

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

The Reader

a novel



Bernhard Schlink

"A formally beautiful, disturbing and finally morally devastating novel.
From the first page, [*The Reader*] ensnares both heart and mind."

—*Los Angeles Times*

TRANSLATED BY CAROL BROWN JANEWAY

Resumo de The Reader

"The Reader" is both a literary surprise and a moral challenge: a riveting, provocative, and deeply moving novel about a young boy's erotic awakening in a passionate, clandestine love affair with an older woman, and what happens to them both when the secrets in her past are revealed.

Fifteen-year-old Michael Berg becomes ill on the way home from school. A woman takes care of him. Later, the boy arrives at her home with a bunch of flowers to thank her.

And then comes back again. Hanna is the first woman he has ever desired. But there is something slightly off-key about her. His questions about her family and her life go unanswered.

One day Hanna simply disappears. Michael's life goes on, but he can't forget her. Years later, as a law student observing a trial in Germany, Michael is shocked to realize that the person in the dock is Hanna.

The woman he had loved so passionately is a criminal. Much about her behavior during the trial makes no sense. But then, suddenly and terribly, it does — Hanna is not only obliged to answer for a horrible crime, she is also desperately concealing an even deeper secret.

As the past erupts into the present — both Michael's past with Hanna, and the past of Germany itself — Michael must accept that he will never be free of either of them.

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