

the things they carried

the things they carried is a profound literary work that explores the physical and emotional burdens faced by soldiers during the Vietnam War. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the book, delving into its major themes, the symbolic significance of the items the soldiers carry, and the impact of war on individual psyche. Readers will discover how Tim O'Brien blends fact and fiction to craft a compelling narrative, the role of storytelling, and the importance of memory and trauma in shaping the soldiers' experiences. With a focus on the book's characters, symbolism, and critical reception, this article will offer readers a thorough understanding of why **the things they carried** remains a crucial piece of modern American literature. Whether you are a student, educator, or literary enthusiast, this guide covers essential insights and analysis to deepen your appreciation of O'Brien's masterpiece.

- Overview of The Things They Carried
- Major Themes in The Things They Carried
- Symbolism and the Significance of What Soldiers Carry
- Character Analysis and Emotional Burdens
- Narrative Style and Storytelling Techniques
- The Role of Memory and Trauma
- Critical Reception and Legacy

Overview of The Things They Carried

Tim O'Brien's **The Things They Carried** is a collection of linked short stories that revolves around a group of American soldiers fighting in the Vietnam War. The book was first published in 1990 and has since become a seminal work in war literature. O'Brien uses a mix of autobiographical fiction and creative storytelling to present the experiences of soldiers, focusing on both the tangible items they physically carry and the intangible burdens they bear emotionally and psychologically. The narrative moves between the battlefield and the soldiers' lives before and after the war, offering a holistic view of the impact of conflict.

The stories are interconnected, centering primarily on Lieutenant Jimmy Cross and his platoon. O'Brien employs a blend of realism and metafiction, challenging the boundaries between truth and fiction. The book's structure allows readers to see the different facets of war, including fear, guilt, love, and loss. **The Things They Carried** is widely studied for its innovative narrative style and its exploration of the human condition under extreme

circumstances.

Major Themes in **The Things They Carried**

The Burden of War

One of the central themes in **The Things They Carried** is the burden of war, both physical and psychological. The soldiers carry heavy equipment, weapons, and supplies, but also invisible weights such as fear, guilt, memories, and emotional scars. These burdens are depicted in vivid detail, highlighting how war shapes and sometimes distorts the soldiers' identities.

Truth and Storytelling

O'Brien frequently explores the concept of truth within the narrative. He blurs the lines between fact and fiction, suggesting that the emotional truth of a story can sometimes be more important than factual accuracy. Storytelling becomes a coping mechanism for the soldiers, a way to process trauma and make sense of their experiences.

Memory and Trauma

The role of memory is essential in the book. The characters are haunted by their past actions, losses, and the violence they witness. Trauma is conveyed through fragmented stories and recurring motifs, emphasizing how memories of war can linger long after the conflict ends.

Symbolism and the Significance of What Soldiers Carry

Physical Objects Carried by Soldiers

O'Brien meticulously details the items each soldier carries, using them as symbols to illustrate their personalities, fears, and desires. The list of objects includes weapons, photographs, letters, medical supplies, and personal mementos. These items serve as both practical tools for survival and representations of emotional states.

- **Weapons and Ammunition:** Represent the constant threat and necessity of self-defense.

- Photographs and Letters: Symbolize the connection to loved ones and life back home.
- Medical Kits: Indicate the ever-present danger and need for protection.
- Lucky Charms: Reflect superstition and hope in dire circumstances.
- Maps and Radios: Signify navigation, communication, and the search for direction.

Emotional and Psychological Burdens

Beyond physical items, the soldiers are weighed down by emotional burdens. These include guilt over the loss of comrades, fear of death, responsibility for leadership, and memories of traumatic events. O'Brien uses these intangible "things" to highlight the true cost of war, which often remains unseen and unspoken.

Character Analysis and Emotional Burdens

Lieutenant Jimmy Cross

Lieutenant Jimmy Cross is the platoon leader and a central figure in the book. He is burdened by his love for Martha, a woman back home, and his sense of responsibility for his men. Cross's internal conflict between duty and distraction serves as a recurring motif, illustrating the heavy emotional cost of leadership during wartime.

Other Key Characters

O'Brien introduces a diverse cast of soldiers, each with unique backgrounds and personal struggles. Characters like Kiowa, Norman Bowker, and Ted Lavender are given depth through the description of their fears, hopes, and losses. These character studies provide a nuanced look at the psychological impact of war.

- Kiowa: Represents faith, morality, and the pain of loss.
- Norman Bowker: Embodies the struggle to adapt after war and survivor's guilt.
- Ted Lavender: Symbolizes fear and the randomness of death in combat.

Narrative Style and Storytelling Techniques

Blending Fact and Fiction

Tim O'Brien's narrative style is characterized by its blend of autobiography and fiction. He often inserts himself as a character, creating ambiguity about what is real and what is imagined. This technique invites readers to question the nature of truth in storytelling and to understand the complexities of memory and perspective.

Use of Repetition and Fragmented Structure

The book employs repetition and a fragmented structure to mirror the experience of trauma and the cyclical nature of memory. Stories are revisited from different angles, allowing for deeper exploration of events and emotions. This approach reinforces the idea that war is not a linear experience but a series of overlapping and recurring moments.

The Role of Memory and Trauma

Impact on Soldiers' Lives

Memory and trauma are persistent themes throughout **The Things They Carried**. The narrative demonstrates how traumatic events are not easily forgotten and can shape the lives of veterans long after the war ends. O'Brien explores how soldiers cope with loss and guilt, and how storytelling becomes a therapeutic process.

Coping Mechanisms

Soldiers in the book rely on various coping mechanisms, such as humor, camaraderie, and storytelling, to handle the stresses of combat. These strategies help them process grief and maintain a sense of normalcy amidst chaos. The importance of shared experience is emphasized as soldiers attempt to support one another through difficult times.

Critical Reception and Legacy

Literary Acclaim

Since its publication, **The Things They Carried** has received widespread critical acclaim. It is praised for its innovative narrative style, emotional depth, and evocative portrayal of

war. The book has been included in numerous academic curricula and is considered a modern classic in American literature.

Influence on War Literature

O'Brien's work has had a significant impact on the genre of war literature, influencing both writers and readers. The book's exploration of storytelling, memory, and psychological trauma has set a new standard for works dealing with the subject of war. Its legacy endures as a powerful testament to the complexities of conflict and the resilience of those who endure it.

Frequently Asked Questions about The Things They Carried

Q: What is the main theme of The Things They Carried?

A: The main theme is the burdens—both physical and emotional—that soldiers carry during war. The book explores how these burdens shape their experiences and identities.

Q: Who is the author of The Things They Carried?

A: Tim O'Brien is the author of The Things They Carried. He is renowned for his works focusing on the Vietnam War and its psychological impacts.

Q: What items do the soldiers carry in The Things They Carried?

A: Soldiers carry items such as weapons, ammunition, photographs, letters, medical supplies, lucky charms, and maps. These objects symbolize their hopes, fears, and connections to home.

Q: How does Tim O'Brien use storytelling in the book?

A: O'Brien uses storytelling as a coping mechanism and explores the blurred line between fact and fiction to convey the emotional truth of war.

Q: What role does memory play in The Things They Carried?

A: Memory is central to the narrative, illustrating how trauma and past experiences affect soldiers long after the war has ended.

Q: Why is *The Things They Carried* considered a classic?

A: The book is considered a classic for its innovative narrative style, emotional depth, and profound exploration of the human side of war.

Q: What is the significance of Lieutenant Jimmy Cross in the story?

A: Lieutenant Jimmy Cross represents the emotional burdens of leadership and the conflict between duty and personal feelings.

Q: How does the book explore the concept of truth?

A: *The Things They Carried* challenges the idea of absolute truth by blending facts and fiction, emphasizing that emotional truth is sometimes more important than factual accuracy.

Q: What coping mechanisms do the soldiers use in the book?

A: Soldiers use humor, camaraderie, storytelling, and personal rituals to cope with the stresses of combat and trauma.

Q: How has *The Things They Carried* influenced war literature?

A: The book has set a new standard for war literature, particularly in its treatment of memory, trauma, and the complexities of storytelling.

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The Things They Carried: Exploring Tim O'Brien's

Masterpiece of War and Memory

Introduction:

Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* isn't just a war novel; it's a profound exploration of memory, truth, and the enduring impact of trauma. This post delves deep into O'Brien's masterpiece, examining its key themes, literary techniques, and lasting significance. We'll unpack the symbolic weight of the physical and emotional burdens carried by the soldiers in the Vietnam War, and analyze how O'Brien crafts a narrative that blurs the lines between fiction and reality, leaving a lasting impression on the reader. Prepare to embark on a journey into the heart of a timeless classic.

The Weight of Physical and Emotional Burdens:

The Things They Carried opens with a meticulously detailed inventory of the physical objects carried by the soldiers: ammunition, rations, weapons, and personal items. These items are far more than just equipment; they represent the tangible weight of war. O'Brien masterfully interweaves this physical burden with the invisible, yet equally heavy, emotional baggage the soldiers carry – fear, grief, guilt, and the constant threat of death. This juxtaposition highlights the profound psychological toll of war, often surpassing the physical strains.

The Symbolic Power of Objects:

Each object carries symbolic weight. The weight of the items mirrors the psychological weight of their experiences. A heavy pack represents the burden of responsibility, while a cherished photograph symbolizes the longing for home and loved ones. This intricate use of symbolism enriches the narrative, allowing readers to connect with the soldiers' emotional states on a deeper level.

Truth and Storytelling in a War Zone:

O'Brien challenges the conventional notion of truth in *The Things They Carried*. He repeatedly emphasizes that the stories he tells are not necessarily "true" in a factual sense, but rather "true" in their emotional impact and their ability to convey the essence of the war experience. He blurs the lines between fiction and non-fiction, forcing readers to question the nature of memory and the power of storytelling to shape our understanding of the past.

The Power of Ambiguity:

The ambiguity inherent in O'Brien's narrative style is crucial to the novel's power. By leaving certain details open to interpretation, he allows readers to engage with the text on a personal level, drawing their own conclusions about the characters and events. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the complexities of war and its lasting effects.

The Impact of Trauma and Moral Ambiguity:

The soldiers in *The Things They Carried* are not simply heroic figures; they are flawed, conflicted individuals grappling with the moral ambiguities of war. They witness atrocities, commit acts of violence, and grapple with the psychological scars that follow them long after they return home. O'Brien doesn't shy away from depicting the brutality and moral compromises of war, forcing readers to confront the uncomfortable realities of conflict.

The Lasting Effects of War:

The novel powerfully demonstrates the lasting effects of war on the human psyche. The soldiers' experiences continue to haunt them long after they leave Vietnam, manifesting in PTSD, nightmares, and a pervasive sense of alienation. O'Brien's portrayal of these long-term consequences elevates the narrative beyond a simple war story, highlighting the enduring impact of trauma on individuals and society.

Literary Techniques and Narrative Structure:

O'Brien's masterful use of literary techniques contributes significantly to the novel's impact. He employs vivid imagery, shifting perspectives, and a non-linear narrative structure to create a sense of immersion and to reflect the fragmented nature of memory. These techniques work in tandem to deliver a powerful and unforgettable reading experience.

Frame Narrative and Interwoven Stories:

The novel's frame narrative structure, with stories interwoven within the main narrative, creates a sense of fluidity and reflects the soldiers' interwoven experiences. This technique also allows O'Brien to explore multiple facets of the war and its impact on the soldiers' lives.

Conclusion:

The Things They Carried stands as a testament to the enduring power of literature to explore the complexities of war, trauma, and the human condition. O'Brien's masterful storytelling, combined with his unflinching portrayal of the human cost of conflict, creates a work of profound beauty and enduring relevance. It's a book that stays with you long after you've finished reading it, prompting reflection on the nature of truth, memory, and the indelible mark of war.

FAQs:

1. Is *The Things They Carried* a true story? While based on O'Brien's own experiences in Vietnam, the novel blends fact and fiction, highlighting the subjective nature of memory and the power of storytelling.
2. What are the major themes in *The Things They Carried*? Major themes include the physical and emotional burdens of war, the ambiguity of truth, the impact of trauma, moral ambiguity, and the power of storytelling.
3. What makes *The Things They Carried* so impactful? The novel's impact stems from its raw honesty, its masterful use of literary techniques, and its exploration of universal themes of loss, trauma, and the enduring human spirit.
4. Who is the intended audience for *The Things They Carried*? While often studied in academic settings, *The Things They Carried* resonates with a wide audience due to its powerful themes and accessible writing style.
5. How does O'Brien use symbolism in the novel? O'Brien uses symbolism extensively, imbuing the physical objects carried by the soldiers with deeper meaning, reflecting their emotional and psychological burdens. The weight of the physical objects mirrors the weight of their experiences.

the things they carried: *The Things They Carried* Tim O'Brien, 2009-10-13 A classic work of American literature that has not stopped changing minds and lives since it burst onto the literary scene, *The Things They Carried* is a ground-breaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling. *The Things They Carried* depicts the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and the character Tim O'Brien, who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three. Taught everywhere—from high school classrooms to graduate seminars in creative writing—it has become required reading for any American and continues to challenge readers in their perceptions of fact and fiction, war and peace, courage and fear and longing. *The Things They Carried* won France's prestigious Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger and the Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize; it was also a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

the things they carried: *In the Lake of the Woods* Tim O'Brien, 2006-09-01 A politician's past war crimes are revealed in this psychologically haunting novel by the National Book Award-winning

author of *The Things They Carried*. Vietnam veteran John Wade is running for senate when long-hidden secrets about his involvement in wartime atrocities come to light. But the loss of his political fortunes is only the beginning of John's downfall. A retreat with his wife, Kathy, to a lakeside cabin in northern Minnesota only exacerbates the tensions rising between them. Then, within days of their arrival, Kathy mysteriously vanishes into the watery wilderness. When a police search fails to locate her, suspicion falls on the disgraced politician with a violent past. But when John himself disappears, the questions mount—with no answers in sight. In this contemplative thriller, acclaimed author Tim O'Brien examines America's legacy of violence and warfare and its lasting impact both at home and abroad.

the things they carried: *The Things They Carried* Tim O'Brien, 1991 A collection of award-winning and utterly moving stories about the madness of the Vietnam war.

the things they carried: *The Names of the Dead* Stewart O'Nan, 1996 In Ithaca, New York, in 1982, Larry Markham awakes to discover his wife, Vicki, has taken their young son, Scott, and left him - not for the first time, possibly for the last. It is a deep blow to a life already in fragments: a dead-end job delivering Wonder Bread; a strained relationship with his aging father, a veteran of World War Two; and weekly visits to the VA hospital where Larry, a former Army medic, leads a support group for disabled Vietnam vets. As he struggles to win Vicki back, Larry finds he is in danger of a far more imminent sort: A disturbed member of the support group - a trained CIA assassin - has disappeared, and is stalking Larry and his family. His methods send an unmistakable message: The game will end in death. At the same time, *The Names of the Dead* is a harrowing and heartfelt portrait of the Vietnam War and the men who fought it. The year is 1968, the place A Shau valley, and Larry Markham - nineteen and green - must find a way to keep his platoon alive. Here we see the stories Larry cannot bring himself to tell - of friends who made the ultimate sacrifice in a war their country scorned. *The Names of the Dead* is the story of a man trying to find his way back to himself - a story about storytelling and memories that refuse to fade. It is the story of a man rediscovering the courage to love one woman, and, through her, the world, his country, his family, and finally himself.--BOOK JACKET.Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

the things they carried: *The Girl with Ghost Eyes* M. H. Boroson, 2015-11-03 "The Girl with Ghost Eyes is a fun, fun read. Martial arts and Asian magic set in Old San Francisco make for a fresh take on urban fantasy, a wonderful story that kept me up late to finish." —#1 New York Times bestselling author Patricia Briggs It's the end of the nineteenth century in San Francisco's Chinatown, and ghost hunters from the Maoshan traditions of Daoism keep malevolent spiritual forces at bay. Li-lin, the daughter of a renowned Daoshi exorcist, is a young widow burdened with yin eyes—the unique ability to see the spirit world. Her spiritual visions and the death of her husband bring shame to Li-lin and her father—and shame is not something this immigrant family can afford. When a sorcerer cripples her father, terrible plans are set in motion, and only Li-lin can stop them. To aid her are her martial arts and a peachwood sword, her burning paper talismans, and a wisecracking spirit in the form of a human eyeball tucked away in her pocket. Navigating the dangerous alleys and backrooms of a male-dominated Chinatown, Li-lin must confront evil spirits, gangsters, and soulstealers before the sorcerer's ritual summons an ancient evil that could burn Chinatown to the ground. With a rich and inventive historical setting, nonstop martial arts action, authentic Chinese magic, and bizarre monsters from Asian folklore, *The Girl with Ghost Eyes* is also the poignant story of a young immigrant searching to find her place beside the long shadow of a demanding father and the stigma of widowhood. In a Chinatown caught between tradition and modernity, one woman may be the key to holding everything together. Skyhorse Publishing, under our Night Shade and Talos imprints, is proud to publish a broad range of titles for readers interested in science fiction (space opera, time travel, hard SF, alien invasion, near-future dystopia), fantasy (grimdark, sword and sorcery, contemporary urban fantasy, steampunk, alternative history), and horror (zombies, vampires, and the occult and supernatural), and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller, a national bestseller, or a Hugo or Nebula

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the things they carried: *Dad's Maybe Book* Tim O'Brien, 2019 A bestselling author shares wisdom from a life in letters, lessons learned in wartime, and the challenges, humor, and rewards of raising two sons.

the things they carried: *Going After Cacciato* Tim O'Brien, 2009-02-18 A CLASSIC FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE THINGS THEY CARRIED To call *Going After Cacciato* a novel about war is like calling *Moby-Dick* a novel about whales. So wrote The New York Times of Tim O'Brien's now classic novel of Vietnam. Winner of the 1979 National Book Award, *Going After Cacciato* captures the peculiar mixture of horror and hallucination that marked this strangest of wars. In a blend of reality and fantasy, this novel tells the story of a young soldier who one day lays down his rifle and sets off on a quixotic journey from the jungles of Indochina to the streets of Paris. In its memorable evocation of men both fleeing from and meeting the demands of battle, *Going After Cacciato* stands as much more than just a great war novel. Ultimately it's about the forces of fear and heroism that do battle in the hearts of us all. Now with Extra Libris material, including a reader's guide and bonus content

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the things they carried: *The Enormous Radio, and Other Stories* John Cheever, 1953

the things they carried: If I Die in a Combat Zone Tim O'Brien, 2011-08-24 A classic from the New York Times bestselling author of *The Things They Carried* One of the best, most disturbing, and most powerful books about the shame that was / is Vietnam. —Minneapolis Star and Tribune Before

writing his award-winning *Going After Cacciato*, Tim O'Brien gave us this intensely personal account of his year as a foot soldier in Vietnam. The author takes us with him to experience combat from behind an infantryman's rifle, to walk the minefields of My Lai, to crawl into the ghostly tunnels, and to explore the ambiguities of manhood and morality in a war gone terribly wrong. Beautifully written and searingly heartfelt, *If I Die in a Combat Zone* is a masterwork of its genre. Now with Extra Libris material, including a reader's guide and bonus content.

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the things they carried: *The Way of Kings* Brandon Sanderson, 2014-03-04 A new epic fantasy series from the New York Times bestselling author chosen to complete Robert Jordan's *The Wheel of Time*® Series

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the things they carried: *Boots on the Ground* Elizabeth Partridge, 2018-04-10 □ Partridge proves once again that nonfiction can be every bit as dramatic as the best fiction.* America's war in Vietnam. In over a decade of bitter fighting, it claimed the lives of more than 58,000 American soldiers and beleaguered four US presidents. More than forty years after America left Vietnam in defeat in 1975, the war remains controversial and divisive both in the United States and abroad. The history of this era is complex; the cultural impact extraordinary. But it's the personal stories of eight people—six American soldiers, one American military nurse, and one Vietnamese refugee—that create the heartbeat of *Boots on the Ground*. From dense jungles and terrifying firefights to chaotic helicopter rescues and harrowing escapes, each individual experience reveals a different facet of the war and moves us forward in time. Alternating with these chapters are profiles of key American leaders and events, reminding us of all that was happening at home during the war, including peace protests, presidential scandals, and veterans' struggles to acclimate to life after Vietnam. With more than one hundred photographs, award-winning author Elizabeth Partridge's unflinching book captures the intensity, frustration, and lasting impacts of one of the most tumultuous periods of American history. *Kirkus Reviews, starred review of *Marching for Freedom*

the things they carried: *The Things They Carried* Harold Bloom, 2009 This collection of stories from Vietnam War writer Tim O'Brien paints a through picture of the soldiers' life in the Vietnam War.

the things they carried: *Tomcat in Love* Tim O'Brien, 1999-09-01 A CLASSIC FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE THINGS THEY CARRIED In this wildly funny, brilliantly inventive novel, Tim O'Brien has created the ultimate character for our times. Thomas Chippering, a 6'6" professor of linguistics, is a man torn between two obsessions: the desperate need to win back his former wife, the faithless Lorna Sue, and a craving to test his erotic charms on every woman he meets. But there are complications, including Lorna Sue's brother, Herbie, with whom she has an all-too-close relationship, and the considerable charms of Chippering's new love, the attractive, and of course already married, Mrs. Robert Kooshof, who may at last satisfy Chippering's longing for intimacy. In *Tomcat in Love*, Tim O'Brien takes on the battle of the sexes with astonishing results. By turns hilarious, outrageous, romantic, and deeply moving, this is one of the most talked about novels in years: a novel for this and every age.

the things they carried: *Dien Cai Dau* Yusef Komunyakaa, 1988-09-01 This collection by the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet is "a major contribution to the body of literature grappling with Vietnam" (Poetry). Yusef Komunyakaa is renowned for his ability to blend memory and history with strikingly evocative poetic imagery. Born in the rural community of Bogalusa, Louisiana, Komunyakaa served in Vietnam as a correspondent and editor of *The Southern Cross* and received a Bronze Star for his service as a journalist. In *Dien Cai Dau*, he applies this unique sensibility to his experience of the Vietnam War. The resulting poems have been called some of the finest Vietnam testimony ever documented in verse or prose. "So finely tuned are Komunyakaa's images, so faultless his vision, that the reader sees precisely what the poet recalls . . . A powerful must-read for those who have forgotten those days." —Booklist

the things they carried: *The Things They Carried* Tim O'Brien, 2011 Two bestselling novels from one of his generation's most deservedly acclaimed authors. (Chicago Tribune)

the things they carried: *The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien (Book Analysis)* Bright Summaries, 2019-04-08 Unlock the more straightforward side of *The Things They Carried* with this concise and insightful summary and analysis! This engaging summary presents an analysis of *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien, a series of interconnected short stories set during the Vietnam War. O'Brien was drafted to fight in Vietnam when he was in his early 20s, and he has written extensively about the conflict in both fiction and nonfiction pieces. In *The Things They Carried*, he tries to make sense of his and his comrades' experiences during the war, which have an enduring effect on them and are never fully understood by those at home. As well as *The Things They Carried*, O'Brien is known for his novel *Going After Cacciato* and the autobiographical account *If I Die in a Combat Zone, Box Me Up and Ship Me Home*. Find out everything you need to know about *The Things They Carried* in a fraction of the time! This in-depth and informative reading guide brings you: • A complete plot summary • Character studies • Key themes and symbols • Questions for further reflection Why choose BrightSummaries.com? Available in print and digital format, our publications are designed to accompany you on your reading journey. The clear and concise style makes for easy understanding, providing the perfect opportunity to improve your literary knowledge in no time. See the very best of literature in a whole new light with BrightSummaries.com!

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grieving father. But as Lowen's feelings for Jeremy begin to intensify, she recognizes all the ways she could benefit if he were to read his wife's words. After all, no matter how devoted Jeremy is to his injured wife, a truth this horrifying would make it impossible for him to continue loving her.

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the things they carried: War in Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* Gary Wiener, 2011-06-13 This did not happen is a common refrain throughout the stories in *The Things They Carried*. Tim O'Brien's account of the Vietnam War purposely blurs the line between fact and fiction to get closer to the truth of what soldiers actually experienced. This compelling volume explores the

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