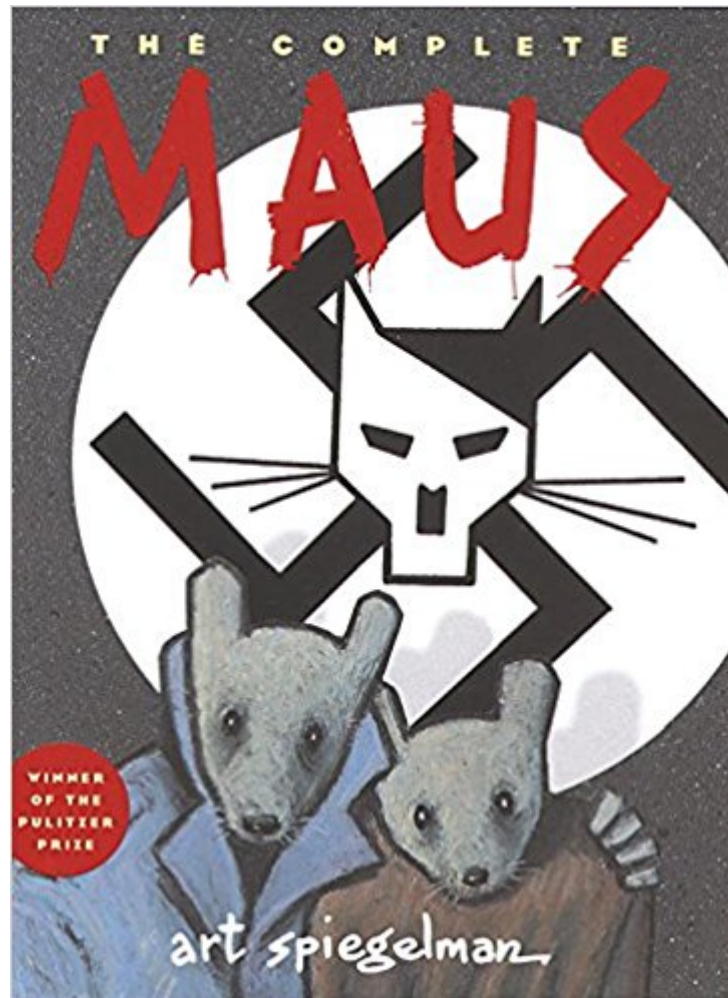




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# The Complete Maus



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## Synopsis

The Pulitzer Prize-winning *Maus* tells the story of Vladek Spiegelman, a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe, and his son, a cartoonist coming to terms with his father's story. *Maus* approaches the unspeakable through the diminutive. Its form, the cartoon (the Nazis are cats, the Jews mice), shocks us out of any lingering sense of familiarity and succeeds in "drawing us closer to the bleak heart of the Holocaust" (The New York Times). *Maus* is a haunting tale within a tale. Vladek's harrowing story of survival is woven into the author's account of his tortured relationship with his aging father. Against the backdrop of guilt brought by survival, they stage a normal life of small arguments and unhappy visits. This astonishing retelling of our century's grisliest news is a story of survival, not only of Vladek but of the children who survive even the survivors. *Maus* studies the bloody pawprints of history and tracks its meaning for all of us.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A loving documentary and brutal fable, a mix of compassion and stoicism [that] sums up the experience of the Holocaust with as much power and as little pretension as any other work I can think of." —The New Republic  
"A quiet triumph, moving and simple—impossible to describe accurately, and impossible to achieve in any medium but comics." —The Washington Post  
"Spiegelman has turned the exuberant fantasy of comics inside out by giving us the most incredible fantasy in comics history: something that actually occurred. The central relationship is not that of cat and mouse, but

that of Art and Vladek. Maus is terrifying not for its brutality, but for its tenderness and guilt. "The New Yorker" "All too infrequently, a book comes along that is as daring as it is acclaimed. Art Spiegelman's Maus is just such a book." "Esquire" "An epic story told in tiny pictures." "The New York Times" "A remarkable work, awesome in its conception and execution" at one and the same time a novel, a documentary, a memoir, and a comic book. Brilliant, just brilliant. Jules Feffer

It is the story of Vladek Spiegelman, a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe, and his son, a cartoonist coming to terms with his father's story. Maus approaches the unspeakable through the diminutive. Its form, the cartoon (the Nazis are cats, the Jews mice), shocks us out of any lingering sense of familiarity. Maus is a haunting tale within a tale. Vladek's harrowing story of survival is woven into the author's account of his tortured relationship with his aging father. Against the backdrop of guilt brought by survival, they stage a normal life of small arguments and unhappy visits. This astonishing retelling of our century's grisliest news is a story of survival, not only of Vladek but of the children who survive even the survivors. Maus studies the bloody pawprints of history and tracks its meaning for all of us.

Browsing through the reviews and comments about Maus, I saw that there was some question as to whether the hardcover edition comprised Parts I and II. This is understandable because the product is listed in as "The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale (No 1)," which seems contradictory. When I was considering purchasing it, I looked at the number of pages that were listed for the edition and guessed that it included both parts of the story. So I bought it, it arrived fine, and I am now writing to confirm that yes, this edition includes I and II. I should look into this and remove the "(No 1)" from the listing's title.

One man's story of how he and his wife survived the Holocaust told in graphic novel format; and another story of a man (the author) and his difficult and contentious relationship with his father (the surviving man). The senior Spiegelman's story, as told to the author, his son, is cleverly and uniquely told after many years have passed. During the times the father recounts his, and his wife's, life in Poland and in Auschwitz, I almost felt like I was there. Touching, frightening and revealing this is one of those books that should be required reading in our educational system. As time goes by, and more and more concentration camp survivors pass away, I fear that the story of man's greatest

inhumanity to man will also pass away. The story of the Holocaust, the people, the unbelievable circumstances that allowed it to happen, is something that must not be forgotten. The saying "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" is very true and the thought of this happening again is unfathomable. We, the human race, have had other similar events happen more recently; Rwanda, Cambodia's Killing Fields, and so on are not as publicized as the Holocaust but they are just as horrible. Those stories need to be added to ones like *Maus* to show that these things can, and will, happen if we don't take steps to stop them. Knowledge is the key and this book is one tool in our toolbox of knowledge. Experience it and NEVER FORGET.

This is a great book. Highly recommend. It shows another side of the holocaust and what the holocaust survivors face and how it affects their children.

I am left speechless. I had previously read Joe Sacco's *Palestine* and thought that was good. The bar has been reset. *Maus* is one of the best things I have read ... period. The art work, the story, the reality, the depiction of the horrors faced by the Jews ... all this was captured with such elaborate preciseness that I felt I was there .. with them. Some might think that 'dumbing down' an event as significant, and as defining, as the holocaust using graphic comic is wrong. This is where the author has managed to truly show his magical imagination. He has captured it all, packaging history and its aftermath, in drawings of cats, mice and pigs. Small things like the Jewish characters wearing pig masks to pass as Poles was, in my opinion, genius. Increasingly we are living in a world where the written word might lose its grasp on the young. Everyone wants bite sized chunks of information. Where this is good for general knowledge and breadth of information, it still does not allow the depth that is needed to truly understand the intricacies of what is being learnt. I believe that a comic book like this will make a significant contribution to erasing this depth of knowledge. Within the pages of *Maus* is encapsulated one of the most important pieces of history that everyone should know about and maybe the fact that it's a graphic novel might attract the younger generation to pay heed to history. Fantastic. A must read.

In my readings of WWII of the fighting on the Eastern Front I also have read the books of Mazower telling of the Germans desire to expand the Eastern frontier in the concept of *Lebensraum*. In the starting of WWII with the attack on Poland is where the first book in this series started with Vladek Spiegelman on his odyssey of what it was to be a Jew under the governance of Nazi rule. In the first book we learn of the progressive pogroms utilized to ostracize and segregate the Jewish

community. We see this happening in a gradual and degrading way. At first their property is taken from them and they lose their jobs and professions. After this is done they are relegated to the most menial of tasks. It still amazes me that Germany spent so much of their resources both in materials and personnel to try to exterminate a culture of people. These resources should have been used to try to win the war. Such was the hatred of the corrupt Nazi government. In Art Spiegelman's second book we see how it was to live in these concentration camps which in the end murdered over six million Jews. How there were survivors is in of itself a miracle. I have read the diaries of Victor Klemperer and Mazower's books of the Eastern front and there was discussion of the concentration camps but really no memoirs of actual survivors. What Art Spiegelman has done in these two volumes of graphic depictions is nothing short of incredible. It shows as a testimony to the resourcefulness and iron will of Vladek Spiegelman to endure these deprivations of starvation and true cruelty. The result of his knowing English helped him to survive by friending a Polish kampa who looked out for his interests and kept him out of harm's way. The creativity of learning the ins and outs of the culture of the concentration camp helped him to survive. The author shows us the story as he was recording these stories for this book. However the other story which is expertly interweaved in the book is how Vladek was living his life in Rego Park Queens. He shows us a thrifty person who finds it hard to part with his money and who is always complaining about his gold digging second wife. Always complaining as he goes on to tell of what it was to live, die and above all survive under the auspices of Nazi Germany. If you read one book on the lives of people in such places as Auschwitz this is the one to read!!!

One of the best graphic novels ever. The story is so well designed. It was a tragic moment in the world but its really amazing to see how the writer deals with his family history

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