

Refugee by Alan Gratz

Notes by Chapter

Ch#	Page	Character	Vocab	Plot
1	1-6	Josef	Promenade Indignation	Germany 1938- Josef is awoken by intruders- Nazis- on Night of Broken Glass. Father is accused of practicing law while Jewish and taken away. 6 months later father returned, the family has 14 days to escape Germany.
2	7-12	Isabel		Cuba 1994- The Soviet Union fell, which caused Cuba to be poor. Isabel feeds a stray cat although most animals on the island have been eaten. Friend Ivan says he is building a doghouse, really a boat to escape their leader Castro. Ivan likes baseball, Isabel plays trumpet.
3	13-17	Mahmoud		Syria 2015- Many countries in the Middle East are fighting for freedom but Syria is led by Bashar al-Assad and it is dangerous to speak out. War is everywhere as Mahmoud tries to get home from school w/ his younger brother. Mahmoud used to have a friend Khalid and stood up to bullies which got them both beaten up. Later, Khalid dies and Mahmoud sees bullies again- this time he hides instead of standing up to them.
4	18-24	Josef	Reel ethereal	Josef's family is at the train station with Star of David armbands marking them as Jewish. They are on a train and going to meet their father in Hamburg and then go to Cuba. Lots of people already fled and other countries stopped letting them in; the family will wait in Cuba and hope to go to America later. Ruthie does not want to go to Cuba and is being fussy; she has a stuffed rabbit named Bitsy. Josef does not think Jews and Germans are that different and takes his armband off and goes to the German part of the train. Josef's armband falls out while buying a paper and candy for Ruthie; a Hitler youth stomps on it and grabs Josef.
5	25-29	Isabel		Isabel hears broken glass, screaming, and a gun. Havana is rioting against Castro; Isabel's father and grandpa are there. In the chaos, Isabel finds grandpa but dad is missing; she climbs on top of a car and sees her dad throw a bottle at police. They are beating father, and Isabel throws herself in between police and father. A police man Luis Castillo (Ivan's older brother) stops another police officer from hitting her. The policemen are called away by a whistle, but the policeman vows to find Papi and get him. Papi has to leave Cuba tonight.
6	30-32	Mahmoud		Mahmoud's mother is a nurse and has to heal a lot of civilians who get injured. Mahmoud and brother Waleed pray; they are Muslim. Mahmoud's apartment and town is hit with missiles.
7	34-39	Josef	Queue anecdote	The Hitler youth takes Josef back to the Jewish compartment and tells him not to do it again. They arrive at Hamburg station to get on a boat called MS St. Louis; it has Nazi flags and is heading to Cuba. They meet father who looks thin and dirty after 6 months at a concentration camp. He tells them they have to get on the boat and make a run for it; the family doesn't understand because they have tickets and visas. The father darts onto the ship and the mother gives them their tickets, apologizing for her husband's behavior. Has he gone crazy?

8	40-48	Isabel		<p>Dad (Geraldo) says the riot started because of lack of food. Mom is pregnant; dad says he has to leave. Grandpa has tried to leave previously unsuccessfully.</p> <p>Escaping to Cuba</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -if caught at sea they were sent back to Cuba or to refugee camp -if they make it to Florida land they get refugee status and can live there <p>Castro speaks and says he won't stop people from leaving!</p> <p>Isabel tells the family they should all leave together: Ivan's father (with boat) agrees if Isabel gets gas. Isabel trades her trumpet for gasoline; tells the fisherman he has to take care of the kitten too.</p>
9	49-55	Mahmoud		<p>Mahmoud's family is able to escape the apartment and are reunited safely as the apartment falls down. Then, father arrives and says he has gotten some money and the car and they are leaving. They plan to go to Turkey and then Germany to get out of Syria.</p>
10	56-59	Josef	Waning perversion	<p>Josef and Ruth meet Renata and Evelyne Aber on the boat. The girl's father is in Cuba, but the mom refused to leave Germany. They are happy and play; on the boat there is food, games, cartoons, and no one is treated badly for being a Jew. The dad, Aaron, is still traumatized and won't leave his cabin.</p>
11	60-65	Isabel		<p>At the beach, half the town is leaving and there are news crews. The Castillo and Fernandez family are leaving when two police run toward the boat; papi thinks they are after him for throwing the bottle. However, it is Ivan's older policeman brother Luis and Luis's girlfriend. The police fire at Luis because he was drafted into the police and cannot leave, but he has run away deserting the police force. This is illegal. As the motorboat leaves, water pours in the side from the gunshot.</p>
12	66-73	Mahmoud		<p>The family is stopped by soldiers on their way to Turkey.</p> <p>The current fighting is between US and Daesh (aka ISIS), Syria military led by Assad and anti-Assad rebels, there's just a whole bunch of war everywhere.</p> <p>The soldiers get in the car and say to drive south, they think people should fight against Assad</p> <p>The car is attacked, a soldier shot in the head and killed. The family and 2 rebel soldiers jump out of the car among rifles being fired. They are able to grab the phone and the charger but must abandon the car and everything else.</p>
13	74-80	Josef	Fraught squalid	<p>Josef has his bar mitzvah, coming of age ceremony for a Jewish boy who turns 13. The girls Renata and Evelyne are playing a prank where they lock bathroom doors, but Josef, now a man, is not amused. Then he sees two sailors talking asking what would happen if Cuba is full and won't let in more refugees. They also hint that something else is going on.</p>
14	81-86	Isabel		<p>The families dream of life in America, and Isabel admits to selling her trumpet to Lito. Amara, the girlfriend, introduces herself and Lito compliments her a lot. There is a heavy Castro head from a statue on the bottom of the boat; they laugh. The family is singing trying to be positive and the engine dies.</p>

15	87-92	Mahmoud		Family walks to Turkey and meets up with many other refugees fleeing Syria. Dad has found a smuggler to get the family into the EU= European Union. Once in the EU they can get refugee status. They must meet the smuggler on the coast of Turkey- looking for a ride. Mahmoud buys Waleed a Ninja Turtle toy. Dad found a ride but they need to leave NOW.
16	93-98	Josef	Bridge Dubious	Kids meet Captain Shroeder and get to see the bridge= the command room of the boat. Josef asked if they were racing 2 other ships, but the captain denied it. The kids go to see the engine room and see the crew members quarters; it is very pro-Nazi and anti-Jewish. One drunk man comes up to the kids calling them “Jewish rats.” The real world is what they experience below deck; the rest of the ship is a fake little bubble of happiness.
17	99-103	Isabel		They try and get the motor working again, also the sock is dripping some and they are trying to keep the boat dry. Lito says his brother, Guillermo lives in the US, but Lito stayed because Cuba is home. Lito says they should have stayed because things always change. He also calls Papi an idiot with no plan to take care of the family; all Papi cares about is “freedom” but there is no plan. There is a big boat headed right at them.
18	104-109	Mahmoud		The family took 2 days to get across Turkey. The boat they hired is not there- the smuggler keeps pushing them off. He suggests a hotel, but the family is trying to save money. Turkey is very clean. The hotels are full with three families in each! Family is trying to get to EU, European Union, specifically Germany. A boy says he knows a place they can sleep- but wants \$ to show them where it is. Dad pays it and the boy takes them to an abandoned mall that families are living in. The boy also says they need life vests for boats- and dad spends money and buys that too.
19	110-115	Josef	Intervene Behemoth	Dad is still crazy saying the Nazis are after them. Mom and Josef have to try and calm him. A person on the ship- Professor Weiler- has died of cancer. Father who has not left the boat since they boarded wants to go to the funeral. Father says he saw lots of men die in Dachau (concentration camp) without funerals. Schiendick wants to cover the body in with the Nazi flag which is a German law to cover the body before dropping it in the sea. Father disagrees/argues. Captain Schroeder breaks up the argument and Schiendick leaves. (Interesting he is standing up for Jews and not the Nazi side.) Some Jewish traditions like ripping your clothes to show sympathy for the wife and throwing sand on the body happen.
20	116-120	Isabel		A larger tanker/shipping boat is headed right toward Isabel’s boat. They are able to get the engine to start but the large waves get water into the boat and Ivan’s father goes overboard. Isabel jumps in to save him.
21	121-128	Mahmoud		For more than a week, the smuggler has told Mahmoud’s family that the boat is coming “tomorrow.” The family walk back to the abandoned mall but are not allowed inside. Two men in tracksuits, one with a gun in his waistband, tell Mahmoud’s father that they have to pay to stay at the mall. The price is outrageous, so the family leaves, but Mahmoud is exhausted. While trying to find a place to sleep, Mahmoud waves down a car and tells the occupants that they need somewhere to stay. The driver is an old man named Samih Nasseer who speaks Arabic and says he is a refugee from Palestine 67 years ago and now lives in Turkey. Nasseer agrees to help them, but Mahmoud’s father receives a text from the smuggler saying that the boat is ready. This time a boat is there.

22	129-135	Josef	Charade Tedious	One day away from Cuba there is a celebratory party. When they reach Cuba, a doctor wants to inspect all passengers. Father is crying and paranoid during the examination by the doctor. Josef slaps Father and says the doctor is a Nazi who will send them back if he makes a sound/movement. They pass the inspection, but Cuban police won't allow anyone off the boat.
23	136-140	Isabel		Isabel grabs Senor Costillo, who is not moving. The group pulls everyone back into the boat. The engine has died again and they bail water out of the boat. Senor Costillo is alive, but weak. Lito says a storm is coming.
24	141-146	Mahmoud		The boat is really an overcrowded raft. The family pays the smugglers and gets on. They are headed for Lesbos, in Greece. People are getting sick and there is freezing cold rain. Someone yells "I see rocks!," there is a large boom, and Mahmoud falls into the sea.
25	147-152	Josef	Berate Respite	A group of sailors, who call themselves "firemen," are starting to "control" the Jews on the boat. An English boat is allowed to dock and disembark from the ship. The same happens with the French ship. Now a fireman, Shiendick comes to Josef, asking for a key to search his parents' cabin. Shiendick and a fellow fireman ransack and destroy the room as payback for the father not wanting the Nazi flag during the funeral. When Josef slapped his father, he promised him that if he was quiet, the Nazis wouldn't send him back to a camp. Now, the father feels like the Nazis are coming for him anyway and betrayed by Josef's promise.
26	153-156	Isabel		The storm brings rain and the group works to keep water out of the boat. Isabel remembers a storm four years earlier where her grandmother slipped from her hands and was never seen again. (That is why she jumped into the water so quickly to save Senor Castillo.)
27	157-163	Mahmoud		Everyone is in the water, trying to swim or float and running into each other. A floating cell phone says 2:32 a.m. The life preservers are fake. The boat has sunk. They are all drowning. A second boat full of people is coming toward them but is not stopping. Mahmoud, Fatima, and Hana are able to grab a side-strap, while Yousef and Waleed are left behind. The passengers take the baby, but kick Mahmoud and his mother off the strap.
28	164-170	Josef	Console abode	Dad is crazy. Mom goes to get sleeping medicine but they make her drink so she passes out. Father tells a graphic story of people being drowned at a concentration camp. Josef goes to retrieve Ruthie from the pool. When he returns dad fled the cabin, ran, and jumped overboard.
29	171-178	Isabel		Family spots land, lands at a pier on the Bahamas. The tourists give them food, water, and medicine. They are not allowed off the boat if they will be deported to Cuba. Mami is sick and Lito wants her to go to shore and get treatment, but mother refuses, stays with family. The people were kind and helpful and the boat leaves.
30	179-182	Mahmoud		Mahmoud's mother is upset about losing Hana. The big man from the raft has died and is floating with a real life jacket. Mahmoud goes over to the dead body and takes the life jacket off; then he puts the life jacket on his mother.

31	183-186	Josef	Incoherent Inevitable	A Cuban police officer pulls Josef's father from the water as he tries to resist and screams that he wants to die. A man from the boat shoots one of the two sharks so they turn away from Josef and the policeman. Josef is in shock and believes after this incident his whole family will be sent back to Cuba; his father emotionally never returned from the concentration camp.
32	187-191	Isabel		The boats continue to sink and they have not reached Florida. Papi is more attentive to Mami. The boat is taking on water still so two people at a time stay in the water to lessen the weight.
33	192-196	Mahmoud		Mahmoud hears a boat and waves it down using the light of the cell phone; it is a Greek coast guard. The boat also has Waleed and Father on it. They are dropped off on the island of Lesbos in Greece. There are life vests, dead bodies, and people who are alive too. The family cannot locate Hana.
34	197-202	Josef	Badger Limbo	The Jews are still not allowed off the boat. Renata and Evelyn's father comes to visit by being in a nearby boat and shouting to his daughters. The Cuban police officer who saved Papi comes to visit and the Jewish people give him some money as thanks for saving Papi. Papi is in Cuba and sedated at a mental facility. The officer flirts with Mami and plays with the kids. *Connection* The police officer is Lito from Isabel's story.
35	203-209	Isabel		Mami is in labor. Ivan gets bitten by a shark and dies.
36	210-215	Mahmoud		In Lesbos, Greece the family gets on a ferry and goes towards Athens, Greece. On the boat, tourists look negatively at Mahmoud while he prays (racism). They have to get through many countries and hope to get to Germany. They have still not located Hana.
37	216-222	Josef	Rend eternal	Renata and Evelyn's dad (Dr. Aber) come and get the girls off the boat. They have paid someone off to get the girls ashore. The boat is going to leave and the Captain arrives. The captain says the Cuban government will not let them off the boat. The Jewish people protest, but they have no choice. They worry they will be sent back to Germany, but the captain says they will try and find a different country to dock at. The father is left behind and Josef rips his shirt like he did at the funeral showing the father is gone; father was left in Cuba.
38	223-228	Isabel		Lito prays for Ivan's body. Senora Castillo (Ivan's mom) and Luis (Ivan's brother) touch the body saying goodbye. Luis shoots a shark and the blood distracts the shark; they dump Ivan's body off the opposite side of the boat. Isabel wants Ivan's favorite baseball cap and finds it in the boat. Senor Castillo says he dreamed of opening a restaurant with his sons. The group sees Miami; they have made it to the US.
39	229-235	Mahmoud		Family is traveling from Greece to Macedonia. They get a ride through Macedonia. Then they're in Serbia and are making their way through that country. On their way to Hungary they get a 2nd ride but the driver has driven them to a deserted location and pulled a gun on them.
40	236-242	Josef	Condolence canister	The boat has left Cuba and they are headed toward the US hoping to find any country that would accept the Jewish refugees. A group of Jewish passengers ask Josef for help; they want to overthrow the Germans and take command of the ship to make sure they do not go back to Germany.

41	243-246	Isabel		The boat is sinking. They are close to Miami. Isabel and Amara kick the engine off the boat to make the boat less heavy. The US coast guard raises their sirens and says they are breaking the law and are going to board their boat. Caught.
42	247-252	Mahmoud		The taxi driver with a gun demands 300 euros (\$) and for them to get out of the car even though they are in the middle of a foreign country.
43	253-258	Josef	Even-keeled odyssey	Jewish group with Josef take over ship's bridge. Captain agrees not to press charges and will go to Europe but not Germany.
44	259-262	Isabel		US Coast Guard captures a different boat and then goes after Isabel's group. Mami started having baby.
45	263-269	Mahmoud		At Hungary/Serbia border the family gets arrested and jailed for crossing into Hungary. The family answers some questions and police say they will send them back to Serbia.
46	270-274	Josef	Euphoria negotiation	Boat party- Jewish people are happy they are allowed back to Belgium, Holland, France, and England. Josef's family is chosen for France. They were on the boat for 40 days and 40 nights. Josef's mother does laundry. Ruthie goes to kindergarten. Josef was put in 1st grade because he couldn't speak even though he is 13. Germany invaded France; they're on the run again.
47	275-278	Isabel		The US coast guard is after the group; mami is having the baby. Lito tells the story of Josef and the Jewish people on the boat and not letting them into Cuba. Lito sacrifices himself to the coast guard and the rest of the group heads to shore.
48	279-284	Mahmoud		Beaten and in jail in Hungary- dad not joking anymore. Life lesson- being invisible is not a good choice. UN observers at the refugee camp in Hungary. Mahmoud walks/runs out one of the doors and the Hungarian refugee camp and
49	285-291	Josef	Expectant In spite of	Josef's family is on the run in France from the Nazis. They are caught and mom has Ruthie take off her coat which has valuable earrings sewn into it. She offers the soldiers the diamond earrings to spare her children. The Nazis say it was only enough to save one child and tells her to choose which to save.
50	292-298	Isabel		Isabel's brother is born as the group is being chased by the Coast Guard. Ivan's family- the Castillos- help get everyone to shore. On land, the Coast Guard can do nothing and turns around and leaves with Lito. Lito smiles as he sees the baby and his sacrifice was worth it.
51	299-305	Mahmoud		Mahmoud and refugees walk from Hungary to Austria- a 12 hour walk. They get to the border and pray. In Austria they get a warm welcome , food, water, etc.

52	306-309	Isabel	Cadence Reverent	Isabel is in a band and for her audition she plays “The Star Spangled Banner” with a salsa beat showing her Cuban side. Mami runs a daycare, Papi drives a taxi. Senor Castillo is going to open a restaurant and Senora Castillo is going to study American law. Amara is going to become an American and wants to be a police officer; Luis works at a bodega/store; they are getting married. Baby Mariano is healthy.
53	310-317	Mahmoud		Mahmoud’s family is taken in by the Rosenbergs in Germany. Frau is Ruthie and she recalls the story of Josef sacrificing himself to save her. The mom and Josef died in concentration camps; dad lived in Cuba and also died. Ruthie is a toy designer and has a large family- thanks to Josef’s sacrifice. Ruthie promises to help Mahmoud’s family find Hana.

CHARACTERS organized by Story

Germany- Josef

Landau Family

Dad- Aaron, accused of practicing law while Jewish, concentration camp made him crazy

Mom- Rachel, hid earrings in Ruthie's coat and tries to save children, tried to support dad after concentration camp

Josef- 12 turns 13 and has bar mitzvah, sacrifices himself to save Ruthie

Ruth-6, when old she becomes a toymaker, gets married, and takes in Mahmoud's family promising to find Hana

Captain Schroeder- maybe hiding something, possibly more boats racing them to Cuba, nice to Jews, defends Dad from Schiendick and other Nazi workers on boat

Petty Officer Jockl- gives kids tour of boat

Otto Schiendick- pro-Nazi, calls kids Jewish rats, wants to cover Jewish body in Nazi flag, destroys Josef's families room

Pozer- Jewish passenger leads a group to attempt to take over the boat

Evelyna and Renata- kids on boat, dad in Cuba, mom staying in Germany

Dr. Ader- Evelyna and Renata's dad

Professor Weiler- passenger dies of cancer

Officer Padron- saves dad's life, also Lito from Isabel's story

Ostermeyer- German working on boat

Hitler- leader of Germany

Cuba- Isabel

Fernandez Family

Guillermo- Lito's brother in US

Lito- mom's dad, Isabel's grandpa, thinks little of Papi, has brother Guillermo in US, wants to stay in Cuba, also the officer who saves Josef's father from his suicide attempt, real name Mariano Padron

Papi-Isabel's dad, wants freedom but doesn't have plan to care for family, changes and starts caring deeply for Mami and family

Mami- Theresa, pregnant

Isabel- 11, trades trumpet for gas, jumps in water after Senor Castillo, finally hears clave

Mariano- baby named after grandpa

Castillo Family

Senor Rudi Castillo- falls into water, hopes to open a restaurant in US

Senora Castillo- hopes to become American lawyer

Luis- Ivan's older brother, police officer defends Papi from other police, abandons job to get on boat

Amara- Luis' girlfriend, police officer in Cuba, hopes to become American police officer

Ivan- 12, dies of shark attack, loves baseball

Castro-leader of Cuba

Syria-Mahmoud

Bishara Family

Yousef- dad, engineer, jokester

Fatima- mom, nurse

Mahmoud- 12, walks out of refugee camp in Hungary and leads the 12 hour walk to Austria

Waleed- 10, likes Ninja Turtles, seems frozen/in shock since apartment got hit with missile

Hana- baby sister, when drowning another rescue boat saves her but she is lost and the family hopes to find her

Samih Nasseer- driver in Turkey, offers to help family

Smuggler- person who promises to get the family out of Turkey for money

Bashar al-Assad- leader of Syria