



The Tunnel

By William H. Gass

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While writing the introduction to his magnum opus, a moral history of Hitler's Germany, a middle-aged historian finds himself writing instead a history of the historian himself and secretly digging a tunnel out of his own basement. 15,000 first printing.

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The Tunnel By William H. Gass Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

A strange and monumental novel that took William Gass three decades to write. When a Midwestern historian sits down to write the introduction to his magnum opus study of the Third Reich, he instead writes a chaotic, obscure and labyrinthine exploration of his personal history. Then he begins digging a tunnel from the basement of his house. The writing, the digging, and the reader's reading blend into one profound meditation on history, evil, the living and the dead. PEN/Faulkner Award Finalist.

From Publishers Weekly

This long-awaited magnum opus by the dean of American prose modernists, 30 years in the making, is a terrible disappointment. In this endless ramble of a novel, Gass (*Omensetter's Luck*; *In the Heart of the Heart of the Country*), though here, as always, possessed of a bewitching and spectacularly fluid and allusive style, fails to find a suitable home for his narrator's wickedly dyspeptic views of history, marriage and culture.

William Kohler is a Midwestern academic historian working on an introduction to his life's work—a massive study of "guilt and innocence in Hitler's Germany." This, however, and the fact that Kohler begins to secretly dig a tunnel out of his basement, are the only shards of plot in this otherwise formless book. Gass, as readers of his fiction and gorgeous literary essays will know (*On Being Blue*), can turn a phrase and render lyrical descriptions that have not only music to them, but also shape and weight. But in portraying the failed career and life of Kohler, these gifts are brought to bear on such a litany of sour rant—about his aging body, his wife's widening girth, the fatuous enthusiasms of his colleagues and mentors—that the reader will beg for a way out of this dark and airless space. Unfortunately, there is no light at the end of *The Tunnel*, and the promise of a new perspective on our century's most heinous crime—the Holocaust—is very much a forgotten vow.

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From Library Journal

Here, Gass presents William Kohler, a professor of history who sits in his basement study trying to write a preface to his monumental work, *Guilt and Innocence in Hitler's Germany*, but instead finds himself writing his autobiography. Historical objectivity eludes him, as old wounds and resentments obscure the facts. He broods over an unhappy childhood and a loveless marriage and regrets "a life spent in a chair." The result is a sort of *Mein Kampf* from this self-described Fuhrer of the Party of Disappointed People. Between chapters, Kohler pauses to dig an escape tunnel through the basement wall as his wife waits patiently upstairs. Like Gass's best-known metafictional work, *Willie Master's Lonesome Wife* (LJ 12/1/71), this book is filled with puns, limericks, illustrations, and unusual typefaces. In marked contrast to the earlier work, this playful design seems completely at odds with the ponderous text. For larger fiction collections.

Edward B. St. John, Loyola Law Sch. Lib., Los Angeles

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Tonya Deschamps:

The book *The Tunnel* make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You may use to make your capable considerably more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting strain or having big

problem using your subject. If you can make looking at a book The Tunnel for being your habit, you can get more advantages, like add your own capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You are able to know everything if you like wide open and read a book The Tunnel. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science publication or encyclopedia or others. So , how do you think about this reserve?

Grace Harrell:

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Vickie Gilbert:

Often the book The Tunnel will bring you to the new experience of reading a new book. The author style to describe the idea is very unique. If you try to find new book to study, this book very ideal to you. The book The Tunnel is much recommended to you to learn. You can also get the e-book from the official web site, so you can easier to read the book.

Daryl Radford:

What is your hobby? Have you heard in which question when you got learners? We believe that that question was given by teacher on their students. Many kinds of hobby, Every person has different hobby. Therefore you know that little person similar to reading or as examining become their hobby. You need to understand that reading is very important and book as to be the issue. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your own personal teacher or lecturer. You get good news or update about something by book. Different categories of books that can you choose to use be your object. One of them is this The Tunnel.

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