.

Oskar becomes the leader of a band of anti-establishment youths called The Dusters. He refines their way of doing things and helps them break into government offices. They are finally caught in a church, sawing apart a statue of the Virgin Mary and the baby Jesus, because a sister of one of the members ratted them out.

Alfred, a member of the Nazis, is killed at the end of the war by the invading Russian army. Once Alfred is gone, Oskar, Maria, and Kurt are forced to emigrate to Düsseldorf to be with Maria's sister, Guste. There, Kurt and Maria take up trading on the black market, and Oskar becomes a tombstone engraver. Later, during the tough time of the currency reform after the war, Oskar becomes a model at the academy of art in Düsseldorf. Later, he takes up jazz with his friend Klepp and they put together a jazz band and play at a nightclub called "The Onion Cellar" in Düsseldorf. Once the nightclub owner dies, Oskar is offered a contract to take his drum on the road for solo acts. This leads to a recording deal and makes Oskar rich.

The record company turns out to be owned by Bebra, who becomes close to Oskar and then dies. Oskar stops drumming. Out walking in the fields outside Düsseldorf, Oskar finds the severed ring finger of the woman, a nurse named Sister Dorothea, who had lived across the hall from him in his Düsseldorf apartment and had been murdered. He keeps the finger because he had been in love with her. He then meets another man, Vittlar, with whom he becomes friends. For Vittlar's sake, he asks his friend to turn him in to the police for Sister Dorothea's murder, which Vittlar does. Oskar is put on trial for the murder and is wrongfully convicted and forced to live in a mental hospital where he writes his memoirs.

The Tin Drum Major Characters

Oskar Matzerath (Bronski): The main character and narrator of the novel. Oskar willfully stunted his growth at three feet tall as a three-year-old, although later in the novel he grows to four feet one inch. For a majority of the novel, Oskar is never found without his red and white lacquered tin drum, which he plays constantly. He is also endowed for most of his life with the ability to shatter glass with a high pitched scream, though he eventually loses this ability.

Bruno Münsterberg: Oskar's keeper in the mental institution. He keeps an eye on Oskar through a peephole in his bedroom door, and spends his time making elaborate works of knotted art with old pieces of string.

Anna Bronski (Koljaiczek/Wranka): Oskar's maternal grandmother, wearer of four potato-colored skirts, who hides Oskar's grandfather Joseph Koljaiczek under her skirts to keep him from the law. They bear a daughter, Agnes, Oskar's mother.

is in charge of the company. Through Bebra, Oskar meets Roswitha Raguna, the love of his life.

Roswitha Raguna: A beautiful Italian woman who, though a bit taller than Oskar, has nevertheless chosen not to grow. She is the most celebrated somnambulist in all of Italy. When Oskar joins Bebra's performing troupe, he and Roswitha have a long love affair that lasts until she is killed by mortar fire on the front lines of France in WWII.

Herbert Truczinski: Oskar's friend who, in order to get away from almost certain death working in a bar on the Danzig waterfront (he was stabbed repeatedly by sailors), takes a job guarding a figurehead from an old sailboat named 'Niobe.' The figurehead is supposedly cursed and is responsible for Herbert's death - he takes an ax to the figurehead but kills himself in the process.

Maria Truczinski (Matzerath): Oskar's first sexual partner and the mother of the boy he considers his biological son, Kurt. Maria marries Alfred Matzerath after Agnes dies, because Alfred thinks he has gotten Maria pregnant. Oskar flees to western Germany with her after WWII.

Kurt Matzerath (Bronski): Kurt is Maria's son and the reason that she marries Alfred Matzerath, for he believes himself to be Kurt's father. Oskar, however, knows better - he is convinced he fathered Kurt with Maria in her bed after pouring fizz powder in her navel. Kurt does not like Oskar and does not understand him; he is of normal size and does not understand how to drum.

P. Korneff: A tombstone artisan in Düsseldorf with whom Oskar gets a job chiseling inscriptions. Korneff has a constant skin infection - there are boils constantly erupting on the back of his neck.

Sister Dorothea (Köngetter): The nurse living across from Oskar in the Zeidler flat. He never lays eyes on her in the light, but is infatuated with her. He hides in her closet, then has a failed sexual episode with her in the flat's darkened bathroom. Her murder is wrongly pinned on Oskar, who comes into possession of her severed ring finger.

Minor Characters

Vincent Bronski: Anna Bronski's brother, and Oskar's great-uncle. He is a widower and lives on a farm in Kashubia. After a pilgrimage to Czestochowa (a place where the virgin Mary was sighted), he becomes obsessed with coronating the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Poland. His son is Jan Bronski, Agnes Bronski's lover.

Gregor Koljaiczek: Joseph Koljaiczek's elder brother, who marries Anna Bronski after his brother drowns. He is a drunk and works in a gunpowder factory. He dies in the flu epidemic of 1917.

Hedwig (Lemke) Bronski/Ehlers: Jan Bronski's wife, a Kashubian woman described as big and 'rawboned,' with an 'inscrutable bovine gaze.' She and Jan have two children, Stephan and Marga.

Gretchen Scheffler: Agnes Matzerath's friend who takes it upon herself to educate Oskar after it is clear that he cannot go to school. Although she believes her attempts to be futile, it is from her that Oskar learns of Rasputin and Goethe, the two great intellectual forces in his life.

Alexander Scheffler: Gretchen Scheffler's husband, a baker, who travels constantly with his wife on the Third Reich's 'Strength Through Joy' ships.

Joseph Koljaiczek (Wranka) / Joe Colchic: Oskar's maternal grandfather, who hid from the police under Anna Bronski's four skirts; he was wanted for arson (burning down a paper plant). He fathers Agnes, Oskar's mother, the day that he meets Anna Bronski, (whether while hiding under Anna's skirts or later that night is a subject of debate), and marries her that night. He then takes on the persona of Joseph Wranka, a dead riverman, living and working for many years. Once he is found to be Joseph Koljaiczek, he attempts escape from the law again, only to drown under a raft in his flight. A family myth remains that he actually survived drowning and fled to America, where he became a millionaire lumber baron in Buffalo, N.Y. under the name Joe Colchic. - *WIKI - LOOK*

Agnes Koljaiczek (Matzerath): Oskar's mother and closest confidant. Although she marries Alfred Matzerath, a soldier she meets as a nurse, she has an ongoing affair throughout her life with Jan Bronski, her cousin. Oskar suspects that Jan, and not Alfred, is his actual father. After an incident watching an eel fisherman at the coast, she begins to eat fish obsessively and eventually dies.

Jan Bronski: Vincent Bronski's son and Oskar's mother (Agnes Matzerath)'s cousin and lifelong adulterous lover. Jan is also the man that Oskar presumes to be his biological father. Jan is a skinny, perpetually sickly man, who was turned down four times for the army. He works in the Polish post office in Danzig and is taken prisoner while unwillingly defending it against the Germans when they invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. He is later executed.

Klepp (Egon Münzer): Oskar's friend who comes to visit him in the mental institution. A jazz flautist, he played in a jazz band with Oskar and Scholle, a guitarist, at the Onion Cellar, a club in Düsseldorf after WWII.

Gottfried von Vittlar: A friend of Oskar's, who comes to visit him in the institution. He first met Oskar in his mother's apple tree while Oskar was on a walk after WWII. Vittlar is the reason Oskar is in a mental institution - Oskar asked him to turn him in as the murderer of the nurse Sister Dorothea, even though he was innocent.

Alfred Matzerath: Oskar's assumed father (Oskar presumes Jan Bronski to be his actual father), whom Agnes Koljaiczek met while working as a nurse. Alfred had been shot through the thigh in WWI. He and Agnes were later married. He is a strong and vocal supporter of Hitler throughout WWII, and is killed by Russian soldiers when they take Danzig after the war.

Albrecht Greff: The greengrocer and boy scout leader. He is obsessed with order, and knows little about the vegetables he sells. He is rumored throughout the book to be 'rather too fond' of the young boys in his troupe (which is eventually taken away from him in lieu of the emergence of the Hitler Youth Corps). Each morning in the winter, Greff goes out to the frozen sea, cuts a hole in the ice, and swims. He is preoccupied with inventing clever mechanical machines. When he is summoned to appear in court on a morals charge by the German authorities, Greff kills himself with an elaborate counterweighted machine that he invents in order to hang himself in his basement.

Lina Greff (Bartsch): Albrecht Greff's wife, a slovenly woman who rarely gets out of bed. She carries on an extended adulterous affair with Oskar, which Albrecht knows about but ignores. She provides Oskar with his first substantial sexual experiences.

Bebra: Oskar's lifelong mentor and role model; he is, like Oskar, a man who refused to grow. He first meets Bebra at the circus - Bebra is a musical clown. Later, Oskar joins up with a performing troupe Bebra has put together; they perform for soldiers on the front lines during WWII. Later, when Oskar is signed to a record and performing contract, Bebra



Fritz Truczinski: Fritz keeps rabbits in the courtyard behind Oskar's Danzig apartment. He is in the army and is only known to Oskar through the postcards he sends home from the front lines in the west.

Laubschad the watchmaker: A man living in Oskar's apartment building who lives surrounded by clocks. He is a member of the local SPCA, and saves Meyn's cats from the garbage on the day of Herbert Truczinski's funeral.

Koybella: The janitor at the Polish Post Office in Danzig - he had one leg an inch shorter than the other, and was fabled to be able to fix toy drums. He is killed in the defense of the post office when it is attacked by the Nazis.

Victor Welhun: An extremely nearsighted man who loses his glasses at the post office battle. His job is delivering money orders. He is the only man who escapes German imprisonment and execution. Oskar refers to him only as 'Poor Victor.'

Ehlers: Hedwig Bronski's second husband, who causes Jan's former family to change their last names.

Felix & Kitty: The two acrobats in Bebra's troupe. Kitty is blonde and exotic; Felix is the tallest member of the group, measuring well over four feet.

Corporal Lankes: A tortured artist and soldier on the front line, Lankes becomes friends with Oskar, and takes a trip with him back to the Atlantic wall after the war is over. Lankes smokes incessantly, but never buys his own cigarettes, preferring to take them from whoever is near.

Ripper, Putty, Firestealer, Mister, Soup Chicken, Lionheart, Bluebeard, Totila, Teja, Belisarius, Narses, Störtebaker, Felix and Paul Rennwand: The major members of the Dusters, a group of young hoodlums that Oskar leads. They act as a guerrilla group against the government, breaking and entering. They are finally caught when they break into the church of the Sacred Heart and saw apart the statue of the Virgin Mary with the infants Jesus and John the Baptist.

Moorkähne: The leader of the other faction of Dusters, Moorkähne is shy and soft-spoken, a very good student, and has a limp because one of his legs is shorter than the other.

Lucy Rennwand: Felix and Paul Rennwand's sister, who takes the information on the Dusters to the police and is responsible for their getting caught.

Mr. Fajngold: A Polish refugee who comes to live with Oskar's family in the wake of the war. Although she had been killed, he is convinced that his wife Luba and his children Lev, Jakub, Berek, Leon, Mendel, and Sonya are there with him, and consults them on every decision. Fajngold had been the disinfectant at Treblinka Concentration Camp. Finally he proposes to Maria, who declines marriage and moves west with Kurt and Oskar.

Willem Slobber: The Düsseldorf version of Leo Schugger. According to Korneff, there is a whole fleet of Leo Schuggers, living under a different name in every city.

Sister Gertrude: A nurse that Oskar takes on a date; she leaves him at a dance hall because she is embarrassed to be with him.

Professor Kuchen: The first artist Oskar poses for; he does his work, as do his students, in charcoal.

Professor Maruhn: A sculptor and friend of Kuchen's; Oskar spends a lot of time posing for him, though Maruhn is never satisfied and never finishes a sculpture of Oskar.

Stephan & Marga Bronski/Ehlers: The children of Jan and Hedwig Bronski. Jan is as sickly as his father. They are either Oskar's cousins or half siblings, depending on whether Oscar's father is Jan Bronski or Alfred Matzerath.

Auntie Kauer: Oskar's kindergarten teacher, who would walk her students through town by harnessing them all together.

Meyn the trumpeter: A tenant in Oskar's family's apartment building, he is a gin-drinking drunk who is capable of playing beautiful music. Oskar often accompanies him on the drum. During WWII, he gives up drinking and joins the army. After he is discharged, he starts drinking again. Meyn owns four cats - one day he gets sick of them, beats them to death and puts them in a dumpster. Laubchaud the watchmaker reports him to animal control.

Dr. Hornstetter: Oskar's doctor in the mental institution, who comes by his room almost every day, just long enough to smoke a cigarette. She insists that Oskar suffers from childhood isolation.

Old Man Heilandt: An older tenant of Oskar's apartment building. He had a shed in the courtyard behind the apartment building, where he would spend his time straightening old nails that he pulled out of crates.

Nuchi Eyke, Axel Mischke, Harry Schlager, Hänschen Kollin, and Susi Kater: The children Oskar's age that live in his apartment complex. They never accept him, but make fun of him and make him drink a soup they make out of pulverized brick, spit, urine, and live frogs.

Sigismund Markus: The Jewish toy store owner where Agnes buys Oskar his drums. Sigismund is secretly in love with Agnes; he volunteers to watch Oskar every week when Agnes has her hotel liaisons with Jan Bronski. He is killed by the Nazis when they take over Danzig, after they destroy his store.

Löbsack: The Nazi district chief of training, also a hunchback. Oskar regards him at first as the Nazi emissary of he and Bebra's kind, but then realizes he is mistaken.

Father Wiehnke: The priest at the Church of the Sacred Heart in Danzig, where Agnes Matzerath went every Saturday to confess.

Dr. Hollatz: The doctor that gained notoriety by publishing a paper studying Oskar's glass-breaking voice.

Sister Inge: Dr. Hollatz' assistant and a nurse, the only person in the office that Oskar allows to perform experiments on him.

Leo Schugger: A man whose occupation is to turn up as a mourner to funerals and offer condolences; he attended seminary school and Oskar calls his vision of the world 'radiant and perfect.'

Mother Truczinski: A woman living in Oskar's apartment building, the mother of Herbert, Maria, Guste, and Fritz Truczinski. She keeps Oskar company and offers him a place to sleep over the years after Maria and Alfred Matzerath are married.

Guste Truczinski (Köster): A quiet, unwed woman who is a waitress at a Danzig hotel. She then marries a soldier named Köster, whom she had only known for a few weeks, and moves to Düsseldorf. After the war, Maria, Oskar, and Kurt flee to the west and live with her.



Danzig: The setting for the majority of the novel, Danzig (now Gdansk) is a major northern port town in Poland. Danzig was a free and independent city until September 1, 1939, when it became the first region taken by Germany at the outset of WWII. After the war, Danzig became a part of Poland again.

skat: A three-handed card game that Jan Bronski, Agnes Matzerath, and Alfred Matzerath play continuously throughout the novel. From time to time, their friends play with them as well.

glass-breaking scream: Since age three (when he was given his first tin drum), Oskar was endowed with the ability to scream with such a high pitch that he could shatter any piece of glass. He could control it, as well - at one point he can break windows on the other side of the city, and he can etch writing into glass. Once he begins growing at the end of the novel, he loses this ability.

nurses: Oskar has a lifelong fascination with nurses, starts when he is five. Every time he is in the hospital, he laments having to leave on account of the nurses. The woman he is wrongly accused of killing, sister Dorothea, is a nurse.

Sütterlin script: A style of handwriting referred to often in the novel; it was the standard German script taught in schools from 1915-1945

Rasputin: A Siberian Peasant and faith healer who gained favor in the Court of czar Nicholas II of Russia before the Russian revolt of 1917 by allegedly healing Nicholas' hemophiliac son. He was renowned for his sexual exploits, and assassinated by a group of aristocrats in 1916.

Goethe: Known as one of the centers of both German and world literature, Goethe spearheaded the German Romantic movement in the late 18th century. His plays and poems are known for their understanding of the human condition and human individuality. His greatest work is considered to be the dramatic poem Faust.

rostrum: The impromptu stages that were set up by the Nazis to hold rallies. They were marked by their symmetrical rows of Nazi flags, uniformed SS men, and party comrades.

Baby Jesus sculpture: The sculpture, of the Virgin Mary seated with the baby Jesus and John the Baptist on her lap, is in the church of the Sacred Heart. It is a key image of focus for Oskar - he spends time trying to get this baby Jesus to drum, and as the leader of the Dusters, he sneaks into the church to cut the sculpture into pieces and steal it.

Saspe cemetery: A cemetery on the outskirts of Danzig; it is the place where Jan Bronski is executed and buried by the Nazis.

severed horse's head: At the beach on Good Friday, Oskar, Jan, Agnes, and Alfred see an old man fishing for green eels with a black severed horse's head tied to a clothesline. The memory of this scene eventually kills Agnes.

coffin: Oskar spends a lot of time admiring and describing coffins, saying that his mother's coffin was a proper one because it suited the human body so well. It was black and 'tapered at the foot end.'

Herbert Truczinski's Back: On the scars on Herbert's back, Oskar sees (like images in clouds) the same promise he finds in his drum. The reproductive organs of women he has known, the ring finger of the murdered Sister Dorothea, and his own umbilical cord are all visible to Oskar.

Niobe: The cursed figurehead that Herbert Truczinski was put in charge of guarding at the Maritime Museum in Danzig. The sculpture is responsible for his death.

Ulla: Corporal Lankes' sometime fiancée, whom he beats when he cannot find artistic inspiration. Ulla spends time posing with Oskar for the young art students.

Raskolnikov: A painting student who turns out the masterpiece of Ulla and Oskar posing together. He is so nicknamed because he never stops talking of Crime and Punishment, guilt and atonement.

Zeidler: Oskar's landlord in Düsseldorf, an undertaker who Oskar nicknames 'The Hedgehog.'

Mrs. Zeidler: Zeidler's wife, who wears poorly tailored suits and is given to throwing her husband into glass-throwing rages.

Dr. Erich Werner: Sister Dorothea's admirer, whom Oskar never sees but becomes jealous of through the letters he sends to Dorothea.

Mr. Stenzel: Maria's boss and second husband, whom she marries in Düsseldorf. Oskar doesn't like him, and stays away from Maria after she marries.

Scholle: The long-sought guitarist and third man in Oskar's jazz band 'The Rhine River Three,' which plays in the Onion Cellar.

Ferdinand Schmuß: The owner of the Onion Cellar, where Oskar's jazz band plays. Schmuß spends his time in the Rhine meadows, shooting sparrows.

Dr. Dösch: A man who frequented the Onion Cellar; after Schmuß's death, he offers Oskar a contract to take his drumming act solo.

Sister Beata: A nurse and best friend of Sister Dorothea. Dr. Erich Werner was in love with Sister Dorothea, Sister Beata was in love with Dr. Werner, and Sister Dorothea was not in love at all. Nevertheless, Sister Beata became jealous of the doctor's misplaced affections. She killed Sister Dorothea - the 'real' killer in the case for which Oskar is in the mental institution.

The Tin Drum Objects/Places

Knotted string art: Bruno Münsterberg, Oskar's keeper in the mental institution, makes pieces of old string (which he finds after visiting hours in his patients' rooms) into elaborate pieces of knotted art. He dips the string in plaster to harden and places the sculptures on pedestals fashioned out of old knitting needles.

Kashubia: A rural region in the north of Poland, west of the city of Danzig (Gdansk). This is the region that Oskar's maternal grandmother, Anja Bronski, is from.

Four potato-colored skirts: The clothes that Anja Bronski, Oskar's maternal grandmother wears (simultaneously) each day, in accordance with a strict schedule: the skirt that was closest to her body one day is placed on the outermost layer the next, so that the skirts rotate in succession. She has a fifth skirt as well, just like the other four, which she rotates into the succession on washing days.

The tin drum: One of the centerpieces of the novel: Oskar is constantly in possession of a red and white lacquered toy tin drum, on which he constantly plays, and needs to play, in order to proceed successfully in life and to remember the past. He goes through cycles of drumming and not drumming throughout the novel, and it is a source of constant tension. He is forever destroying and getting new drums on which to play.



card house: Jan builds a house of cards during the battle for the post office, which is knocked down by the Germans. Oskar says card houses are 'the only dwellings worthy of humankind.' (Chapter 20, Pg. 247)

empty cartridge case: Leo Schugger gives Oskar the empty cartridge case used to execute Jan Bronski, then leads him to Saspe, the cemetery where Jan was shot and buried.

fizz powder: Before the war, this was what the lower classes substituted for soda - flavored powder that fizzed when mixed with water. Oskar and Maria have a long history with fizz powder - Oskar would spit in Maria's hand, which was full of powder, and she would drink it.

lovebird: On the way to Matzerath's funeral, a soldier gives Maria a cage with a lovebird inside; Kurt tries to pull out its feathers, then throws rocks at it in the cemetery and hits it.

The Lion's Den: A dance hall in Düsseldorf that Oskar visits several times; it is a place for young people, built in a bombed out building.

The Onion Cellar: A nightclub in Düsseldorf where Oskar's jazz trio plays. In the club the owner, Schmu, serves raw onions, which make the guests cry.

swarm of sparrows: Schmu, the nightclub owner, liked to hunt sparrows, but as a rule he would only shoot twelve in a day, then give the remaining birds food. One day he killed thirteen; in the car on the way home, a swarm of sparrows attacked the car and forced an accident, killing Schmu.

Lux: A rottweiler that Oskar rents to take walks with - Lux is the one that first finds Sister Dorothea's ring finger.

ring finger: Lux, Oskar's rented dog, brings Oskar a ring finger that turns out to belong to Sister Dorothea - it is this finger that responsible for Oskar's internment in the institution.

streetcars: In every city in which Oskar finds himself, the streetcar is his chosen means of transportation. In Danzig, the streetcar would take him not only through the city, but past Saspe cemetery on the way to the shore