

<sup>1</sup> that is only visually discernable (capitalized vs. lower case) and actively disrupts the text on an orthographical level. Through this partnership, the author sets up a dialogic situation which reflects the protagonist's fears and intrusive thoughts. Its function goes far beyond what Wenzel's publisher CATAPULT<sup>2</sup> among others has described as "witty"<sup>3</sup> and "humorous." By analyzing this text, I am hoping to revise these public receptions of the novel that have failed to understand the text on its most basic level. Instead, I argue that the unconventional structure of







rather an interaction between “retrieval and erasure.”<sup>18</sup> Wenzel incorporates this mechanism by changing of details that happen in the context of the train platform. While the protagonist is faced with the same arrangement of objects, minor changes—such as which, the people who are present on the platform—signal this exact mechanism. These returns can be referred to with what trauma theorist Cathy Caruth specifies as “the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucination,”<sup>19</sup> a texture Wenzel incorporates through certain elements that retain the episodes on the platform in a dreamlike state. Here, the initializing “where am i” question, now printed in lower case, resembles a grounding technique used to cope with anxiety or panic attacks.<sup>20</sup> But the technique does not work here; she is not able to answer the question which suggests that this confrontation with her brother troubles her immensely. The protagonist is not able to recognize where she is, which distinguishes this return from all the others while directing the focus on the importance of space itself. Finally, the dialogue is clearly marked by the Italics as internal and helps in identifying the return to the platform as a product of her subconscious, a means for her to deal with his suicide.

As is later uncovered in the narrative, the platform is also the site of another, earlier racist assault against the protagonist and her brother, and the recollection of such becomes her last return to the platform in the narrative.<sup>21</sup> Therein, the twins are attacked by an older man who repeatedly performs the Nazi salute and then goes on to verbally abuse the two of them in ways, saying “[they] belong in a concentration camp, that [they] will be gassed there properly, and that soon the right train will come for [them].”<sup>22</sup> The direct reference to the Shoah through its connection to trains as described by Todd Samuel Presner in *Mobile Modernity* cannot be disregarded here.<sup>23</sup> Wenzel is addressing this interrelation through the figure of the old man who functions as a link between Germany’s past and present; he acts as a remnant of Nazi ideology that is prevalent to this





## Works Cited

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