

Huck Finn

The book starts by Huck plugging his previous book, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, from that book, we know that he and Tom has 6,000 dollars. In these chapters Huck lives at the Widow Douglas plantation, and is being watched over by the Widow Douglas and her sister, Miss Watson.

So the story's main theme for Huck is that regular society is trying to make him civilized, trying to teach him the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, and for the most part, he doesn't like that. So one night, Huck goes out to smoke, and hears Tom Sawyer's secret call, and they go out, and Huck makes some noise, that alerts Jim, and ultimately they trick Jim into thinking it is nothing, and they go to meet up with some other friends and screw around being a band of robbers and stuff.

Huck returns late into that night, and is scolded by the Widow Douglas, and she tells him about religion and stuff, which he doesn't take at all well to. Later the next day, Huck meets up with Tom, and Tom tells him about superstitions and stuff, more specifically, about a magic lamp.

Huck fears his dad (Only cause he beats him...) and during the day, he sees things that make him believe his father is back in town. He tries to give all his money to the Judge, but the Judge won't take it. Huck then goes to Jim and tries to get his fortune read from Jim's magic hairball. Anyways, what it all leads up to is that Huck finds Pap waiting for him in his room.

Pap is drunk as usual, and beats Huck for having learned to read and write. Pap finds out about Huck's fortune, and eventually wants to have custody of Huck, which he eventually get's partial custody through a second judge (even though the first judge and the Widow didn't want it to happen). Huck continues with his schooling, and even goes to the Widow Douglas's place often, which angers Pap, and he kidnaps Huck and takes him to his own private cabin.

Pap does everything in his power to control Huck. He locks the doors when he goes out and he beats Huck frequently. Despite this, Huck rather enjoys the fact that he doesn't have to be civilized anymore.

However, Huck's happiness is short lived when his Pap comes home and nearly beats him to death, it is when Pap threatens to kill Huck that Huck decides to run away. Huck while gathering wood, finds a canoe, and hides a saw. Whenever Pap leaves, Huck goes to work with his saw, eventually, being able to chop his way out. He slaughters a pig, and uses it's blood to fake his own death, and eventually takes the canoe down river to the uninhabited Jackson Island.

Huck's staged murder worked, and he escaped to Jackson Island. All the towns people believe that Huck has been murdered, and in their ensuing search, nearly kill Huck with a cannon.

Huck enjoy's being by himself, but eventually get's lonely on the island, eventually one night, he finds ashes of a campfire, and upon investigation, find that the ashes belong to Jim. At first Jim thinks that Huck is a ghost, but later Huck proves to Jim that he is still alive.

The two find a nice cavern to live in, they also scavenge off the river picking up stuff including a huge raft (as if that will be used later in the book...). One night, they see a huge wrecked boat float down the river, in which they pull lots of valuables. Jim finds a body, who just happens to be Huck's dad, but doesn't show him the body, and the two leave the boat.

Huck get's sick of fish and all the regular stuff they grab off sinking ships, so he decides to go to the city disguised as a girl. He is found out by some old lady, but convinces the lady that there was a reason he was dressed as so. Eventually he finds out that Jim is a possible suspect in his own murder, finds out that people are after him, and he goes to Jim, warns him, and the two take off down the river in the raft.

Jim and Huck have been on the river for a couple days, during that time, Jim built a tent on the raft to protect them against the weather. They eventually hit a big storm, and in the storm they come up to a shipwrecked steamboat, which Huck decides, against the wishes of Jim, to board the ship.

On the ship, Huck overhears the plans of two accomplices who plan to eliminate the third member of their gang. Huck then plans to release their boat, so that all three accomplices will be stuck on the sinking ship, however, when he goes to Jim, he discovers, that their boat has washed away, so they would be stranded on the ship.

Huck and Jim take off in the robbers ship, and eventually find their raft. Before that however, Huck told a watchman about the sinking ship, and that there were three people on the ship, and the Watchman reluctantly goes to find and save them.

“Interesting” Points/Facts that you should know

Jim ate Strawberrys while he was alone on the island

Jim/Huck ate catfish on their first day for breakfast

Jim is Ms. Watson's (son?)

The Town was shooting the cannon, signifies they're chasing someone?

Catching a bird brings death, chickens/young birds flying a yard apart means it's going to rain

Bees don't sting idiots, Huck invested 10 bucks in a cow, died, sold tallow for 1.10

Invested \$5 /w a dude named Bob, promised 35 at end of the year, but bank closed, never got money

Gave 10 cents to **Balam Ass**

Hid canoe in willow trees, found cavern in the middle of the island

Where they are borders Illinois/Missouri, along with Missouri/Mississippi River

Found a dead man in a house on the island, looted the place

Huck killed a rattlesnake and put it on Jim's bed, his mate came, bit Jim

They used a rabbit as bait to catch a 6 foot 2 catfish

Huck went to town as a girl, town of St. Petersburg

Made people think he was murdered, Town believes that Jim killed Huck

Huck pretended that the town was Goshen, Met Mrs Loftus who saw through his disguise

Said his name was Sarah Mary Williams, then George Elexander Something

After the riverboat wreck, Huck and Jim start floating down the river. They still have lots of loot that they were able to grab from the boat, and in that loot, there is a book. In the book that Huck reads are lots of stories about kings, dukes and lords, and this eventually will lead up to why Huck and Jim are deceived by them. Anyways, Huck and Jim start talking about a lot of things. First off, Jim doesn't think Soloman was to wise for splitting a baby in half, and also Jim doesn't understand why a Frenchman doesn't speak English, but still is considered a man.

Huck and Jim's goal is to reach Cairo, a city that lies where the Ohio and Mississippi meet. When they nearly reach their goal, a thick fog envelops the them and the raft. Huck takes a canoe, an attempts to tie the raft up, however, loses the rope and ultimately loses Jim and the raft. Eventually by the next day Huck gets to the raft to wake Jim. He then convinces Jim that the whole incident of the previous night was a dream, however, Jim finds out, get's angered and Huck then apologizes to him.

They travel down the river a little further Jim starts talking about what he is going to do once he gets free, and this upsets Huck, because it sickens him to be called an abolitionist, and to go against society, so Huck grabs the canoe and starts to go to shore to tell someone, while he is doing so, Jim tells him how great a friend he is.

Huck finds two slave catchers, but he then has a change of mind, and decides not to tell the men about Jim. When they want to check out the raft to make sure, Huck says that it is his dad who is on board, and he lets the men assume that his father has small pox, and the men get scared at this, leave Huck money and run off.

Unfortunately for Jim and Huck, during the fog they passed Cairo, and they lost their raft, and as they float down the river a steamboat smashes the boat and Jim and Huck get separated.

Huck survives the wreck, and finds himself on the river bank. He gets himself to a mansion. The Grangerfords take Huck into their mansion as he tells them that he is George Jackson and has fallen off a steamship. After Huck finishes his story, they show him some of their daughters poetry and drawings. The drawings are quite morbid and the poetry is quite bad, but they all seemed to be impressed by them. Finally, they stick Huck into Buck's room, a boy who is about his age, and the two become good friends.

One day Huck and Buck are out, and they see Harney Shepardson. They stash themselves behind a bush, and Buck takes a shot at Harney. After which, Buck explains what a feud is, and in Buck's particular feud, they are uncertain of how it started.

While at the Grangerford's mansion, Huck deliver's messages for Sophia Grangerford, and one day, while delivering a message, he finds Jim at a river bank. Apparently Jim was preparing the raft for them so that they can continue their voyage.

Huck then goes to church with the Grangerfords and the Shepardsons, and all of them are praying at the church with their guns. (Ironic Huh?) So eventually the Grangerford's find out that Sophia has run off with a Shepardson in good old Shakespearian Romeo

and Juliet fashion, and the end result is the all the Grangerfords are killed, and Huck even witnesses Buck get killed, so Huck runs back to the raft, and Jim and him take off.

It seems as though the whole focus of the book changes when Huck and Jim help two men who are being chased by some other men and their dogs. The two men come aboard ship, one is about 30, and he claims to be the Duke of Bridgewater, the other is about 70 and he claims to be the Dauphin of France.

The Duke and the Dauphin then decide to perform Shakespear's Romeo and Juliet, and they pool their resources to do so. They also go ashore and pull a couple scams to get money, one such scam was the King pretends to be a reformed pirate, and swindles 80 some dollars from the group by doing so. At the same time the Duke goes to the printing office and get's a handbill saying the Jim is a runaway slave, and he intends to keep it just in case anybody question's Jim's being there.

While the Duke and Dauphin rehearse Shakespeare, Mark Twain interjects a little story in which Huck observes Colonel Sherburn and a town drunk named Boggs. In the story Boggs, goes into the saloon, and get's drunk, and says he is going to kill Colonel Sherburn, after which Colonel Sherburn kills him. Then a man named Buck Harkness gathers a mob together to kill Sherburn, but then when they reach Sherburn, he tells the crowd that they are cowards, and eventually, they go away crying.

Books from wreck contains tales from kings/dukes, Jim recognizes **King Sollermum**, not a good person because he would have divided a child into two parts. Entire concept of a **Frenchman** is a man and should speak like a man, or English. In 3 nights, expected to reach **Cairo**, 2nd night, **too much fog**, Huck can't find Jim and the raft, falls asleep, finds raft with trash on it, when Jim wakes, **tells him it's all a dream**, Jim figures it out, says trash is people that puts dirt on the head of their friend and makes them ashamed. Huck promises never to play a trick on him again. Jim starts talking about freedom, Huck starts wondering cuz he's helping a slave escape. Jim states crap about selling him his children and him stealing them.

Huck plans to tell, Jim'll never forget what a good friend he was, Huck doesn't tell, says crap about father having smallpox When they saw the **clear water**, knew they passed Ohio, canoe disappears, gets sliced by steamboat, Huck loses Jim Found himself before house with dogs barking, house of the **Grangerford**, ID's as **George Jackson**, share room w/ youngest son **Buck**. Fascinated by **drawings of Emmiline Grangerford**, who died at 14. Really likes the food. Everyone has Negro servant, Feud with **Shepherdson**, **Buck shot at Harney Shepherdson**, only way for feud to end is when everyone dies When delivering message for **Sophia Grangerford**, servant takes him to find Jim, **Sophia ran off with Harney** So many die that he regrets coming on shore, continues w/ Jim. Huck went for berries, meets two men being pursued, takes them onboard, **72 year old is Dauphin of France**, **30 year old is Duke of Bridgewater**, but Huck sees through them

Two frauds try to fake a **Romeo/Juliet**, pretended to be **reformed pirate** in need of money, prints banner of reward for Jim, 40 miles south of **New Orleans**. **Presented Romeo/Juliet in Arkansas town**, circus already in town. Old drunk **Boggs**, wanted to kill **Old Colonel Sherburn**, sent daughter to take care of him, Sherburn shoots him, **Buck Harkness** creates mob, wanted to lynch Sherburn, colonel calls them cowards for going a zillion on 1.

Interesting facts You should know

Stole Books, Spyglass, and 3 boxes of See gars from ship

King Sollomum got a million wives in Harem

Cows and Cats are animals, but the French are men, so they should talk like men, or English

Can't teach a nigger to argue They were afraid of passing Cairo

Jim thought jack lanterns and lightning bugs was Cairo

There were 2 men who Huck told his dad had smallpox, men gave him 20 bucks

Told the Grangerford's that he fell off a steamboat, they asked him if he knew the shepardsons

Buck couldn't spell Huck's name right, Family was in Arkansas

Girl wrote **Ode to Stephen Dowling Bots, Dec'D**, about a boy who drowned, in **Presbyterian Observer**

Whistler – the only dude where the undertaker got to him before Emmelline did when he died

Col. Granger carries mahogany cane with a silver head.

Bob was the oldest son, then Tom

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some dollars from the group by doing so. At the same time the Duke goes to the printing office and get's a handbill saying the Jim is a runaway slave, and he intends to keep it just in case anybody question's Jim's being there.

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After that wonderful event, Huck goes to a circus, then to the Duke and Dauphin's Shakespearian play. The first night bombs, so they change it so women and children cannot enter, this raises interest, however, the crowd feeling let down, get's angered and they go to tar and feather the Duke and Dauphin, however, they are too late as they get on the raft and take off.

The next scam of the Duke and Dauphin is to rip off the Wilks. Peter Wilks has recently died, and the Duke and Dauphin show up in the town to try to fake being the brothers of Peter Wilks. For the most part it fools the nieces and they hand over the almost 3000 dollars that was set aside for the brothers of Pete Wilks. The Duke and Dauphin give the money to the girls as a kind gesture, which woos everybody except for Dr. Robinson who distrust the Duke and Dauphin. Later on, one of the nieces, Joanna, starts to question Huck, and he almost gives away the identities of the Duke and Dauphin.

He didn't, however, give away their identities, but his conscious kicks in and Huck grabs the money that the Duke and Dauphin get, and he hides it in a coffin. He later confronts Mary Jane another niece, and confesses everything to her, however, to give him time to get away, Huck makes sure Mary Jane does nothing for a day.

In the next day, a new set of Wilks brothers comes in on a steamship, the real set, and they come in contact with the Duke and Dauphin. To find out which is the real set of Wilks brothers they must identify a tattoo on Peter Wilk's body, and in doing so they find the money their, and the Duke and Dauphin and Huck run back to the raft and take off again.

After a couple days, the Dauphin sells Jim as a runaway slave. Huck is angered at them both for selling Jim, and decides to write a letter to Mrs. Watson, so that she will take he and Jim back, but he decides to tear up the letter and he finds out that Jim is at a nearby plantation, and decides to free him.

Cliff Notes

Buck Harness led attack on **Sherburn's** house, Sherburn calls them **cowards**, crowd disperses

Huck dove under tent to see circus, **12** people attend **Romeo/Juliet**, comes up with men only show

First night, cheat, cons people into telling people it was good, second night, same thing, made a run for it 3rd night

Stole **\$465** from **Bricksville**, **The Royal Nonesuch**. **Duke** dresses **Jim** as **sick Arab** so they don't have to tie him

On the way to Steamboat, **meets a young man, Tim Collins**, who thought they were **Mr. Wilkes**, whose brother **Peter** just died, inheritance, **Tim going to Rio de Janeiro**, tells them all about the situation.

King plays **Rev Harvey, Duke** as the deaf and mute **William**, pose as the **Wilkes brothers**

King/Duke put on crying act besides coffin, used info provided by Tim to make the town think they're genuine

Nieces believe it, **\$3000, house to girls, \$3000 to William/Harvey**, money is hidden in the **cellar**

King/Duke go to get it, come up **\$415** short, makes up for it with their own money, gives it all to girls

Everyone believes except **Dr. Robinson**, but no one believes him. In order to show loyalty, **Mary Jane** gives all **\$6000** to **King** to let him **invest it**, no receipt needed. **Joanna – Hare Lip** – asks Huck a bunch of questions

MJ and **Susan** tells her to be nice, **Huck** feels guilty for taking money from the girls, spies on **King/Duke** as they **hid money in the straw part of the mattress**, then steals it. When **Huck** tries to leave with money, **doors are locked**, and someone is coming (**MJ**), so **hides money in coffin**. Huck isn't sure weather the money is still there, King/Duke begin selling Wilk's property, **wants to take girls to England**. On auction day, King/Duke find money missing, went to talk to Huck, **who blames it on the slaves**, which were already sold. Then encounters **MJ crying**, blurts out that the slaves will be returned, makes her **Promise to leave town for 4 days**, reveals entire hoax, **shortens time to 1 day**, and when she gets back, put **candle in the window**, and wait till 11 **She must leave BEFORE breakfast cuz her facial expressions will give it away**. Also advises her to go to **Bricksville** and mention **Royal Nonesuch**, and they'll have plenty of witnesses. When MJ asks where is the money, **Huck writes it down and makes her promise not to read it until she was on her way out**. Huck tells family that **she has gone to help a sick friend (Proctor)**.

Another set of Wilkes Brothers arrive...

New set of Wilkes brothers, big argument, **handwriting tests are negative**, King says a **blue arrow** on Peter's chest, New guy says **PBW**. Had to dig up the body, found the gold, Huck made it a run for it, sees MJ's candle, feels relieved. But, King/duke catches up to him, King about to kill Huck, but he tells him that the dude that was holding him let him go and told him to run, King/duke argue with each other and blames each other for wanting to steal the gold, but recover later. For a few days, they don't

land, but they land later at **Pikesville, King sells Jim for \$40 bucks**, Huck thought about telling Miss Watson, but thought that he would **“go to hell for Jim,”** went to **Phelps Plantation** to hunt him down...

Other Points You Should Know

After **Harness's** troops tear down **Sherburn's** fence, he shows up and **starts laughing. Harness was “half a man”**

Judges don't hang murderers because they're in fear of being shot themselves

Everyone is a coward, so they follow Buck, then pulls gun, crowd disperses

Drunk man got into the ring at circus, wanted to ride, people almost got up, but he put on a show, part of circus

Stood on a horse, took off 17 suits

The Royal Nonesuch at **Court House**, 3 nights, **Garrick/Kean**, 50 cents admission. King naked/painted on stage

King/Duke are **Rapscallions. Henry VIII married everyday**, chopped head in morning, told a tale every night

Doomsday Book – 1001 tales the wives have told.

King's father is the Duke of Wellington.

King wanted to cause trouble in colonies, so dumped tea overboard and declaration of independence (Jim)

When the duke got drunk, nearsighted man can't tell him from a King. Jim's kids are **Liz** and **Johnny**

Liz died of **Scarlet Fever** at **age 4.**

Had to tie up Jim so he'll look like a runaway slave

Dressed him up in a **King Lear's outfit**, painted him blue, posted **“sick Arab”** sign, so people would back off

King looked like Leviticus himself after the new cloths. Said he was from St. Louis or Cincinnati.

King told **Tim** that **Huck** was **Adolphus, or his servant.** Also told him he was **Rev. Blodgett**, going to see a friend on farm up

the river. Brother George is married, Harvey is from Sheffield, England, Peter just died, himself headed for **Rio. George is a**

carpenter, Henry a minister, Peter a Tanner. Caught boat from Cincinnati, **The Susan Powell**

Crew got pissed cuz they're only going a few miles, had to pay a buck/mile/person. King/Duke plays Wilkes Brothers

Mary Jane is Red Haired

Two rested head on coffin, put on a good show. King “asked” family friends to come to a

supper the next day, but Robinson doesn't believe a word they say. In their money, **they were missing \$415**, put it in themselves.

Called money “Yaller Boys”.

Gives girls the money, everyone welcome at the funeral

King/Duke got a room, Huck stayed in the **Cubby**, was presented as the **King's Valley, or servant**

Huck ate something, tells Joanna that **King William IV goes to Sheffield for summer only because he wants to take a sea bath.**

But there's no sea, so the water comes in barrels. Said that he went to his church, sat in Uncle Harvey's row, but since

Harvey's the minister, he should have a pulpit, so got mixed up there. Said that **kings have 17 Preachers, for style**

Servants no holidays, didn't even go to church, he went to church cuz he was valley, not servant

Put his hand on a **dictionary** and said he wasn't lying.

Hid behind Mary Jane's gowns in Dukes room, hears them hide money, takes it. **Duke called King Capet**

Didn't want to rob girls of everything, but knew sale won't be valid cuz it's stolen property

Thought about running away and writing back to MJ about the money in the coffin. **Funeral took place in Parlor?**

Borrowed a melodeom for funeral. Reverend Hobson was at the funeral. During speech, **dog caught rat in cellar**

MJ could stay at **Mr. Lothrop's** for a few days, candle business. Huck told sisters that MJ went to help **Haner Proctor**

Asks them to tell Harvey that she went to **Arthrop's** to ask them to get over here and buy the house

Said crap about MJ going and that **Haner** got this special form of **mumps** that has measles and everything in one

Levi Bell was lawyer going to **Louseville**, sided with **Robinson** on the “fake Wilkes” case

Saw Spanish moss for the first time as they went up the river.

Sold Jim to Silas Phelps, \$200 buck reward

Caught duke putting up posters for another Royal Nonsech at Phelps Sawmill

Duke told him that **Abram G. Foster took Jim, lives 40 miles away** on the way to **Lafayette.**

When he arrives at plantation, hears a **spinning wheel**, surrounded by **dogs**. Negro disperses dogs, and then white woman with

kids greets Huck, **ID's herself at Aunt Salley**, and calls him Tom. Doesn't know who he is till Mr. Phelps appears

Goes to town to **“get his luggage,”** meets real Tom, **who thinks Huck is a ghost.** Tom agrees to help free Jim

Tom says he's **William Thompson**, of Ohio, looking for **Mr. Nichols.** Mr. Nichols lives 3 miles up road, stayed for dinner

Offends **Aunt Salley** by kissing her, but forgiven when he introduces himself as **Sid Sawyer**, came cuz Tom did.

Meal large enough for 7 families, subject of **King Cameleopard** comes up, tries to warn **Duke/King**, but too late. **They're**

tarred/feathered and ridden out of town on a rail. (This is vague, so looked for detail later). Tells story about boat blowing a

cylinder head, and when asked if he killed anyone, he says, no, killed a nigger. Jim is already free

Tom discovers Jim in a hut in back of house, wants something more elaborate than stealing the key, must dig him out

Negro in charge of Jim (Nat) is made to believe that witches are haunting him when Jim identifies Huck/Tom

Decide to dig tunnel, saw off leg of bed, use rope ladder, break out a window, etc. Huck steals sheet, shirt, case knives.

Must hurry because Mr. Phelps will learn that Jim didn't come from New Orleans and learn the truth.

Jim was supposed to record his experiences in blood on the white shirt. When digging with case knives took too long, **Tom**

uses picks and pretend they're case knives. Can't climb the lightning rod to the second story and uses the stairs as a

lightning rod. Steal pewter spoon, chopped up brass candlestick, 3 tin plates to assist in the great plan. **Nat** is supposed to

deliver the witch pie?, contain a rope ladder made of a sheet torn in strips. Makes Huck pay a dime for stolen Watermelon.

Aunt Salley starts missing stuff, Tom puts spoon in Uncle Silas's pocket, drops spoon in Salley's apron Pocket, Jim takes it out, Salley gets confused, starts forgetting her original number of sheets, shirts, spoons

Takes them 3 weeks to collect the rats, snakes, spiders, shirts, spoons, etc to free Jim in style. Rats/Snakes get loose and scares people, **Supposed to produce tears with an onion and to write on the shirt when the rats bite him.** Says he'll never be in prison again, for anything. **Tom thinks of writing anonymous letter telling them that a gang of killers in Indian Territory is going to steal Jim that night.** When Huck goes to basement to get Butter, Salley catches him, goes to Sitting Room, see 15 armed gunmen ready for the Indians. Slips away (Again, Vague, Look for stuff later). The three escape through the hole. **Tom gets caught on splinter, snakes, makes noise, bullets/dogs go after them. They get away, but Tom is shot in the leg** Tom wants to bandage it himself, Huck went for Doc, Jim hide until doctor is gone. Huck is discovered by Uncle Silas, hears how worried Salley is, they go back, tells some exaggerated stories, Salley doesn't lock door, but tells him don't run again. Stays in his room that night because of her kindness. Tom later wears the bullet around his neck, escaped through a tunnel. W/o Huck, Jim has to greet doctor, losses freedom again. Tom brought home next day on mattress, delirious, Jim chained again, but Doctor puts in a good word for him. When Tom came to, explained the entire plan, non-anonymous letter, all the fun. **Jim was set free 2 months ago by Miss Watson's will.** Whole plan was for adventure only, Aunt Polly comes back from St. Petersburg, identities of Tom as Sid and Huck as Tom revealed. Jim is outta chains, Tom gives him \$40 for being a patient prisoner. Dead man in the floating house is Pap. Tom wears bullet around neck, but Huck leaves because Aunt Salley wants to civilize him and he can't take that again

Internet

When Huck arrives at the Phelps plantation, he is greeted by a woman who thinks that he is Tom Sawyer, and the woman is Aunt Sally, Tom Sawyer's Aunt. Because Huck knows Tom so well, he is able to make up stories so that he can play the role of Tom Sawyer.

Huck then leaves towards town saying that he is getting his luggage, and he runs into the real Tom Sawyer. At first Tom thinks that Huck is a ghost, but Huck convinces him otherwise, and also convinces him to help him get Jim to freedom. When they arrive at the Phelps plantation, Tom convinces Aunt Sally that he is really Sid Sawyer.

The two find Jim chained up as a prisoner in a hut behind the house. Huck's plan to free him involves stealing the key, freeing Jim, and getting back on the raft, and go back down the river. However, Tom finds the plan too simple, and changes the plan to digging a hole underneath the hut, sawing off the leg of the bed that Jim is chained to, then using a rope ladder, having Jim break out the window.

Throughout their attempts to free Jim, they encounter many difficulties with Tom's elaborate plan, but eventually, the plan is ready to go. The previous night before the escape, Tom tells the Phelps that Indians are planning on stealing Jim. So the next day rolls around, Huck get's caught for stealing butter sent to the "setting-room" there he sees a bunch of farmers with guns who are waiting for the Indians to come, and then Huck slips away to join Tom and Jim. The three escape as planned, and while they are doing so, Tom makes some noise, and the men shoot at them, and Tom get's shot in the leg.

Huck makes up an elaborate story to the doctor who takes care of Tom. Then Aunt Sally catches Huck and punishes him by making him stay in his room. Meanwhile Jim is chained up again, and this time he has a guard to watch him. The next day, Tom is delirious from the gun shot wound, as soon as he gains consciousness, he tells Aunt Sally the whole story, and also tells them that Jim is supposed to be free because Miss Watson freed him in her will.

Finally Aunt Polly comes up from St Petersburg, and reveals the true identities of Tom and Huck. Then Jim is released from his chains, and Tom gives him 40 dollars for being a prisoner and finally in an exciting conclusion, well, I'll let the book finish it....

...But I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, Because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilize me and I can't stand it. I've been there before

Other Points You Should Know

Well, I don't have time to read the book, so I'm leaving this section out. Unless he gives a super easy test like he did last time, you won't get a 10 memorizing this, so lower your expectations...

Catcher in the rye

Holden Caulfield begins his story writing from a rest home to which he has been sent for therapy following a nervous breakdown. He refuses to talk about his early life, only mentioning that his brother D.B. is a Hollywood writer. He begins his story the day he left Pencey Prep, a famous school he attended in Agerstown, Pennsylvania.

Holden's career at Pencey Prep has been marred by his refusal to apply himself, and after failing four of his five subjects--he passed only English-- he has been forbidden to return to the school after the fall term. The Saturday before Christmas vacation begins, Holden stands on Thomsen Hill overlooking the football stadium, where Pencey plays its annual grudge match with Saxon Hall. Holden has no interest in the game, and had no plans to watch it at all--he is the manager of the fencing team, and went to New York for a meet, but he lost the team's equipment on the subway, forcing them to return early. Holden walks away from the game to go say good-bye to a former history teacher, Mr. Spencer, who is very old and ill with the flu.

Holden sprints to Spencer's house, but since he is a heavy smoker he has to stop to catch his breath several times. In Spencer's sickroom, the old teacher tries to lecture Holden about his academic failures, even forcing him to read a terrible essay he wrote about the ancient Egyptians. Not wanting to be lectured, Holden interrupts Spencer and leaves, returning to his dorm room before dinner.

Holden lives in Ossenburger Hall, named after a wealthy Pencey graduate who made a fortune in the cut-rate funeral home business. In his room, Holden sits and reads Isak Dinsens's *Out of Africa* while wearing his new hunting hat, but he is interrupted by Ackley, a pimply, scraggly student who lives next door. Ackley irritates Holden by cutting his toenails on Holden's floor and refusing to take Holden's hints that he should leave. When Holden's handsome popular roommate Stradlater enters, Ackley, who hates Stradlater, quickly returns to his own room.

Holden goes to the bathroom with Stradlater and talks to him while he shaves. Holden contrasts Stradlater's personal habits with Ackley's--Ackley is ugly and has poor dental hygiene, while Stradlater is attractive but uses unsanitary razors. The two joke around until Holden learns that Stradlater's date for the evening is his former girlfriend, Jane Gallagher. Holden is not pleased that Stradlater, one of the few sexually experienced boys at Pencey, is dating Jane, but cannot work up the courage to go say hello to Jane while she waits for Stradlater.

When Stradlater leaves, Holden is unable to find a moment's peace, as Ackley barges back in and sits around in Holden's room squeezing pimples until dinnertime.

Commentary

Holden Caulfield is the most important character in *The Catcher in the Rye*, and the most important function of these early chapters is to establish the basics of his personality. From the beginning of the novel, sixteen year-old Holden tells his story in an almost bitterly cynical voice--he refuses to discuss his early life, he says, because he is bored by "all that David Copperfield kind of crap." He gives us a hint that something catastrophic has happened in his life, acknowledging that he writes from a rest home to tell about "this madman stuff" that happened to him around the last Christmas, but he doesn't yet go into specifics. The particularities of his story are in keeping with his cynicism and his boredom--he has failed out of school, and leaves Spencer's house abruptly because he does not want to be lectured.

Beneath the surface of Holden's tone and behavior runs a more idealistic, emotional current. He begins the story of his last day at Pencey Prep by telling how he stood at the top of Thomsen Hill, preparing to leave the school and trying to feel "some kind of a good-by." He visits Spencer in Chapter 2 even though he failed Spencer's history class, and he seems to respond to Mrs. Spencer's kindness. What bothers him the most, in these chapters and throughout the book, is the hypocrisy and ugliness around him that diminish the innocence and beauty of the external world--the unpleasantness of Spencer's sick room, for instance, or Ackley's pimples and Stradlater's secret slovenliness.

Holden despises "phonies"--people whose surface behavior distorts or disguises their inner feelings. Even his brother D.B. incurs his displeasure by accepting a big paycheck to write for the movies; Holden considers the movies to be the phoniest of the phony, and emphasizes throughout the book the loathing he has for Hollywood.

Unfortunately Holden is surrounded by phonies in his circa-1950 prep school. Preening Ackley and self-absorbed Stradlater act as his immediate contrasts. But despite their flaws, he acts with basic kindness toward them, agreeing to write Stradlater's English composition for him in Chapter 4 even though Stradlater is out with Jane Gallagher, a girl Holden seems to care for very deeply. The pressure of adolescent sexuality--an important theme throughout *The Catcher in the Rye*--makes itself felt here for the first time: Holden's greatest worry is that Stradlater will make sexual advances toward Jane.

Salinger therefore seems to treat his narrator as more than simply a portrait of a cynical 1950s rich kid at an impersonal and pressure-filled boarding school. Even in these early chapters, Holden connects with life on a very idealistic level; he seems to feel its flaws so deeply that he tries to shield himself with a cynical veneer. *The Catcher in the Rye* is in many ways a book about the betrayal of innocence by the modern world; despite his bitter tone, Holden is an innocent searching desperately for a way to connect with the world around him that will not cause him pain.

Holden's new hunting hat, with its funny ear flaps, becomes very important to him; throughout the novel, it serves as a kind of protective device, which Holden uses for warmth and comfort. When he wears it, he always claims not to care what people think about his appearance, which might be a source of self-conscious embarrassment for Holden--he is extremely tall for his age, very thin, and though he is only sixteen he has a great deal of gray hair.

After a dry and unappetizing steak dinner in the dining hall, [Holden](#) gets in a snowball fight with some of the other Pencey boys. He and his friend Mal Brossard decide to take a bus into Agerstown to see a movie--though Holden hates movies--and Holden convinces Mal to let [Ackley](#) go with them.

After the movie, Mal goes off to look for a bridge game, and Ackley sits on Holden's bed squeezing pimples and making up stories about a girl he claims to have had sex with the summer before. Holden finally gets him to leave by beginning to work on the English assignment for [Stradlater](#), which he writes about a baseball glove his brother [Allie](#) owned. Allie wrote poems in green ink all over the glove.

Allie died several years ago, on July 18, 1946, of leukemia. Though Allie was two years younger than Holden, Holden says that Allie was the most intelligent member of his family. Holden describes Allie briefly, mentioning his bright red hair; the night Allie died, Holden slept in the garage and broke all the windows with his bare hands. After he finishes the composition for Stradlater, he sits staring out the window.

Stradlater returns soon, and is visibly annoyed when he reads the composition. Holden tears the composition up and throws it away angrily. He asks Stradlater about his date with [Jane](#), and when Stradlater casually refuses to tell Holden about his physical relationship with Jane, Holden attacks him. Stradlater pins Holden to the floor, insults him, and bloodies his nose. Holden goes into Ackley's room to sleep.

Holden stares out Ackley's window, and finally decides to leave the school. His last day there would be Wednesday anyway, so he resolves to go to New York for a few days in secret, staying in a hotel to let his parents digest the news of his expulsion before going home to their Manhattan apartment. He packs his bags, dons his hunting hat, and begins to cry. Heading into the hallway, he yells "*Sleep tight, ya morons!*" to the boys on his floor, then steps outside and leaves Pencey forever.

Commentary

Holden's kindness to Ackley in Chapter 5, when he convinces Mal Brossard to let the unpopular Ackley come to the movies with them, comes almost as a surprise after the evident dislike Holden felt for Ackley in the previous section. Though Holden almost never discusses this and may be unaware of it, his innocent longing for a more beautiful world carries with it a powerful moral conscience. Holden continues to complain about Ackley, but the sympathy he feels for his next-door neighbor is evident.

The most important revelation in this section also comes in Chapter 5, when Holden writes the composition for Stradlater and reveals that his brother Allie died of leukemia several years ago. Holden idealizes Allie, praising his intelligence and sensitivity--the poem-covered baseball glove is a perfect emblem for both--but remaining relatively silent about his emotional reaction to Allie's death. He discusses, almost in passing, his behavior, saying that he slept in the garage on the night of Allie's death and broke all the windows with his bare hands, "just for the hell of it." He tried to break the car windows as well, but could not because his hand was already fractured from smashing the garage windows. Throughout the novel, it becomes increasingly clear that Allie's death was one of the most traumatic experiences of Holden's life, and may play a major role in his current psychological breakdown--the cynicism with which Holden avoids expressing his feelings may result from Allie's death.

Holden seems increasingly pressurized throughout this section as he moves toward leaving school, and Salinger manipulates the details of Holden's physical environment to match this internal pressure. He cannot get a moment alone; Ackley continues to barge in with his made-up sex stories, and when Holden finally writes the very personal composition, Stradlater criticizes it, then taunts Holden about Jane. When Holden finally snaps and attacks his roommate, Stradlater easily overpowers him, and when he tries to seek refuge in Ackley's room, Ackley is so unpleasant that Holden cannot relax. He leaves abruptly, as though trying to escape the torment of his environment; what Holden does not yet realize is that he carries his torment with him, inside himself.

[Holden](#) walks the whole way to the train station and catches a late train to New York. At Trenton, a woman gets on and sits next to him; she turns out to be the mother of his classmate, Ernest Morrow. Holden dislikes Ernest immensely, but makes up extravagant lies about him to his mother, claiming that he is the most popular boy on campus and was nearly elected class president. When she asks why he is leaving Pencey early, Holden claims to be returning to New York for a brain tumor operation.

At Penn Station, Holden wants to call someone, but cannot think of anyone to call--his brother [D.B.](#) is in Hollywood, his sister [Phoebe](#) is young and probably asleep, he doesn't feel like calling [Jane Gallagher](#), and another girl, [Sally Hayes](#), has a mother who hates him. So Holden takes a cab to the Edmont Hotel; he tries to make conversation with the driver, asking him where the ducks in the Central Park duck pond go in the winter, but the driver is uninterested. In his room at the Edmont, he looks out across the hotel courtyard into the lighted windows on the other side, and watches people's bizarre sex lives: one man dresses in women's clothing, and a couple in a different room repeatedly spit water onto one another. Holden begins to feel aroused, so he calls Faith Cavendish, a promiscuous girl recommended to him by a boy he met at a party, and tries to make a date with her. She refuses, claiming she needs her beauty sleep. Holden changes shirts, and goes downstairs to the Lavender Room, the Edmont's nightclub.

He takes a table, and tries to order a cocktail; because of his height and his gray hair, he is often able to order alcohol, but in this case the waiter refuses. He flirts and dances with three women on a trip from Seattle, but they laugh at him and depress him by being obsessed with movie stars. When Holden lies to one of them about having just seen Gary Cooper, she tells the other two that *she* caught a glimpse of Gary Cooper as well. Holden pays for their drinks, then leaves the Lavender Room.

Commentary

The Catcher in the Rye is a chronicle of Holden Caulfield's nervous breakdown, but Holden never directly comments on it. At no point in the story does he even say directly that he is *having* a nervous breakdown; he simply describes his increasingly desperate behavior without much explanation. Salinger cleverly manipulates Holden's [narrative](#) to signal to the reader that there is more to the story than what Holden admits or describes.

In the previous sections, Holden has exhibited a number of behaviors that might indicate a troubled mind: running through the snow to Spencer's house, writing Stradlater's English composition about Allie's baseball glove, attacking Stradlater for joking about Jane, leaving his dorm forever in the middle of the night, and yelling an insult down the hallway on his way out. In this section, Holden's frantic loneliness and constant lying further the implication that he is not well mentally or emotionally.

As soon as he gets off the train in New York in Chapter 9, Holden wants to call someone, and seems especially to want to call Jane but is apparently too nervous (he suspiciously claims to not "feel like it" and runs through a long list of people he could contact instead). This seems particularly strange given Holden's cynicism and evident *dislike* for most people--in Chapter 8, for instance, he describes enjoying the solitude of late night train rides. His desire for human contact becomes even more intense as the section progresses: he begins to feel sexually aroused and tries to make a date with a stranger whose number he was given at a party, a then goes to a nightclub to flirt with older women.

Holden's constant lying, in this section and throughout the novel, is a mark of immaturity and imbalance. As soon as he meets Mrs. Morrow on the train, Holden begins telling ridiculous lies, claiming to be named Rudolph Schmidt and to be going to New York for a brain tumor operation. He feels guilty for lying, but the only way he can stop is to stop talking altogether; when he meets the women from Seattle in the Lavender Room, he tells more lies about having seen Gary Cooper in the nightclub.

As he tells his story, Holden never seems too concerned about his own behavior or that of those around him; he often seems angry, but rarely discusses his feelings. By combining what we know about Holden from his narration with his actions in the story, we can piece together the desperation, the pressure, and the trauma he endures during this difficult time in his life.

As he walks out to the lobby, [Holden](#) reminisces about [Jane](#). Her family's summer home in Maine was next door to his family's; he met Jane after his mother confronted her mother about a Doberman pinscher that frequently relieved itself on the Caulfields' lawn. Holden and Jane became close-- Jane was the only person to whom Holden ever showed Allie's baseball glove. Their physical relationship was mild, but they used to hold hands constantly. One day Jane's alcoholic stepfather came out to the porch where Holden and Jane were playing checkers, and asked Jane for cigarettes; Jane refused to answer him, and when he left, she began to cry. Holden held her, kissing her face and comforting her. The thought of Jane with Stradlater makes Holden sick.

Holden takes a cab to a Greenwich Village nightclub called Ernie's, a spot he used to frequent with [D.B.](#) His cab driver is named Horwitz, and Holden takes a liking to him. But when Holden tries to ask him about the ducks in the Central Park pond, Horwitz unexpectedly becomes angry with him.

At Ernie's, Holden listens to Ernie play the piano, but is unimpressed. He takes a table, drinks Scotch and soda, and listens to the conversations around him, which he finds depressing and phony. He encounters an obnoxious girl named Lillian Simmons, whom D.B. used to date, and is forced to leave the nightclub to get away from her.

He walks the forty-one blocks back to the hotel, thinking about how he feels like a coward. He takes the elevator up to his room. The elevator operator offers to send him a prostitute for five dollars, and Holden, depressed and flustered, accepts. The prostitute who arrives is a cynical young girl with a high voice, and Holden becomes even more flustered--especially when she takes off her dress. She sits on his lap and tries to seduce him, but he is extremely nervous and tells her he is unable to have sex because he is recovering from an operation on his "clavichord." He finally pays her the five dollars and asks her to leave. She claims the price is ten, but he refuses to pay her more, and she leaves in a huff.

Commentary

Jane and the prostitute bookend this section, and their characters make a very obvious contrast. Holden's memories of Jane continue to imbue her with importance; she seems to be one of the only people with whom Holden feels comfortable and safe. The prostitute is nearly Jane's opposite--crude, uncaring, and carnal.

While Holden's relationship with Jane was not very physical, the prostitute offers just physicality. In this section, Jane appears only in Holden's memory, but the prostitute is very physical and very real, to the point that Holden becomes flustered and is unable to desire her sexually. The tension between Holden's growing sexuality and his fragile innocence grows much stronger throughout this section--he wants to live in a beautiful world, but the pressure of his sexuality compels him, through encounters with people like the elevator operator and the prostitute, closer and closer to the ugliness around him.

The scene at Ernie's reemphasizes Holden's loneliness; his intense longing for human company compels him to take a cab ride to Greenwich Village in the middle of the night to find it. This section also reemphasizes the pain he feels when he encounters hypocrisy and phoniness, which contrast his fundamental sympathy and kindness. Ernie is a snob, his playing is "show-offy," and Holden bitterly thinks that if he were a pianist, he'd "play it in the goddam closet." Ernie's mock-humble bow at the end of the performance disgusts him. But Holden feels strangely sorry for Ernie afterwards, thinking that "it isn't all his fault." His pity makes Holden feel even more disgusted and depressed.

Holden's preoccupation with the ducks in the Central Park duck pond--he has now asked two cab drivers where the ducks go

in the winter—seems somewhat confusing at this point in the novel. For now, it simply seems to indicate the heightened awareness Holden has for his surroundings, and his frustrating inability to communicate that awareness to those around him. His pestering the cab drivers also sticks out as an eccentric behavior pattern testifying to his mental imbalance.

Holden goes to bed, and though he feels like praying, he is an atheist and cannot manage to do it. Suddenly, there is a knock at his door. He answers in his pajamas, and discovers the burly elevator operator Maurice and Sunny, the prostitute, coming to collect the extra five dollars Sunny demanded when Holden threw her out. Holden tries to refuse to pay, but Maurice pins him against a wall, and Sunny takes the money from his wallet. Maurice snaps his finger into Holden's groin, and Holden starts to insult him; Maurice slugs Holden in the stomach, and leaves him crumpled on the floor. Holden imagines himself as a movie character taking his revenge on Maurice, but finally manages to get in bed and go to sleep.

The next morning, he calls **Sally Hayes** and makes a date with her for later that afternoon. He checks out of the hotel, leaves his bags in a locker at Grand Central Station, and worries about losing money--though his father is a wealthy corporation lawyer, he frequently gets angry when Holden loses things. Holden goes to eat breakfast in a little sandwich bar, and meets two nuns who are moving to Manhattan to teach in a school. Holden talks to one of them about *Romeo and Juliet*, and forces them to take ten dollars as a charitable contribution.

After breakfast, he goes for a walk down Broadway and buys a record called "Little Shirley Beans" for his sister **Phoebe**. He thinks about Phoebe, whom he considers to be a wonderful girl--though only ten, she always understands what Holden means when he talks to her. He sees a little boy walking down the street singing "If a body catch a body coming through the rye," which cheers him up. He buys theater tickets for his date with Sally, for a show called *I Know My Love*, starring the Lunts.

Holden wants to see Phoebe, and he remembers that she often ice-skates in the park on Sundays, so he goes to look for her. On the way, he stops at a phone booth and tries to call Jane, but she isn't home, so he goes on the park. There, he meets a girl who knows Phoebe; she tells him that Phoebe is on a school trip to the Museum of Natural History, but then remembers that the trip was Saturday, and today is Sunday. Nevertheless, Holden walks to the museum and thinks about his own class trips there--every time he went, he felt that he had changed but the museum had stayed exactly the same.

At two o'clock, he goes to meet Sally at the Biltmore; she is late, but looks very attractive, so he immediately forgives her tardiness. At the play she irritates him by flirting with a pretentious Andover boy between acts, but he agrees to take her ice-skating at Radio City Music Hall after the show. When they take a break from skating and sit at a table indoors, Holden suddenly snaps, and begins proposing wild ideas to Sally about how they should run away together and escape from society, living in a cabin. He becomes more and more agitated, and Sally begins to cry. Holden begins to apologize, but Sally is upset and angry with him, and finally he leaves without her.

Commentary

Things go from bad to worse for Holden in these chapters, from his nightmarish run-in with Sunny and Maurice in Chapter 14, to his fiasco with Sally in Chapter 17, the surest sign yet that Holden is heading toward a nervous breakdown. Throughout his tirade at the table by the skating rink, Sally asks Holden to stop yelling, and he claims not to have *been* yelling, indicating that he is unaware of his own extreme agitation. His attempt to convince a shallow socialite like Sally to run away with him to live in a cabin in the wilderness shows his increasing distance from reality--or at least his inability to deal with the reality in which he finds himself.

Though Holden admits his behavior is odd by saying, "I swear to God I'm a madman," he doesn't do much to explain the significance of his behavior. Salinger continues to drop clues--like Sally's requests for Holden to stop yelling--to signal the reader that the story behind Holden's narration is darker and more troubling than it might at first appear. His mood swings with Sally serve a similar purpose: when he first sees her, he is convinced he is in love with her, then alternates between annoyance and rapturous passion for the duration of their date, until he finally tells her that she gives him "a royal pain in the ass." Sally's coldness and lack of compassion for Holden's obviously unstable condition are reflective of the greater world's lack of concern about his plight; except for Jane and Phoebe, no one in Holden's world seems to care how he feels as long as he observes social norms. Only when his actions violate those norms does anyone notice his disturbed state, and even then their usual response, like Sally's, is to criticize him.

In many ways, Holden is an innocent who feels deeply threatened by the cynical ugliness of the world around him; he stands on the border between childhood and adulthood, and from his vantage point the adult world looks very harsh and grim. It is appropriate, then, that throughout this section Holden is fascinated and cheered by children. He is more eager than ever to see his beloved sister Phoebe, buying her the "Little Shirley Beans" record, and finds himself temporarily cheered by the little boy singing "If a body catch a body coming through the rye." This reference to the title of the novel is impossible to ignore, but like Holden's interest in the Central Park duck pond, it remains unexplained through this part of the novel.

After leaving the skating rink, **Holden** goes to a drugstore and has a Swiss cheese sandwich and a malted milk. He thinks about calling **Jane** again, but remembers a time she dated a boy Holden thought was a show-off; Jane said he had an inferiority complex, and Holden decides that girls always use that excuse to date arrogant boys. Finally he calls Jane again, but no one answers. He calls a boy named **Carl Luce**, whom he used to know at the Whooton School, and Luce agrees to go out for drinks with him later that

night.

Holden goes to see a movie at Radio City, which he finds depressing, then begins walking to the Wicker Bar, where he is supposed to meet Luce. The movie was about the war, so Holden thinks about the army, and decides he could never be in the army unless he thought he would be killed by an atomic bomb.

At the Wicker Bar, located in the posh Seton Hotel, Holden thinks about Luce. Luce is three years older than Holden, and at the Whooton School, Luce used to tell the younger boys about sex. Holden thinks he is effeminate and a phony, but claims to find him amusing.

Luce, now a student at Columbia, arrives, and treats Holden coldly--Holden aggressively asks him about sex, and claims to find his coldness amusing. When Luce leaves, Holden stays at the bar and gets very drunk. He tries to make a date with the singer, an attractive woman named Valencia, then tries to make a date with the hat-check girl.

He goes outside and starts walking, but the water he splashed in his hair while trying to sober up in the bathroom freezes. With icicles in his hair, he worries about catching pneumonia, and imagines his funeral. He missed [Allie](#)'s funeral, he says, because he was in the hospital after breaking the garage windows with his bare hands. He walks to the frozen duck pond in the park, and remembers going to Allie's grave with his parents. He becomes disgusted and upset; the idea of placing flowers on the grass covering the stomachs of the dead disturbs him.

Holden wants to talk to [Phoebe](#), so he decides to risk going home. He expects his parents to be asleep, allowing him to sneak in and talk to Phoebe and then leave without being heard. He leaves the park and begins the long walk home.

Commentary

Holden's off-kilter ramblings about being killed by an atom bomb in Chapter 18 sound like the bravado of a frightened, threatened boy. Bravado as a characteristic of sixteen year-old masculinity has been important throughout the novel; Holden worries that he is a coward, screams at Maurice when he steals Holden's five dollars, and imagines himself as a vengeful movie character seeking justice through extreme force. But bravado is most important in this section, because the introduction of the effeminate Carl Luce causes Holden to exhibit a subtle vein of homophobia that will be important later in the novel. Like many adolescent boys, Holden is uncomfortable with sexuality, and especially uncomfortable with the idea of homosexuality. Luce, though he seems to prefer women, also seems slightly "flitty" to Holden, and brings out a kind of unpleasant lewdness in Holden's behavior.

Holden aggressively questions Luce about sex, and seems to feel titillated throughout their conversation. When Luce leaves, however, Holden seems to feel depressed and uncomfortable: he gets extremely drunk and acts utterly unhinged, hits on Valencia and the hat-check girl, and senselessly breaks into tears before walking to the duck pond in the freezing cold.

His thoughts as he walks to the pond reveal what may lie at the root of his manic behavior; he is upset and miserable at the memory of Allie's death. His memory of leaving flowers on Allie's grave leads him to another one of his defensive understatements--he was obviously left shaken by the trips to the cemetery, but all he says in his narration is that he used to go with his parents, but he stopped accompanying them because he "certainly didn't enjoy seeing him in that crazy cemetery."

The conjunction of Allie's memory with the image of the duck pond helps to explain Holden's preoccupation with the pond, and establishes it as one of *The Catcher in the Rye*'s key [metaphors](#). Allie is gone forever, and Holden does not believe in afterlife--his atheism was mentioned in Chapter 14. Now Holden is troubled by unexplained disappearances--he is anxious to know where the ducks have gone since he feels extremely threatened by the idea that people and things just *vanish*, as Allie did.

The pond itself becomes a minor metaphor for the world as Holden sees it. It is "partly frozen and partly not frozen," just as Holden's world is partly made ugly by its hypocrisy and partly made moving by his own innocence; the pond is in transition between two states, just as Holden is in transition between childhood and adulthood.

[Holden](#) rides up to his family's apartment in the elevator; luckily for him, the regular elevator operator is gone, and the new man does not recognize Holden. He is able to convince the man that he wants to visit the Dicksteins, who live across the hall from the Caulfields.

Holden sneaks in and goes to [Phoebe](#)'s room, but Phoebe isn't there--Holden remembers that she likes to sleep in [D.B.](#)'s room when D.B. is in Hollywood. Holden tiptoes to D.B.'s room, where he finds Phoebe sleeping peacefully. He notices that children always look peaceful when they are asleep, unlike adults. He watches Phoebe sleep, and reads through her schoolbooks--she has signed her name "Phoebe Weatherfield Caulfield," even though her middle name is Josephine.

He finally wakes Phoebe, and they talk for awhile about Phoebe's school play. Before very long, she realizes he must have been kicked out of school, and repeats over and over again that their father will *kill* him. Holden tries to explain to her why he fails his classes; he tells her all the things he hates about school, and she accuses him of hating *everything*. He refutes her claim, and she challenges him to name one thing he likes. He tries, but is preoccupied thinking about the nuns he met at breakfast, and about James Castle, a boy he knew at the Elkton Hills School who jumped to his death out a window while being tormented by other boys.

He tells her that he likes [Allie](#), and she reminds him angrily that Allie is dead. She asks what he wants to do with his life, and his only answer is to mention the song, "If a body catch a body comin' through the rye." He says he'd like to stand at the edge of a cliff by an enormous field of rye, and catch the children playing in the field when they come too close to falling off the cliff.

Holden leaves Phoebe's room for a moment to call [Mr. Antolini](#), an English teacher he had at Elkton Hills. Mr. Antolini

invites Holden to stay the night at his house, and Holden goes back into Phoebe's room and asks her to dance. Suddenly, they hear the front door open--their parents have come home from their dinner party. His mother comes in to tuck Phoebe in, and Holden hides in the closet until she leaves. Then he tells Phoebe good-bye, and lets her know of his plan to leave New York and move out west alone. She loans him some money, and he leaves for Mr. Antolini's.

Commentary

This section highlights Holden's traumatic confrontation with his brother's death, his fascination with the uncorrupted innocence of childhood, and his emotional instability. The scene in which Holden watches Phoebe sleep and reads through her notebooks is one of the most famous in the book, one of the few moments of respite Holden finds from the brutality of the outside world. As he says, adults "look lousy" when sleeping, but kids "look all right."

After Phoebe wakes up, however, things become more difficult. Her insistence in Chapter 22 that Holden tell her something he likes sends his mind skittering away from the question, and he remembers the violent death of Jimmy Castle, who committed suicide in a turtleneck he borrowed from Holden. After remembering the death of this young boy, the only thing Holden can think to tell Phoebe he likes is "Allie." His mind is increasingly preoccupied with childhood and childhood death; he thinks to call Mr. Antolini when he remembers the teacher picking up Jimmy Castle's broken body in his coat. He grows increasingly emotional and unstable; Phoebe's unaffected kindness when she loans him her Christmas money causes him to break into tears.

One of the most important passages in the novel comes when Holden tells Phoebe he would like to be the catcher in the rye, saving little children from falling off the cliff. This passage elucidates the novel's [metaphoric](#) title. The rye field is a symbol of childhood--the rye is so high that the children cannot see over it, just as children are unable to see beyond the borders of their childhood. Standing on the precipice that separates the rye field of childhood from the cliff of adulthood, Holden wants to protect childhood innocence from the fall into disillusionment that necessarily accompanies adulthood. His innocence in jeopardy, trapped between states, Holden wants to be a "catcher in the rye," a savior of the innocence missing in the world around him, a world that has let him fall over the cliff into adulthood alone.

[Holden](#) finds [Mr. Antolini](#) and his wife in their upscale Sutton Place apartment having just wrapped up a dinner party; glasses and dishes are everywhere. Mrs. Antolini brings coffee for Holden and Mr. Antolini, then goes to bed.

Holden respects Mr. Antolini's intelligence, and tells him about failing out of Pencey Prep. Mr. Antolini at first seems amused by Holden's latest school fiasco, but then begins to talk to him seriously, telling Holden that he seems primed for a major fall. He tells Holden that if he applies himself in school he will learn that many men and women have been similarly disturbed and troubled by the human condition, and will also learn a great deal about his own mind. Holden seems interested in what Mr. Antolini has to say, but he is exhausted; finally, he is unable to suppress a yawn, and Mr. Antolini makes up the couch and lets Holden go to sleep.

Suddenly, Holden wakes up; he feels Mr. Antolini's hand stroking his head. Mr. Antolini claims it was nothing, but Holden believes Mr. Antolini is making a homosexual advance at him, and hurries out of the apartment. He goes to Grand Central Station, and spends the night sleeping on a bench in the waiting room.

The next day, Holden walks up and down Fifth Avenue, watching the children and feeling more and more nervous and overwhelmed. He worries that he will disappear every time he crosses a street, and begins talking to [Allie](#), pleading with his dead brother not to let him disappear. He decides to leave New York, hitchhike west, and never go home or to school again.

He goes to [Phoebe's](#) school and writes her a note telling her to meet him at the Museum of Natural History so he can return the money he borrowed. He wanders around Phoebe's school--his old school as well-- and becomes even more depressed when he finds profanity scrawled on the walls.

When Phoebe meets him at the museum, she is carrying a suitcase; she begs Holden to take her with him. He feels dizzy and worries that he will pass out. He tells her she cannot possibly go with him, and feels even closer to fainting. Holden tells her he won't go away, and asks her to go back to school. She angrily refuses, and he offers to take her to the zoo.

They walk to the park, Holden on one side of the street, Phoebe following angrily on the other, until they come to the merry-go-round. Holden convinces Phoebe to ride it, and he sits on a park bench, watching her go around and around, feeling so suddenly happy he thinks he might cry.

Holden concludes his story by refusing to tell about what happened after that, though he does say that he went home, got sick, and was sent out to the rest home from which he tells this story to recuperate from his breakdown. He says he is supposed to go to a new school in the fall, and that he thinks he will apply himself there, but doesn't feel like talking about it. He wishes he wouldn't have talked about it so much in the first place, even to [D.B.](#), who often comes out to visit him--talking about it makes him miss all the people in his life.

Commentary

Mr. Antolini at first seems to offer Holden his only hope of making a sympathetic connection with an adult, a way to interact with the world without losing his innocence. He respects his teacher's intelligence, and seems legitimately interested in Mr. Antolini's lecture about finding "what size mind you have"--it is important that Holden consistently refers to his old teacher as "Mr.

Antolini," rather with his usual habit of referring to people as "old." When he visits Spencer at the beginning of the book, for instance, he only calls him "old Spencer" or "Spencer"; he respects Mr. Antolini and feels partially comforted by his presence.

A subtle menacing undercurrent runs through Holden's time at the Antolini's: The unwashed glasses from the dinner party, Mrs. Antolini's unattractive appearance without her make-up, and Mr. Antolini's excessive drinking all contribute to a feeling that things there are not quite right for Holden. And when Holden wakes to find Mr. Antolini stroking his head, he snaps--the pressure of his awakening sexuality and the latent homophobia he exhibited around Carl Luce combine with his unstable condition to initiate his nervous breakdown. He leaves Mr. Antolini's awkwardly and hastily, spends the night on a bench in Grand Central Station, and wonders the streets of New York looking at children and praying to Allie to keep him from disappearing, as the ducks disappeared, and as Allie himself disappeared.

Of course, the question of whether Mr. Antolini really made a homosexual advance on Holden is much more complicated than Holden implies. Holden might be right, but it seems far more likely that Mr. Antolini's gesture was simply a tipsy sign of affection for a student in obvious pain, a student in whom Mr. Antolini sensed something fragile and genuine. But to Holden's pressurized mind, only one possible interpretation can explain his teacher's behavior, and with that rash interpretation, all of Holden's trust and faith in Mr. Antolini vanish.

The scenes with Phoebe toward the end of Holden's story, as he tries to leave New York and hitchhike west, give him a chance to act as a kind of "catcher in the rye" even in the midst of his psychological meltdown. When Phoebe tries to go with him, Holden implicitly realizes that the trip west would destroy Phoebe's innocence, and that his erratic behavior would prove harmful to her. He makes the decision to stay to comfort Phoebe, to keep her from pain, and to keep her from falling over the cliff by the rye field before her time.

After Holden makes this decision and Phoebe forgives him, she gives Holden the hunter's hat back, returning to him some of the protection he seems to have lost. The [narrative's](#) final scene--in which Holden watches Phoebe go around and around on the carousel--finds Holden deliriously happy, as he participates in a scene of childhood joy and innocence, uncorrupted by any of the hypocrisy and ugliness of the adult world.

Chapter 26, Holden's concluding refusal to talk any more about his story, nevertheless manages to fill in some key missing details--he went home, was sent to a rest home to recover from the breakdown, is in psychotherapy, and will go to a new school in the fall. Throughout this chapter, as throughout the book, Holden maintains his defensively cynical tone, raising the question of whether he has found any hope in the world, or whether the novel's ending is tragic. He says he plans to apply himself in school next year, and sounds contemplative, but is unable to express his feelings without reticence, saying that he wishes he wouldn't have told so many people his story.

Most important, however, is his admission that the story makes him miss all the people in his story, even Ackley and Stradlater. Holden has not lost the repressed innocence that makes his story so remarkable, and in missing--even involuntarily missing--these painful figures from his past, Holden may very well be making an admission of hope for the future.

Death of a Salesman

[Willy Loman](#), a sixty-three year old traveling salesman, returns home early from a trip, apparently exhausted. His wife, [Linda](#), gets out of bed to greet him. She asks if he had another automobile accident. Irritated, he says nothing happened. Willy says he kept falling into a trance while driving. Linda urges him to ask his employer to give him a non-traveling job in New York City.

Willy's two adult sons, [Biff](#) and [Happy](#), are visiting. Before he left that morning, Willy criticized Biff for working at manual labor on a farm. The argument that ensued was left unresolved. Willy says his thirty- four year-old son is a lazy bum. Shortly thereafter, he declares that Biff is anything but lazy. Willy's habit of contradicting himself becomes quickly apparent in his conversation with Linda.

Willy's loud rambling wakes his sons. They speculate that he had another accident. Linda returns to bed while Willy gets something to eat. Happy and Biff reminisce about the good old days when they were young. Although Happy is younger than Biff, he is more confident. Biff seems worn. Happy is worried that Willy talks to himself. Most of the time, he talks to Biff about his disappointment in Biff's unsteadiness. Biff hopped from job to job after high school. He is disappointed in himself. Happy has a steady job, but the rat race does not satisfy him. He and Biff fantasize about going West together. However, Happy still longs to become an important executive. He often sleeps with the girlfriends and fiancées of his superiors, and he often takes bribes.

Biff plans to ask [Bill Oliver](#), an old employer, for a business loan. He says that Oliver though highly of him and offered to help him anytime. He wonders if Oliver ever knew that he stole a carton of basketballs. Happy encourages him, saying that Biff is "well liked." They are disgusted to hear Willy talking to himself downstairs. They try to go to sleep.

Willy is lost in his memories. Suddenly, the memories come alive. Young Biff and Happy wash their father's car because he has just returned from a trip. Biff informs him that he "borrowed" a football from the locker room to practice. Willy laughs confidentially. Happy tries to get his father's attention, but Willy's preference for Biff is obvious. Willy whispers that he will soon open a bigger business than Uncle [Charley](#) because Charley is not as "well-liked" as he is.

Charley's son, [Bernard](#), arrives to beg Biff to study math with him. Biff is close to failing math, which would prevent him from graduating. Willy orders Biff to study. Biff distracts him by showing him that he printed the insignia of the University of Virginia on his sneakers, impressing Willy. Bernard states that the sneakers do not mean Biff will not fail math. After Bernard leaves, Willy asked if Bernard is liked. The boys reply that he is, but he is not "well liked." Willy tells them that Bernard might make good grades, but Happy and Biff will be more successful in business because they are "well liked."

Willy brags to Linda that he grossed seven hundred in sales. Linda quickly figures his commission at over two hundred dollars. Willy hedges his estimation. Under questioning, he admits he grossed two hundred dollars. The commission is not phenomenal, but it is adequate. Willy moans that people do not seem to like him, so he cannot move ahead. Linda tells him that he is successful enough. Willy says he talks too much and jokes too much. Charley earns respect because he is a man of few words. Willy thinks people laugh at him for being too fat. He once punched a man for making a joke of it. As Linda assures him that he is the handsomest man ever, Willy replies that she is his best friend in the world. As he tells her that he misses her terribly when he is on the road, The Woman's laughter sounds from the darkness.

Commentary

It is important to note that much of the play's action takes place in Willy's home. In the past, the home was located in a semi-rural area outside New York City. There was space within the neighborhood for expansion. When Willy and Linda purchased it, it represented the expression of Willy's hopes for the future. In the present, the house is hemmed in by apartment buildings on all sides, and sunlight barely reaches into their yard. It has come to represent the reduction of Willy's hopes. Just as the house is besieged by apartment buildings, Willy's ego is besieged by doubts and mounting evidence that he will not enjoy the fame and fortune promised by the American dream.

In the past, the home was the site of hopeful departure and triumphant return. Willy would leave each week full of hopes that he would make a killing and bring back a big paycheck. He returned to a happy home with a loving wife and worshipful sons. He whispered his hopes to open his own business in the eager ears of Biff and Happy. He returned with surprise gifts to their delight. When the play opens, Willy returns from a business trip he could not even complete. The house is not full of eagerly waiting family members. In other words, he returns home as a defeated man. Moreover, when he set out in the morning, he left behind an unresolved argument with Biff. The home has become the site of frustrated hopes and dreams.

Willy's reality profoundly conflicts with his hopes. Throughout his life, he has constructed elaborate fantasies to deny the mounting evidence of his failure to fulfill his hopes. By the time the play opens, Willy suffers from a crippling self-delusion. His consciousness is split so soundly that he cannot even maintain a consistent fantasy. In one moment, he calls Biff a lazy bum. In the next moment, he says that Biff is anything but lazy. Naming Biff as a lazy bum deflects Linda's criticism of Willy's harangue against Biff's lack of material success. Saying that Biff is not lazy allows Willy to hold onto the hope that Biff will fulfill his hopes. Depending on the psychological need of the moment, Willy changes his interpretation of reality.

One of the most interesting aspects of *Death of a Salesman* is its fluid treatment of time; past and present flow into one another. It is important to remember that the idyllic past Willy recalls is a past imagined by Willy. Therefore, it is not possible to take it entirely as truth. In many ways, the idyllic past functions as an escape from the present reality. It could be heavily influenced by Willy's habit of constructing elaborate fantasies to cope with facts he wishes to deny.

The idyllic past to which Willy retreats demonstrates that he cannot completely deny his real situation. He retreats to it in order to escape from the present, but he examines it in order to find the mistake he made that frustrated his hopes for fame and fortune. Willy often treats his life as a story to be edited and re-written. He also treats it as a story that has gone wrong. He tries to examine the prolonged [plot](#) of his life to discover the reason that led the story astray. He wants to know what happened to his all-American family. In the past his sons respected and adored him. His family had a promising future.

It is important to examine the evolution of Willy's relationship with his family because the family is one of the most prominent elements of the American dream. In the present, his relationship with his family is fraught with tension. In his memories, his family was happy and secure. If we examine Willy's memories of the past, it becomes clear that it was not as idyllic as it seems on the surface. Even Willy's fantasy of his past reveals his split consciousness. No matter how much he wants to remember it as an all-American paradise, Willy cannot completely erase the evidence that it was not.

Willy wants to remember Biff as the bright hope for the future. However, in the midst of his memories, we find that Willy did nothing to discourage Biff's thieving habit. In fact, he subtly encouraged it by laughing indulgently at Biff's theft of the football. As an adult, Biff has never held a steady job because he is continually stealing from his employers. In the present, Biff and Willy suffer from a mutual antagonism. Willy is unable to let go of his commitment to the American dream and he places tremendous pressure on Biff to fulfill it for him. Biff feels a deep sense of inadequacy because Willy wants him to pursue a career than conflicts with his natural inclinations. He does not want to enter business and make a fortune. He would rather work in the open air on a ranch.

Willy's relationship with Happy is also less than perfect in Willy's memories of his past. In Willy's reconstructed past, it is clear that Willy favors Biff over Happy. Happy tries several times to gain Willy's attention and approval. The course of Happy's adult life clearly bears the marks of this favoritism. It is not that Happy ever expresses resentment towards Biff. He emulates the behavior of the high school-aged Biff. In the past Willy expressed admiration for Biff's success with the girls and his ability to get away with theft. As an adult, Happy competes with more successful men by sleeping with their girlfriends and fiancées. In a way, he performs "theft" and achieves sexual prowess within the same practice. Moreover, he practices bad business ethics because he takes bribes. Like Willy, Happy constructs fantasies in order to make himself seem more successful than he is.

Willy's relationship with Linda is even more interesting. In one of his moments of self-doubt, she assures him that he is a good provider and that he is handsome. She also sees through his bluster when he tries to inflate his commission from his latest trip. She does not "buy" his sales pitch. However, she still loves him. She does not personally reject Willy because he fails to make her believe his fantasy of himself. Moreover, she does not measure Willy's worth in terms of his professional success. Willy is

unable to distinguish between love and being "well liked." Love accepts character flaws, doubts, and insecurity. However, Willy misses the opportunity to view himself more honestly through Linda's eyes. He misses the opportunity to acknowledge frankly the facts of his reality and accept himself for what he is without feeling like a failure. Instead, he tries to play the salesman with his family.

The Woman is Willy's mistress. They sit in a hotel room. She tells him that she picked him because he is so funny and sweet. Willy loves the praise. She thanks Willy for the stockings and promises to put him right through to the buyers when she sees him next. The Woman fades into the darkness as Willy returns to his conversation with Linda. He notices some stockings Linda is mending and angrily demands that she throw them out.

Bernard returns to the Loman house to beg Biff to study math. Willy orders him to give Biff the answers. Bernard replies that he cannot do so during a state exam. Bernard insists that Biff return the football, as Linda adds that some mothers fear that Biff is too rough with their daughters. Willy shouts at them to shut up. Bernard leaves, and Linda bursts into tears.

The memory fades. Willy laments that he did not go to Alaska with his brother, Ben, who had a fortune at the age of twenty-one because he discovered an African diamond mine. Charley, having heard the shouts, visits to check on Willy. They play cards. Charley tries to show concern for Willy and offers him a job, but Willy takes it as an insult. Willy asks Charley if he saw the ceiling he put in his living room, but he becomes surly when Charley expresses interest.

Ben appears on the stage. He cuts a dignified, utterly confident figure. Willy tells Charley that Ben's wife wrote from Africa to tell them Ben had died. He alternates between conversing with Charley and his dead brother. Willy gets angry when Charley wins a hand, so Charley takes his cards and leaves. He is disturbed that Willy is so disoriented that he talks to a dead brother as if he were present.

Willy immerses himself in the memory of a visit from his brother. Ben and Willy's father abandoned the family when Willy was three or four years old and Ben was seventeen. Ben left home to look for their father in Alaska, but never found him. At Willy's request, Ben tells young Biff and Happy about their grandfather. He made flutes and sold them as a traveling salesman. Willy begs Ben to stay longer, but Ben hurries to catch his train.

Willy's shouts wake Linda and Biff. They find him outside in his slippers. Happy joins them. They ask how long he has been so disoriented. Linda explains that Willy's mental unbalance results from having lost his salary. He now works only on commission. Linda knows that Willy borrows fifty dollars a week from Charley and pretends it is his salary.

Linda claims that Biff and Happy are ungrateful. She calls Happy a "philandering bum." Angry and guilty, Biff offers to stay home and get a job to help with expenses. Linda says he cannot fight with Willy all the time. She explains that all the automobile accidents are actually failed suicide attempts. She also found a rubber hose behind the fuse box, and a new nipple on the water heater's gas pipe. Willy overhears Biff, Happy, and Linda arguing about him. Biff says that people have laughed at Willy for years. Willy and Biff argue as Willy maintains that he is a "big shot" in sales.

Happy mentions that Biff plans to ask Bill Oliver for a business loan. Willy brightens immediately. Happy outlines a publicity campaign to sell sporting goods. Everyone loves the idea of Happy and Biff going into business together. Willy begins offering advice for the interview. One moment, he tells Biff not to crack any jokes. The next moment, he tells him to lighten things up with a couple of funny stories. Linda tries to offer support, but Willy tells her several times to be quiet. He orders Biff not to pick up anything that falls off Oliver's desk because that is an office boy's job. Before they fall asleep, Linda begs Willy to ask his boss for a non-traveling job. Biff removes the rubber hose from behind the fuse box before he retires to bed.

Commentary

Willy's inability to distinguish between being loved and "well liked" contributes to his descent into self-delusion. As we saw before, Linda does not reject Willy for not being perfect. Willy does not recognize the important opportunity that Linda offers for re-evaluation of his values. Willy's mistress likes him. She buys his sales pitch, and she boosts his ego, but she does not love him. Linda regards Willy's job merely as an income. She clearly draws a line between Willy as a salesman and Willy as her husband, whereas Willy does not.

Willy was first abandoned by his father and later by his older brother Ben. Willy's father was a salesman as well, but he actually produced what he sold. Willy does not get personal satisfaction from the things he sells because they are not the products of his personal efforts. His professional persona is the only thing that he has produced himself, and it is from successfully selling this persona that he seeks satisfaction. In a roundabout manner, Willy seeks approval from his professional contacts by trying to be "well liked." Perhaps it is a coping strategy to deal with his abandonment by the two most important male figures in his life.

Willy's efforts to make his family conform to the perfect family outlined by the myth of the American dream is perhaps an attempt to rebuild the pieces of the broken family of his childhood. He becomes a salesman and desperately wants to be a good father and provider where his own salesman father abandoned him. Willy despairs that he has left his sons nothing in the form of a material inheritance. His own father left him with nothing. Willy the man is still very much the abandoned child. His obsession with being well liked is similar to a small child's emotional reaction to his abandonment by his father and older brother. They did not like him so that must be why they left him.

Willy's memory of Ben's visit to his home is saturated with fears of abandonment and a need for approval. Ben notes that he must leave soon in order to catch his train as Willy desperately tries to find some way to make him stay a little longer. He proudly shows his sons to Ben, practically begging for a word of approval. He begs Ben to tell Biff and Happy about their grandfather.

Willy was so young when his father left him that he remembers very little. Willy has no significant family history to give to his sons as an inheritance.

It is possible that Willy is reluctant to criticize Biff for his youthful thefts and his careless attitude toward his classes because he fears doing damage to Biff's ego. Instead, he offers endless praise, hoping that Biff will fulfill the promise of that praise in his adulthood. It is also possible that he refuses to criticize Biff in his youth because he fears that Biff will not "like" him. Because Willy's consciousness is split between despair and hope, it is probable that Willy does not criticize Biff's youthful indiscretions for both reasons. In any case, his relationship with Biff is fraught with the childhood emotional trauma of abandonment.

The myth of the American dream has its strongest pull on the individuals who do not enjoy the happiness and prosperity that it promises. Willy pursues the fruits of that dream as a panacea for the disappointments and the hurts of his own youth. He is a true believer in the myth that any good-looking young man can achieve the dream if he journeys forth in the world with a can-do attitude of confidence. The men who should have offered him the affirmation he needed to build a healthy concept of self-worth left him. Therefore, Willy tries to measure his self-worth by the standards of an American myth that few Americans actually live.

In his obsession with being "well liked," Willy ignores the love that his family can offer him. Linda is far more realistic than Willy, and she is satisfied with what he can give her. She sees through his facade and she still loves and accepts the man she finds underneath it. She likewise loves her adult sons, and she sees through their bluster as well. She knows that Biff is irresponsible and that Happy is a "philandering bum," but she loves them without having to like their behavior. She demands their help in dealing with Willy's mental decline. If Willy were content to let go of the American myth that has possessed him, he could be more content. Instead, he continues to chase the fame and fortune that is outrunning him. He has built his concept of himself not on human relationships that fulfill human needs, but on the unrealistic myth of the American hero.

When Willy awakes the next morning, Biff and Happy have already left. Willy mentions that he would like to get some seeds and plant a small garden in their yard. Linda points out that there is not enough sun. Willy replies that they will have to get a house in the country.

Linda reminds Willy to ask his boss for a non-traveling job as well as an advance to pay the insurance premium. They have one last payment each on the refrigerator and the house. Willy just finished paying for the car. Linda informs him that Biff and Happy want to take him to dinner at Frank's Chop House at six o'clock. As Willy departs in high spirits, he notices a stocking that Linda is mending and admonishes her to throw it away.

Willy timidly enters his boss's office. Howard is playing with a wire recorder he has just purchased for dictation. He plays the recorded voices of his family. As Willy tries to express admiration, Howard continually shushes him. Willy asks for a non-traveling job at sixty-five dollars a week. Howard replies that there is no opening available. He looks for his lighter. Willy finds it and hands it to him. Willy keeps lowering his salary request, but Howard remains resistant. Howard keeps calling him "kid."

Desperate, Willy tries to relate an anecdote about Dave Singleman. Dave Singleman, an eighty-four-year-old salesman, phoned his buyers and made his sales without ever leaving his hotel room. After he died, hundreds of salesmen and buyers attended his funeral. Willy laments the loss of friendship and personality in the business, and no one knows him anymore. Eventually Willy becomes so distraught that Howard informs him that he does not want Willy to represent his company anymore.

Willy immerses himself in memories of a visit from Ben. Ben asks Willy to go to Alaska and manage a tract of timberland he has purchased. Linda, slightly afraid of Ben, says that Willy already has a nice job. Ben departs as Willy tries desperately for a word of approval from him. Bernard arrives to accompany the Lomans to the big football game. He begs Biff to allow him to carry the helmet. Happy snaps and insists on carrying it. Biff generously allows Bernard to carry the shoulder guards. Charley ambles over to tease Willy a little, and Willy becomes furious.

Grown-up Bernard is sitting in his father's reception room when his father's secretary enters to beg him to deal with Willy. Outside, Willy, still immersed in his memory, argues with an invisible Charley. Bernard converses with Willy and mentions he has a case to argue in Washington, D.C. Willy replies that Biff is working on a very big deal in town. Willy breaks and asks Bernard why Biff's life seemed to end after his big football game.

Bernard mentions that Biff failed math, but he was determined to go to summer school and pass. He went to see Willy in Boston. After he came back, he burned his sneakers with the University of Virginia's insignia. Willy becomes angry and resentful and demands to know if Bernard blames him for Biff's failure. Charley exits his office to say good-bye to Bernard. He mentions that Bernard is arguing a case before the Supreme Court. Willy is astounded that Bernard did not mention it.

In his office, Charley counts out fifty dollars. With difficulty, Willy asks for over a hundred. After a moment, Charley states that he has offered Willy a non-traveling job with a weekly fifty-dollar salary. Willy insults Charley and refuses the job again. Broken, he admits that Howard fired him. He cries that he chose Howard's name when he was born. Charley replies that he cannot sell that sort of thing. Willy retorts that he always thought the key to success was being well liked. Exasperated, Charley asks who liked J. P. Morgan. He gives Willy the money for his insurance. Willy shuffles out of the office.

Commentary

Biff's decision to seek a business loan temporarily raises Willy's spirits. The first thing he thinks about is planting a garden in his yard. He muses to Linda that they should buy a house in the country, so he could build guest houses for Biff and Happy when they have families of their own. It is important to note that Willy's hopeful plans indicate that he has chosen a profession that stifles his natural inclinations. They hint that he is no more suited to the competitive world of capitalism than Biff is. Willy seems

happiest when he dreams of building something with his own hands.

Willy deeply regrets not following Ben to the Alaskan wilderness. Willy's wistful fantasy of living in the forests of Alaska strengthens the implication that Willy chose the wrong profession. He does not seem to like living in an urban setting. However, Willy's fascination with frontier is also intimately connected to his obsession with the myth of the American dream. The intrepid explorer who enters the unknown, uncharted wilderness and strikes gold is imbedded in the national consciousness as the [protagonist](#) in the myth of the American dream. Ben has actually lived that myth by entering the African jungle and discovering a diamond mine. With the rise of consumer capitalism in America, the "wilderness" transformed into the bustling market of consumer goods. Intrepid explorers plunged in the jungle of business transactions in order to find a niche to exploit. Ben represents one version of the frontier [narrative](#). Dave Singleman represents the other. Willy chose to follow Singleman's path.

Willy's dissatisfaction with his life is probably due at least in part to choosing a profession that conflicts with his natural interests and abilities. It is also partly due to believing in a myth. He does not realize that Ben's wealth is the result of a blind stroke of luck rather than the rewards owing to personal merit. Willy also seems to miss the sad side to Singleman's story of success. Singleman was still working at the age of eighty-four, and he died while on the job.

Willy's humiliating interview with Howard sheds some light on his advice for Biff's interview with Oliver. He told Biff that if anything fell off Oliver's desk, he should not pick it up because that is an office boy's job. He told Biff to be very serious and not too eager. His advice clearly has its roots in Willy's relationship with his boss. Howard is much younger than Willy. However, Howard condescends to Willy by calling him "kid" several times in the course of their conversation. Willy plays an entirely subservient role with his boss. He picks up Howard's lighter and hands it to him, unable to follow his own advice about such office boy jobs.

Willy often rudely interrupts Linda when she tries to speak. Howard continually shushes Willy's attempts to speak. Willy is unable to leave his professional role at work. He transfers his professional anxieties into his relationship with his family. Many of Willy's professional ambitions are clearly meant to assuage his familial anxieties from childhood. His brother and father did not "like" him enough to stay, so he endeavors to be "well liked" in his profession. He heard the story of Dave Singleman's success of mythical proportions. Hundreds of people attended Singleman's funeral. He was a man who was "well liked." Dave Singleman's story hooked Willy as the key to emotional and psychological fulfillment.

Willy is unable to sell himself any longer. During his interview with Howard, he keeps lowering his price and becomes increasingly desperate. He relates the story of Dave Singleman and laments the loss of friendship and camaraderie in the profession. If we take into account Willy's lifelong experience as a salesman, it should be clear that the profession has really never been about friendship and camaraderie. Those things belong to the myth of the traveling salesman, not his reality.

Charley tries to explain that Willy's fantasies about the way business world functions conflict with the reality of a consumer economy. He states that the bottom line of business is selling and buying, not being "liked." Ironically, Charley is the only contact that offers Willy a business opportunity on the strength of friendship. However, their relationship is shaped by an ongoing competition between Willy's family and Charley's family, at least from Willy's point of view. Willy rejects Charley's job offer partly because he is jealous of Charley's success. Charley refuses to relate to Willy through blustering fantasy. He chooses to be frank instead. He states that he knows that Willy does not like him very much, and he adds that he does not really like Willy much either. Therefore, Willy refuses his job offer because he is not "well liked" by Charley. Charley's job offer does not conform to Willy's idealistic notion of business relationships. Willy chooses to reject a well-paying, secure job rather than let go of the myths of the American business world.

Willy's conversation with Bernard revives Willy's attempt to understand why Biff never made a material success of his life despite his bright and promising youth. He wants to understand why the "well liked" teenage football player became an insecure man unable to hold a steady job. He assumes there is some secret to success that is not readily apparent. If he were not wearing the rose colored glasses of the myth of the American dream, he would see that Charley and his son are successful because of lifelong hard work.

[Happy](#) banters with the waiter, [Stanley](#). Happy is flirting with a pretty girl when [Biff](#) arrives to join him. Happy tells her that Biff is a famous football player. Happy invites the girl, [Miss Forsythe](#), to join them. She exits to make a phone call, and Biff explains that he waited six hours to see [Oliver](#). Oliver did not even remember him. Biff asks where he got the idea that he was a salesman for Oliver. He was a shipping clerk. After Oliver and the secretary left, Biff ran into Oliver's office and stole his fountain pen.

Happy advises Biff to tell [Willy](#) that Oliver is thinking over his business proposition. Eventually, it will fade away. When Willy arrives, he reveals that he has been fired and states that he wants some good news to tell [Linda](#). Despite the pressure, Biff attempts to tell the truth. Disoriented, Willy shouts that Biff cannot blame everything on him because Biff is the one who failed math. Miss Forsythe returns with her friend, [Letta](#). Willy wanders into the restroom, talking to himself. Biff tells Happy to help Willy, and hurries out of the restaurant. Happy quickly pays the bill and rushes after Biff, pushing Miss Forsythe and Letta along in front of him.

Willy is immersed in the memory of Biff's visit to see him in Boston. He is in a hotel room with his mistress. Biff is outside knocking on the door. [The Woman](#) pesters Willy to answer the door. Willy orders her to stay in the bathroom and be quiet. Willy answers the door and Biff reports that he failed math. He asks Willy to persuade the teacher to pass him. Willy tries to get Biff out of the room quickly, but The Woman laughs in the bathroom. She exits the bathroom, and Willy pushes her out into the hallway. Biff sits on the bed, crying silently. Willy promises to talk to the math teacher, but Biff tells him to forget it because no one will listen to a phony liar.

Biff and Happy return home later that night with a bouquet of roses for Linda. She throws the roses on the ground and shouts at them to pack and never come back. Happy claims that Willy had a great time. Biff hears Willy outside and Linda explains that he is planting a garden. Willy is talking to Ben about a guaranteed twenty thousand-dollar proposition. Ben warns that the company might not honor the policy. Willy retorts that he has always paid the premium and they cannot refuse. He says Biff will realize how important he is until he sees the number of people who attend the funeral. Ben warns that Biff will call him a coward and hate him.

Biff tells Willy that he is leaving for good, and he will not keep in touch. Biff wants Willy to forget him. Willy declares that Biff is throwing his life away out of spite and blaming his failures on him. Biff confronts Willy with the rubber hose. Biff states that he stole himself out of every job since high school. Willy filled him with so much hot air that he could not take orders from anyone. He says he does not want anything except to work in the open air. Crying and exhausted, he trudges upstairs to bed. Suddenly happy, Willy mutters that Biff likes him because he cried. Everyone retires to bed, except Willy. He urges Linda to sleep and promises he will join her soon. Willy converses with Ben that Biff will go far with twenty thousand dollars in his pocket. Linda calls from upstairs and Ben disappears. Happy and Biff listen. They hear the car start and rush away.

Willy's family, **Charley**, and **Bernard** are the only mourners who attend Willy's funeral. Biff recalls that Willy seemed happier working on the house than he did as a salesman. He states that Willy had all the wrong dreams. Charley replies that a salesman has to dream or he is lost. Happy becomes increasingly angry at Biff's observations. He resolves to stay in the city and carry out his father's dream by becoming a top businessman. Linda requests some privacy. Linda reports to Willy that she made the last payment on the house. The play ends with Linda repeating, "We're free and clear."

Commentary

Willy's encounters with Howard, Bernard, and Charley constitute some serious blows to the fantasy through which he wishes to view his life. His life is falling apart. Biff has also experienced a moment of truth, but he regards it as a liberating experience. He wishes to leave behind the false bluster of the Loman family tradition so that they can begin to relate to one another honestly. Willy, on the other hand, wants his sons to aid him in rebuilding the elaborate fantasies that deny his reality as a defeated man. Willy drives Biff to produce a falsely positive report of his interview with Oliver, and Happy is all too willing to comply. When Biff fails to produce the expected glowing report, Happy chimes in with false information about the interview.

Willy's greatest fear is realized during his ill-fated dinner with Biff and Happy. In his moment of weakness and defeat, he asks for their help in rebuilding his shattered concept of his life. It is a moment when he is not very "likable," and he is well aware of it. His sons abandon him in his state of defeated depression while he babbles to himself in the restroom. Their abandonment is one in a long line of abandonments. First his father and then his brother left him. Howard has dropped him, and his fantasy world has left him. Now, his sons leave him.

Willy settles on Biff's discovery of his adulterous affair as the reason for Biff's failure to fulfill Willy's ambitions for him. Before Biff discovers the affair, he believes in Willy's persona. After he discovers the affair, he calls Willy a "phony fake." He sees beneath the facade and rejects the mean underneath it. It is the salesman's worst nightmare to be exposed as a charlatan. Willy decides that Biff's failure owes to his disillusionment. Willy believes Biff's disillusionment with him personally led to Biff's disillusionment with Willy's ambitions for him. Because Biff could no longer "like" him, he gave up all hopes for achieving the American dream.

Willy's final confrontation with Biff exposes the essential gridlock of their relationship. Biff wants Willy to forget him as a useless bum. Once Willy finally lets go of him, Biff can be free to be himself and lead his life without having to carry the weight of his father's dreams. Willy cannot let go of the myth around which he has built his life. He has no hopes of achieving the American dream himself, so he has transferred his hopes to Biff. Fulfilling Biff's request means that Willy finally has to discard his dreams and ambitions forever. Each man is struggling with the other for his identity.

During the confrontation, Biff does not try to find someone to blame for the course that his life has taken. He does not even mention the affair, which Willy imagines as the reason for his lack of material success. He does not name his disillusionment with Willy or Willy's ambitions as the reason. Ironically, Biff blames Willy's fantastic success in selling him on the American dream of easy success as the reason for his failure to hold a steady job. Biff's faith in Willy's dreams is the real reason he could not advance in the business world. He could not start from the bottom and work his way up because he believed success would descend upon him at any moment, regardless of his actions.

Willy's happy reaction to Biff's frustrated tears demonstrates that Willy has again missed an opportunity to take refuge in the love of his family. His response is that Biff's tears mean that Biff "likes" him. Linda corrects him by correcting him with the words "loves you." Willy's failure to recognize the anguished love offered to him by his family is crucial to the [climax](#) of his tortured day. He gets into his car for one last hopeful journey and commits suicide, so Biff can collect twenty thousand dollars of insurance money. It is Willy's final attempt to leave an inheritance that will allow Biff to fulfill the American dream.

Biff's statements at Willy's graveside revive the implication that Willy chose the wrong profession. He remembers that Willy loved to renovate his house. He recalls that Willy was happiest and most content when he worked at building something with his own hands. Willy's own desperation after Happy and Biff abandon him in the restaurant is that he has "nothing in the ground." The fact that Willy uses gardening as a [metaphor](#) for success and failure indicates that Willy subconsciously acknowledges that his chosen profession is a poor choice given his natural inclinations.

In many ways, Willy has done everything the myth of the American dream outlines as the key path to success. He acquired a home and all the modern appliances. He raised a family, and he journeyed forth into the business world full of hope and ambition.

However, he has failed to receive the fruits that the myth promises. His primary problem is that he continues to believe in the myth rather than restructuring his concept of his life and his identity to more realistic standards. The values expressed in the myth are not designed to assuage human insecurities and doubts. Rather, the myth denies their existence. Willy bought the sales pitch that America uses to advertise itself, and the price of his faith is death.

Sherwood Anderson – grotesques – every character of his has this, sees one truth, idea, or ambition, and be obsessed to it
Saw small communities as unhappy place filled with isolated/despairing people living hidden lives.

Jobby – nickname, for the variety of odd jobs he took. Grew up in **Clyde, OH**. Started business, then fled with failed **Dreiser/Sandburg** in **Chicago** urged him to write, **Winsburg, OH** – book close to Spoon River Anthology, Spent last years in VA, as a farmer/newspaper editor, **emphasized on mood/character**

Sophistication – small town life pointless, facts/figures isn't everything, Helen/George understood each other, that was enough
Winesburg County Fair **Turnion Pike** – road leading up to the fair **Tony Tip** – **Wesley's horse** that won in the afternoon.

George Willard – OH boy, waiting for girl outside **Dr. Reefy's** office. When one looks at life backwards, he's a man
One realizes that he/she is another leaf in the wind, needs understanding, a woman would understand.

Never been good at speech making, thought she would marry **Seth Richmond**. **Town is crowding him**
Moyer's bragging pissed him off. Ran across rubbish, nail tore his pants, decided to go see **Helen**

Helen White – Winesburg Banker's daughter. College in **Cleveland**, here for fair. One of her professors liked her
In public, she wanted him, since he's made her look good, but in private, George understood her more
Prof. wants to marry someone w/ money. George wanted to do something in life, wanted Helen to be different
Was at **Banker White's** house when George went to look for her, instructor started Bsing, Helen ran for it
Mom told instructor there's no one here for Helen, **Helen** goes into **garden**, calls for **George**, George finds her

Fair Grounds were on a hill rising over **Wine Creek Valley**, from the **Grandstand**, has view of city.

2 struggles. Unthinking animal against the thing that reflects/remembers, the sophisticated thing that bound George
Ghostly filled with live people. So many people, so loud during the day, so silent at night. Life is meaningless

Sat in the grandstand, George revered Helen, loved her, as the crowd disperses, they kiss, leave the grandstand
Kissed again at **Waterworks Hill**, then Helen tripped George for fun, rolled downhill, but at bottom, serious again

Katherine Anne Porter – Born in TX, descendant of Daniel Boone, used stream of consciousness, **only published 1 book**
Ship of Fools. **Emphasized on Character** Wrote about common people, uncommon characters.

The Jilting of Granny Weatherall – 81 year old, hallucinates at times, dies, doesn't know it till the end, hard life, but positive

Dr. Harry – Ellen Weatherall's doctor. He wasn't there when she needed him when she had **milk leg/2x pneumonia**
Thought Cornelia talking was something swishing newspapers or leaves outside. Had a lot of plans for tomorrow

Made farewell trips in her 60's, made her will, prepared to die. Got a long fever, but got over it, **Father lived to 102**
Forgets Cornelia is right next to her, asked for some hot toddy. Lying in bed stops circulation.

Cornelia thought she was deaf, dumb, blind. Whispered behind her back. **Kids** – **Jimmy, Lydia, Cornelia, Hapsy**
Wished for old times, **John** – old husband, wanted younger women, Granny wanted to show him that she wasn't ruined
worked a lot in her earlier days, hallucinated about her living in the old days. Worked so hard she forgot her objective
Lighting the lamps was a beautiful thing. The kids weren't scared in the light. Picked all the fruit, wasted nothing

Husband, **George**, stood her up at her wedding, Told Cornelia that her kids are coming, thought she was having a party
Doctor comes back, **tried to give her some hypodermic**, responds with something about **sugar ants in her bed**

Asked **Cornelia** to get **George**, tell him that she's fine w/o him. **Father Connolly** of **Holy Communion** shows up

Father Connolly has habit of dropping in, **always had story about an Irishman**. Tells **Corn.** to get him a chair
Goes on another rampage of thoughts, goes pretty much crazy, then dies, 2nd time, no bridegroom, priest in the house...

Hapsy is favorite daughter, she keeps calling for her. **John** is her former **husband**, **George** is the one that stood her up

F Scott Fitzgerald – **Emphasis on Imagery**, of Flaming Youth, Flappers, and the Jazz Age. **Born in St. Paul**

Went to **Princeton**, didn't make football team, Fought in WWI, married **Zelda Sayre**, **The voice of the 20's**

Zelda went crazy, Francis tried to write more to pay the bills, no one wanted to read in Depression, **heart attack at 40**

Winter Dreams –

Dexter Green – caddy at Sherry Island Golf Club. Dad owned 2nd best grocery store in **Black Bear**, 1st was **The Hub**
Quit because he was too old, and cuz Judy called him a boy. **Mr KcKenna** – caddy master.

Borrowed \$1000, bought a partnership in a laundry, made it big, sold it, went to NYC.

Told Judy he was making more than anyone in his age. Career is largely a matter of futures

Lived at one of the two clubs he joined, 18 months after Judy, **married Irene Scheerer, Sept, 25 years old**

Went to a dance, cut in on Judy only once, wasn't jealous. "Hardened against jealousy long before"

After married Irene, others stopped asking about Judy. Supposed to sit at **University Club** for 1 hour w/ her

Irene got headache, went to club alone, met **Judy**. Went for a drive, asked Dexter to marry her, refused

Went into Judy's house, really hurt Irene, Judy/Irene call off engagement, goes East to NYC, but joined army

When he heard Judy. "...that thing is gone. I cannot cry, I cannot care, that thing will come back no more

Mr. Mortimer Jones – Dexter the best caddy he ever had, asked him not to quit.

Mr. Hart – gives Dexter invitation to SI Golf Club, played with **Hart, Sandwood, Hedrick**.

Judy Jones – slammed golf club in ground, hit the nurse w/ a golf club. Hit **Hedrick** in the stomach w/ golf ball
Went on playing golf after hitting him. Hit **Dexter** w/ a motorboat while he was on a raft, asks him to drive
Goes for a ride on a surfboard, then asks him to dinner tomorrow. All the other men were prep school guys
Martha – Butler. Dexter born in **Keeble, MN**. Judy worried that her boyfriend that afternoon was poor
Told Dexter that she didn't kiss the other man, and he was glad that she took the trouble to lie to him
Her words held no value, always got what she wanted. **Started Crying in Dexter's car when she came back**
Later married **Lud Simms**, who drinks, doesn't appreciate her. Lud friend of **Delvin from Detroit**

William Faulkner – Born in MI, didn't have much schooling, wrote books, phased out by 45, Nobel Prize in 49
1st to Used Stream of consciousness, violent imagery at times, **old South Dean of American Lit during the 20's**
Canadian Air Force during WWI. **Wrote about Old Glory**

A Rose for Emily – Father dies, kills **Homer**. Symbolism, flashback, town inseparable from Emily, house description - eyesore

Emily Grierson – Woman who died, entire town went to funeral, men for respect, women to see her house
Buried at the cemetery where Union/Confederate soldiers of **battle of Jefferson**.
Refused to pay taxes, **Board of Aldermen** decided to pay her a visit. **She has no taxes in Jefferson**.
Sweetheart left her shortly ago. Her place smelled bad. People complained to **Judge Stevens**, 80 years old
4 men broke her cellar door and put lime there, the smell went away.
Before her father died, they were higher than everyone else. Now, they can pity her, for she's human
When father died, she didn't want to admit it, didn't dispose of body for 3 days, then broke down
Wanted to buy **Arsenic for Rat Poison**. Needed a reason, but she just stared her way into getting it
People thought she was killing herself, Asked minister to talk to her, **got some family from AL**
Went to buy a toilet set, men's outfit, nightshirt. Town thought they were getting married
Never saw Homer again, Emily reserved again, gave lessons in China painting. Refused postal delivery
Died, funeral, broke into the room above the stairs, **found Homer's body**, pillow next to him, **iron gray hair**

Colonel Sartoris – mayor, no Negro should be out w/o apron, remitted her taxes, father made contribution to town

Homer Barron – contractor that did the sidewalks. Seems to like Emily. People wondered if she could really like him

Ernest Hemingway – most imitated American Writer of the 20's, false front, **unsuccessful singer?** Dressed up like a girl
Life is a battlefield, everyone eventually wounded. **Hemingway Hero** – a man who plays the game well even in loss
Worked for **Toronto Star**, small, **simple words/sentences**. **Food/drink imagery**. Embrace life, physically.

Themes: Violence, nature, arbitrariness of life, death, war, love. Had a bad eye in boxing, can't fight. Killed Himself
Married an alcoholic, older woman, killed himself, same as his father, **with a gun in his mouth**

In Another Country – Narrator injured during war, meets others injured more badly, develops relationship with the Major
City of **Milan**, at the hospital every afternoon. Could take canals or bridges. **Narrator used to play Football**

Got medals because he was an American. The 3 with medals are hawks, he wasn't a hawk cuz he didn't earn it
Major – was a all time fencer, greatest in Italy. Had a tiny hand. **A basso gli ufficiali!** - Down with Officers
Spent a lot of time correcting narrator's grammar. Started teaching him grammar. Called **Signor Maggiore**

A man must not marry so he can't lose his wife, his wife just died of pneumonia. Kept looking out the window
Boy wore a **black silk handkerchiefs** cuz his face was rebuilt, nose isn't right. No medals, not long enough time

Tall Boy – was an **Arditi**, shock troops/commandos, Hemingway served with them. **3 medals**

Most patriotic people in Italy are café girls.

John Steinbeck – Viewed characters on an animal level, characters retain a measure of dignity. **Okies** – “Grapes”, most in CA
The Chrysanthemums - Salinas Valley, Eliza/Henry Allen. December.

Elisa worked in the house and in her garden, seemed to compete with her husband, husband didn't care about her garden
Had done a lot of work, hands were worn, almost like a man. Had a lot of NRG. Grew Chrysanthemums.
Sees a beaten down wagon with a mongrel dog underneath, between the hind wheels. Fixed sign, crooked letters
Sees a big, stubble bearded man, beaten down, asked for something to fix, got nothing. Asked for directions 1st
Asks about flowers, gets her attention. Says it's a good nasty smell. Says someone up the road wants seeds
Puts some in a pot to give to the lady, gives him directions. **Feel the buds with planting hands**

Gives him the pot, asks him to fix 2 Al Saucepans. Paid him 50 cents. Goes into the house to get ready to go
On the road to Salinas, sees the flower pot on the road, realizes how big a nitwit Henry is, and that she's stuck

Henry – just sold 30 3 year old steers to the **Western Meat Co**. Wants to go for dinner at the **Cominos Hotel**, then movie

Scotty – his horse Called Elisa “You look so nice”, and she got mad. **She Envied pan-fixer's freedom**

Jesse Stuart – More of a poet than a novelist. Lincoln Memorial University. Humor/sympathy which he depicts mountain people

Another April – Grandpa goes out in the spring, all wrapped up, sees the trees, plays with butterflies, a turtle, in the last few years

Grandpa – goes out the in spring for his yearly walk, each year a little shorter. Going to see his old friend.

Used to be a powerful man, chopped wood during the winter, did a lot of work. **Tears apart a pine cone**

Felt each pine needle, 91 years old, talks to the hogs, waved his cane at a butterfly, let the wind blow his whiskers
Took the petals off a white blossom, played with a bumblebee, tried to tear a butterfly cocoon, but couldn't
Goes to the back side of the house, finds the Terrapin under the smokehouse floor. Terrapin his old friend
Lets him stroke his head, knows the turtle, got an 1847 in his shell, at least 95 years old.
The terrapins eats tomatoes. Mick was tossing terrapins out, found this one, let it eat, cuz of the 1847.

Mom – wraps Grandpa up in heavy cloths, Cries at the end watching Grandpa say goodbye to the Terrapin

Kid – watches Grandpa from the window, then goes to the dining room to follow his path. **Connection to Whitman**

Eudora Welty – Short stories, southern writer, photographer. Wrote about adolescence and loneliness.

from MI, same as Faulker. Went to University of WI, Columbia University.

A Worn Path – **December, Negro Phoenix Jackson** out to get medicine for her son, and to get a paper windmill

Cane made by umbrella. Small, frail, striped dress, black hair. Heard animals, told them to get out of her way

Obstacles – **Thicket** – animal sounds. **Hill** – had to mount it. **Bush** – caught her dress. **Log** - across a creek
tree in a cloud of mistletoe - imagined boy bringing her marble cake **barbed wire** – had to crawl

Buzzard – talked to it **Scarecrow** – thought it was a man, then ghost, then scarecrow, **danced with it**

Path – followed it. **Spring** – drank from it **Dog** – hit it with a cane, fell into the ditch

Young Man –helped Phoenix outta the ditch. **Thought she was going to see Santa Claus**. Dog got in a fight

Found his nickel, put it in her apron pocket. Red/green lights in the city, Christmas time. Trust feet, not sight

Asked a lady with an arm full of presents to **tie her shoe**. Can't lace them with a cane. Went into a building

Attendant thought she was deaf, and that it was a charity case. Nurse told him it's for her sone

Lives in **Old Natchez Trace**. Nurse asked her if her son was better, she just stood there like an idiot

She forgot why she came. Never had education, too old at the **Surrender of Lee**. Kid waiting all by himself

Gave her the medicine as charity. Attendant gives her nickel, she came to buy a **paper windmill**

Log = courage **Thorn Bush** – patience **Barb Wire** – Determination **Scarecrow** – superstitious

Shoelace – Pride **Pennies/Nickel?** - Cleverness

Bernard Malamud – **Brooklyn, NY**, father a grocer. Wrote about Jewish Culture. Lived in NYC

The 1st 7 years – A shoemaker, his helper likes his daughter, but he's got big plans for her, eventually gives in. **In February**

Feld – Materialistic, like Max. Wanted son instead of daughter. Gave max his telephone so he could call Miriam.

Took Max into hall and suggested that he meet Miriam, asks for picture, he gives, she's sensible. **Shoes \$1.50**

Usually charges \$25. Had a heart condition, couldn't exert himself. Problem when Sobel ran out

Wondered why he would stay working for such a low wage. **His answer was that he's afraid of the world**

Told Sobel not to give Miriam books cuz her eyes were strained/red, and he walked out on him, but came back

Went to Sobel's room, he wasn't there, went home, hired a new helper. New guy isn't as familiar as Sobel

After Max got his shoes, he learned his helper was stealing from him, and got another heart attack. \

Went to talk to Sobel, asked when he's coming back, he said never. Didn't want wages, wanted Miriam.

Called him an "man so old and ugly". Then calms down, tells her wait till she's 21, then marry her.

Sobel – fanatic worker, gets mad all of a sudden, starts pounding the bench, then runs out. Had a short fuse. **Polish**

After Feld's heart attack, he came begging for work, learned quickly, and saved Feld's business

Interested only in books, lend them to Miriam. **Survived the holocaust**

Miriam – big contrast to max, uninterested for higher education, 19 years old. Went out with Max on Friday

1st date went all right, another one for Saturday. Asked about Sobel, told that he got a new job, was disturbed

on the 2nd date, she said she was bored. **"He's nothing more than a materialist"**. Has no soul, only things

Max then took a different route to school, never saw Miriam again, Feld was hurt. Miriam liked Sobel

Max – made great strides, including walk in the snow, to get an education. Admired by **Feld**, wanted him for **Miriam**

Went to fix his shoes, ended up meeting Miriam. **Studied to be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA)**

Flannery O'Connor – from **Georgia, State University of Iowa**. Studied under **Paul Engle**. Humor, sudden acts of violence

Died at age 39 of Lupus, odd characters. South, theme of sin of salvation

The Life You Save May Be Your Own – Old dude comes up, borrows her car, takes her daughter, dumps her in a restaurant

Mr. Shiftlet – came up, formed cross with body in the sunset, talked to woman, **"The world is ALMOST rotten"**

Offered her some gum, says about a doctor in Atlanta cutting out a human heart and not knowing anything

From **Tarwater, TN**. **Carpenter, carries tools his a tin box**. 28 years old, varied life, foreman, radio guy

Said he can't find an innocent woman. Liked to live in the country where he can enjoy life. Slept in the car

Lucynell watch him fix up the place. Even wanted to make the car run. 1 man for a bolt, bad cars.

The problem with the world is that no one cared, or stopped and took any trouble

The Old woman asked him to teach Lucynell to say **Sugar Pie**. She told him Lucynell was **16**, really 30

Went to town, got some parts, made the car run. Doesn't want to marry Lucynell cuz he got no money

Married Lucynell in **Ordinary's** office, **"It's the Law that don't satisfy me"**. Not too happy about marrying

Went back to the house, got lunch, and left for a weekend trip. Wanted to make **Mobile** by nightfall

Lucynell ate lunch when they left, picking cherries off the hat and throwing them out the window
Went to **“The Hot Spot”** to stop for food, after 100 miles, she fell asleep, paid for the food, deserted her
Actually tries to justify his actions by thinking he’s a morale man. **Picks up a hitchhiker for redemption**
Said to the kid his mother was an Angel of God, boy says he’ll go to the devil, **had a tantrum, jumped out**
A turnip shaped cloud covered the sun, a worse looking one behind the car, started pouring.

Lucynell Crator – mother/daughter both Lucynell. Wanted to know where Shiftlet was from.

Daughter shook her finger at Shiftlet when he lit the match. Really cared for her daughter, but knew her death
Offered Shiftlet the house if he would marry Lucynell. Offers \$15, then \$17.50 for a weekend trip

John Updike – from PA, Harvard, England, poems, best known as a novelist, also a poet

Deals with basic issues of life- faith/disbelief, uprooting/uncertainty of human relationships.

The Lucid Eye in Silver Town – Boy, father thinks he’s as good as his uncle, but he despises his uncle, father a follower

Visiting NYC, wanted to get a book on **Dutch Vermeer**. Mom motivated him to art. Dad called Uncle/Jay **“Go Getters”**

Uncle Quin – Didn’t show up at PA Station, met Father/Jay in the hotel. 20th floor. Talking to **Lucas and Roebuck**

Called NYC **Gotham**. **Broadway – The Great White Way** Went to **Pickernut Club**

Piano was playing **“It’s a small hotel”**, which was Quin’s song. **Quin supports Degas over Vermeer**

Tesse – Quin’s wife. He’s from Chicago.

Father (Marty) – agreed with everyone. At the outset, realized Quin wanted to discuss business alone

Traveled the world before Jay was born, answered a lot of his questions. **Asked for scotch and water.**

Liked to call Jay “The Kid” when he’s mad. Told Jerome the waiter that he wasn’t from the big city

Jay – Shook hands with the other 2 businessmen on meeting. Awed at the expensive leather, lotion, silk underwear.

Leaned out the window, saw illegal traffic, recognized a lot of buildings. **Only stupid people pursued money**

Asked for Ginger Ale. Surprised that the Pickernut Club had only 2 flavors of ice cream.

Something fell into his eye while looking at the **Empire State Building**. Went back to hotel, trying to hide it

Quin asks for a doctor, Father tried to help him, but he refused, cuz it was too painful. Ended up to be an **Eyelash**

Quin offered dinner, but Father had a church council to get to. **Had to pay the doc \$5, no money for the book**

Jay got mad that he didn’t bring more, Father just agrees. **Quin’s rich like stamp collector collects stamps**

Goes on another tantrum about him not bring enough and the book costing more than \$5, but ends on the train

Jerome – waiter at Pickernut Club

Freddie – piano player at Pickernut Club

Mother – suddenly said “I Hate Augusts on the train platform”

Alice Walker – Southern writer, wrote about women’s/black rights, motivated by the civil rights movement. Black equality is not meaningful until black women are free and equal. Born to sharecroppers in GA, worked for Head Start

Everyday Use – Mother, 2 kids, one stuck up, one feeling sorry, needed Mom to be the judge.

Mama – dreams she on a TV show with Dee and **Johnny Carson**. Big boned woman, almost like a man, did much work

Never had an education. After school closed after 2nd grade, never went back. Can’t sing, can’t carry tune

Current house was 3 rooms, the one that was burned was too NO real windows, just holes, really broken down

Dee wanted to come no matter where they lived, but would never bring her friends. **Aunt Dee – Big Dee**

Dee Johnson– ambitious, stuck up, no one ever says no to her. Standing under the gum tree while house burned

Hated the house, would hate this house too. Everyone raised money to send her to **Augusta**.

She used to mess with their head, make them feel inferior. Always wanted nice things.

First, a stocky man gets out, future husband?. Then, Dee, looking grand and tall, expensive jewelry.

Takes a bunch of pictures, then starts talking.

Wangero – Dee’s new name – didn’t want to be named after the people that oppressed her.

Asalamalakim – Future Husband’s name. Too long, so they called him **“Hakim a barber”**

Named after beef-cattle people down the road, no time to shake hands, so said **Asalamalakim** – Peact be w/ you

Hakim a Barber didn’t eat pork/collards. Pork was unclean. Wangero eats everything.

Fascinated by the rump prints of the benches. Wanted/took the **churn/dasher**.

Wanted the two quilts by **Grandma Dee and Aunt Dee – Lone Star Pattern and Step Around the Mountain**

Mama didn’t want to give it to her because she promised to give to Maggie at her wedding\

Maggie offered to give them up, but Mama stands up for her anyways. Dee gets mad

1st time someone told her no. She says Maggie can’t appreciate them, and she’ll ruin them

Storms out, tells Maggie to make something of herself. Puts on some sunglasses, leaves

Maggie Johnson–burned up in fire, Wore a pink dress to greet Dee. Sometimes reads to Mama. Will marry **J. Thomas**

When Dee arrives, tries to run for the house, but Mama stops her. Kept mumbling **“Uhhnnh”**

Her head is like an elephants – **Wangero**. In the end, gets dip of snuff, sits there till sundown

Tim O’Brien – Primarily novels: **Theme: Vietnam war, controversial war. From MN.** Drafted, fought in Vietnam

Purple heart for wound at **My Lai**. Really has no children, Field Trip is a fiction story

Field Trip – takes daughter **Kathleen** for her 10th birthday to **Vietnam**, to a field where soldier **Kiowa** dies. Finishes the job

20 years after Vietnam, The field has really changed, no sign of war. Farmers were farming again, but pond still there
Went with Interpreter, who was keeping Kathleen busy. Kathleen a stuck up little girl. 2 hours **from Quang Ngai City**
Took a few pics, Kathleen thought the place smelled rotten. War meant nothing to her. Asked why they were fighting
Couldn't find a good answer, so dismissed the question. Called him weird. The field was normal.
Recognized the hill where **Jimmy Cross** set up the command post, and found the place where Kiowa went down
Went into the muddy water to about the location he went down, put the hunting hatchet in the mud, and it went down
Finally finished the job, farmer seemed mad, but didn't matter, he already moved on too much to care. Didn't tell Wife

E.B. White – Most distinguished essayists/stylists, wrote Children's books (Charlotte's Web, Stuart Little). Writing is laborious and slow, approach to style is by way of plainness, simplicity, orderliness, sincerity. Writing is like Hunting. Mind travels faster than the pen.

Walden – Letter to Thoreau on Walden Pond. At the beginning, mentions woman with **lawn mower**, humans depend on tech
Went to Concord, wasn't peaceful anymore. Highway leading up to it. **Snake and Turtle** – examples of man kill nature
People went to Walden, but still stayed in groups, against solitude. Philosophy still alive – boys assembling shelter in the center of a vacant lot. Went outside to see if his car was locked out for the night. Everyone moving in cars
Amplifiers and speakers make the range of sound limitless. Store near the pond selling ice cream, sandwiches, hot dogs
The Trailer park is home away from home. Popcorn wrappers on the floor. **Bathing suit in pond**. Boys throwing stones at robins. Two beer bottles buried in the earth. Across the pond were a few dressing rooms for swimmers. Spend 7.70 at Walden in a few days. "You must remember the house where you practiced the sort of economy which I respect was haunted only by mice and squirrels. You never had to cope with a shortstop".

James Baldwin – Was the true artists – exposed others to unpleasant realities. To let us know that there's nothing stable under heaven. To drive to the heart of every answer and expose the question the answer hides. Essayist, playwright, novelist

The Creative Process – People always say they're alone, but it's never believed. Aloneness is something that all fear
Everything in the physical world cannot be done alone.; Aloneless of birth, death, to see one suffering, but can't help
Artist's job is to bring back those points that we know, but don't want to acknowledge. Artist is the disturber of peace
People can't live without others because others give them their identity. Everyone else in society will take something for granted, but the artist must not accept anything as real, and must drive to the heart of every answer and expose the question the answer hides. Artists aren't appreciated till they're dead cuz when they're dead, they can't criticize. Artists have the responsibility to go against society. We do things cuz we have to, we're responsible for our actions, but don't understand them. Has reflections to slavery. Suggests that the old South is still stuck on slavery. "societies never know it, but the war of an artists with his society is a lover's war, and he does, at his best, what lovers do, which is to reveal the beloved to himself, and with that revelation, to make freedom real."

Modern poetry due to **symbolist** movement, a movement in France.

Robert Frost – **Poet of New England**, but born in Sf. Named after Robert E Lee. Grandfather bought him a farm, he stayed there to write poetry, but was not recognized. Went to England, met **Erza Pound**, became known. Poems take place in New England. Most popular 20th cent. American poet, Born in Chicago, the New England Poet, Much nature imagery, Under current of sadness, Struggled on farm for 10 yrs, Great speaker/lecturer of poetry, Self-promoter

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Dude stops by woods, horse thought it was strange since there's no farmhouse around, shakes his harness bells, no one answers, the woods are dark and deep, but he had promises to keep, and places to go before he slept.

After Apple Picking

Takes place in the winter, ladder in a tree, a few apples that he didn't pick, falls asleep? Starts dreaming, apples appearing and disappearing, tired from apple picking, dreams the ladder falling, anything that dropped was to the apple cider pile, husband may have just died, wife or kids may be doing the job. Long sleep may be death.

Mending Wall

"**Good Fences Make Good Neighbors**" – This is like the damn quote of the entire damn poem

Winter has broken down the wall built of rocks, in the spring, they go back to rebuild it. Wall is on a hill, he is all pine and I am apple orchard, my apple tree won't eat his cones. I think that the only time fences are needed is when there's cows. Starts challenging why the wall needs to be there, "**Elves**" don't like walls, they want them down

The Death of the Hired Man

Warren is the husband, **Mary** is the wife, **Silas** is the hired man. Silas apparently left during harvest season, and now Warren doesn't want to take him back. Silas is old, and can't find work. Warren can't afford to pay fixed wages, he went to find someone that could. Warren offered some pocket money, but he left during haying time. **Silas is asleep beside the stove**, came up from **Rowe's**, Did nothing but kept nodding when he was asked where he had been. Silas worked together with **Harold Wilson** to work the farm. Wilson went to college, finished. Problem is to think of something to say too late, **Harold Studied Latin**, Silas

felt that school wasn't good for Harold, and wanted to teach him to build a load of hay again. If he could do that, he can be of good use. He felt that he was useless in books. Silas has come home to die. Warren wants him to go 13 miles to his brother's place.

Brother was a director in the bank. Silas isn't bad, but isn't good either, so ashamed to face his brother, who is successful.

"Small sailing cloud hit the moon" – I got no idea what it means. Warren goes to find Silas, and he's dead

Class Notes:

Mary – compassionate, insight, understanding. **Warren** – defensive, fed up with Silas, cares about Silas inside.

Harold – argued with Silas as farmhand. Book smart, became professor. Life pointless, too competitive, **only skill – stack hay**

Black sheep – shame of the family

Carl Sandburg – Son of Swedish immigrants. Fought in Spanish American War in 1898. Wrote accounts of war for hometown newspaper. Quit school, worked at various jobs. Became reporter for Chicago Daily News. The **Biographer of Abe Lincoln**. **75th B-Day pronounced Carl Sandburg Day** by governor of Illinois. **Greatly influenced by Whitman, free verse.** Energy, moning, imagery, vivid, vibrant, **folk singer**

Chicago

City of the Big Shoulders – industrial city, Hog Butcher, tool maker, stacker of wheat, railroad central

Bagging on industrialism, **Wicked** - women under gas lamps luring farm boys. **Crooked** - gunmen kill and go free to kill again

Brutal – women and children with **"wanton hunger"** The big deal of people laughing, laughing like they never lost a battle, laughing at the wealth, industrialism, laughing at the stormy, dust filled sky.

Prayers of Steel – Beat me into a crowbar, let me pry loose old walls, knock down buildings, use me to build new buildings. Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper together. Another example of bagging on industrialism

Grass – I cover all, over Austerlitz and Waterloo. I cover all, I recycle all. Pile them at Gettysburg, Verdun, Ypres. I will cover it, and later, no one will ever know what happened. 20 years later, people will ask the conductor: What is this place?

Imagism – began with **Ezra Pound, American Poet in London**. He named it, chief principles. Concentrated on Image, common language, complete freedom in choice of subject. **W. C. Williams** another imagist. **Influential on TS Eliot**

In a Station – The apparition of these faces in the crowd, petals on a wet, black bough

Fan Piece – O fan of white silk, clear as first on the grass blade, you also are laid aside.

The Red Wheelbarrow – So much depends upon a red wheel barrow, glazed with rain water, beside the white chickens

These are literally the entire poems. These are the 2 or 3 line thingies, and Wilfred says they're on the test

Wallace Stevens – Believed in living in the real world. believed in reality, enhanced by imagination.

Was a corporate executive, lawyer, poet. Independent of any literary circle. Tries to get readers to see world in new light.

Difference between the mundane and uncommon and elusive world.

Anecdote of the Jar – Stuck a jar in **Tennessee**, wilderness surrounded it, nothing special, gray and bare, just normal

Disillusionment at 10 o'clock – house is haunted, but by white guys, not green, with rings, nothing strange, nothing fancy

Only people to dream of anything special is drunken sailors, catches tigers, in **"red weather"**

Mundane lines, unexciting lines, only drunken sailor had excitement

William Carlos Williams – used simple things. Imagist. **Lived in New Jersey**. Met Pound, began to write. Didn't like to allude to history, art, religion, and foreign languages. Liked to write about immediate life. Wrote Red Wheelbarrow Favorite bird is the **sparrow**, influenced by **Whitman, Pound**. Used ordinary speech.

The dance - Breughel's picture, **The Kermess**, dancers, having fun, everyone fat, not worried about appearance, just having fun.

Unsophisticated, but joyful, comfortable, not graceful, but energetic, confusion, but lively.

Poem – Cat, climbs over top of jam closet, right foot first, then hind foot stepped down into the empty flower pot

Ezra Pound – started Imagism, went to Europe. Wanted to "make it new" Used direct treatment of the subject, the immediate and most exact presentation of what the poet had to say. **Encouraged TS Eliot to write the way he advocated**. Edited Eliot's Wasteland, ideas reflected by WC Williams, used in works of Hemingway. Uses lots of different cultures. Born in Idaho. **People thought he was insane, St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington DC, died in Italy**.

The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter – Little girls, tie their hair, cut straight across forehead, played around front gate, pulling flowers, married at age 14, didn't even think, didn't love him, but grew to love him. Man left at age 16, went to **Kutoyen, by the "river of swirling eddies"**, and she misses her, the moss has grown, no one to clean it, no one to trod it. Time passing hurts her, the butterflies, the leaves, she grows older, she wants him to come back, she'll come meet him, as far as **Cho Fu Sa**

Marianne Moore – eccentric, baseball fan, real world writer. Called poetry cuz there's no other name for it. Compressed essays in jagged lines. Varied/weird subjects. Likes to use quotes, footnotes. Grew up in Missouri, Admired Brooklyn Dodgers,

Poetry – I dislike poetry, but reading it, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers in it, after all, a place for the genuine. We cannot understand, something so unintelligible. Poems are written with riddle like terms that it can be interpreted to mean almost anything. “high sounding interpretations” make poetry useful only to the educated. Alludes to baseball bats, elephants. Business documents and schoolbooks are important, Poetry is useless if people can’t relate to it. Conversational tone, have to have truth

TS Eliot – Influenced by Pound, poet, critic, influential, **The Age of Eliot – early 20th century**. Father founded Unitarian church in St. Louis, Principle founder of G. Washington U and Smith Academy, Became a British citizen, announced loyalty to Church of England, spent years in London.

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock – Intro from Dante’s Inferno, one of the damned. Patient etherized upon a table, he’s going to meet his bride/groom’s family. They were phony, talking of Michelangelo, but didn’t know what they were talking about. Yellow fog rubs against windows, yellow smoke rubs on Windows. I have measured my life with **coffee spoons**, didn’t dare to try anything new, never dared to dream.

Cummings – weird setup, weird formatting, but simple feelings. **Painter as well as Poet.** His poetry has that “Look” to it. Raised in MA, Lived in Paris, took up painting, returned to New York. Romantic writer

Anyone Lived in Pretty How Town – Anyone – guy – not happy, no friends, children saw this, adults didn’t

Noone – girl – loved anyone, connected to him. Townspeople went on with their lines, children lost their sensitivity as they grew up. Anyone dies, noone attends funeral, died short time after – reason for living. Anyone and Noone died side by side, life went on. The town is phony, everyone so caught up being in a “perfect” environment, they forget all the stuff they’re missing in life

Pity This – Progress is a comfortable disease, we are all victims. Death and life safely beyond. We can play with the bigness of littleness, using electrons microscopes, turn a razorblade in a mountain range. We can distort anything, and we enjoy it to cover our problems. Why live in this phony world? Doctors know how to kill, they know what’s waiting, lets go..

Harlem Renaissance – 20’s, black writing, art, music, Harlem, New York. McKay – oldest of Harlem Renaissance writers, 1st to publish. Born in Jamaica, money from Institute of Arts/Letters allowed him to emigrate **Toomer** – raised in WA, DC.

Langston Hughes – associated with the life of Harlem. Depicted joys, troubles, and hopes of its people. Went to Africa, Europe, the Weary Blues. Immigration of blacks during WWII, thrived economically, were not isolated, mecca of black culture,

Apollo/Cotton Club – Jazz Clubs. New Jazz cultural center.

The Tropics in New York – McKay – Best fruits, plants, fit for highest prize. However, everything’s phony, not real. “And, hungry for the old, familiar ways, I turned aside and bowed my head and wept”. Brought back memories of fruit trees, dewy dawns, etc.

The Negro Speaks of Rivers – Hughes – he knows rivers, Euphrates, Congo, Nile, Mississippi, he’s seen the world, he’s been everywhere. He’s seen the progress made, he knows of the ancient race. I – blacks

As I Grow Older – Hughes – He had a dream, he had almost forgotten it, but it was there. Then, a wall rose, right in front of him, a wall that he cannot overcome. It touched the sky. Shadow, I am black. Nothing in front of me, only this wall. He tries to break through the wall, to the sun, the goals on the other side. Hughes’ plea against discrimination of blacks and minorities

Any Human to Another – Cullen – Everyone has problems, they pierce to the marrow, through the fat, and past the bone. Our problems are interconnected, diverse yet single, no one can escape. Everyone’s living in the same world, no matter if you’re shy, if you speak, you still have problems. Other cannot help you, because no one can understand, newly wed couple?

Robert Penn Warren – critic, writer. 1st Poet Laureate, won Pulitzer three times. Rich, productive life, lots of awards.

Nicknamed “**Red**” Warren. Wrote, poetry, non fiction, dramas, novels, short stories, wrote almost everything but musical comedy

Why Boy came to Lonely Place – Limestone and cedar, indigo shadow. The sky is flawlessly blue, only the cicada speaks

No birds, Why have I come? You are yourself only by luck, disaster, or chance. Have you come all this way to doubt your ID?

Why did you come? At age 13, ignorant, with the cheese sandwich crumbling, lettuce brown curled, canteen dry

Under the ragged shadow of cedar, you count your years, and wonder if the world would care if you died. You say the name they gave you, that’s all you are, you move your fingers down your face, and wonder how many years you’ll be what you are, to find who you are, you come to this lonely place.

W.H Auden – Witty, sophisticated, poet, **politically conscious, socialist. Born in England, came to US.** Came in his 30’s, Went to many other countries, died in England. Born in York, Prolific poet. Took up Christianity in the US

The Unknown Citizen – the man with a perfect life is unknown. This dude was counted by the Census, no complaints, no bad work records, no criminal records, hospitalized once, released, served the Greater community, had a good job, paid his dues, didn’t have odd views, fully insured, everything was perfect, but he wasn’t free, he was trapped in society, since nothing went wrong, people don’t even know he exists. Common citizen is not well known, the silent majority, very modern,

Theodore Roethke – Big blond man, used a image of a dancing bear in a poem, varsity tennis coach, poetry reflects violence and starin and the struggle toward serenity and wisdom. 10 years to write 1 book.

Elegy for Jane – extremities of emotion, honest emotion, expressive, no pretense, frail, yet energetic and lively
Nature cannot console narrator of her death, helpless to bring her back, recognize his lack of relationship and her special state
I remember lots of things about her, all the good things, balanced in the delight of her thought, her song trembling the twigs and small branches, ponytail, liked to sing, really like nature, when she was sad, went to sit around in nature, but nature cannot comfort the narrator now. “The sides of wet stones cannot console me, nor the moss, wound with the last light. My Sparrow, you are not here.” Wants to wake her up, “over the damp grave I speak the words of my love: I, with no rights in this matter, neither father nor lover.”

Elizabeth Bishop – Lived in Florida, New England, Brazil, recall those of Moore, charges her poems with expressions of emotion.
The Fish – Caught this big fish, he had several hooks in his mouth, he’s fought many battles, blood coming out of the gills, noticed his really big eyes, **5 old pieces of fish line**, saw the hooks, victory filled up the little rented boat, oil had spread a rainbow around the rusted engine, rainbow, rainbow, rainbow, and he let the fish go...

Randall Jarrell – Emerged after WWII, wrote about WWII, life is life because of poetry, w/o it, we’re animals. Grew up during the Depression,

The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner – **He’s 6 miles up**, firing a machine gun, gave up his sleep for the Stae, gave his life for the state, woke back to see people firing at him, when they landed, he’s diced.

Margaret Walker – Long free verse, “I want to write the songs of my people” Black. Introduced into poetry by Whitman, carried into 20th century by Sandberg, Helped revive the ballad tradition, Civil Rights “Activist” – not really arrested

Childhood – I knew red miners wearing carbide lamps, covered with red dust from Ishkooda mines, Lifeless, dinner buckers in their hands, muttering as they go by. Also lived in farmland, filled with famine, terror, flood, plague, sentiment and hatred still held sway and only bitter land was washed away. Making reference to slavery.

Richard Wilbur – Writes about the point of life, about the goals in life, graceful, elegant. Born in NYC, fought for Italy in WWII

Boy at the Window – Worried about the snowman, watching from inside, boy thinks it’s too cold outside, that he should bring him inside, where it’s warm. Worried about the wind. Snowman doesn’t want to go inside and die, but is moved to see the youngster cry, melts enough to drop from one soft eye, trickle of the purest rain, a tear for the child at the bright pand surrounded by such warmth, such light, such love, and so much fear.

James Merrill – father was the founder of Merrill Lynch. Had a good life until age 12, governess, Mademoiselle, but parents divorced at 12, point of poems is seeking through memories of the past to the meaning of the disrupted patters of human lives.

Marsyas – Marsyas is a satyr to found Athena’s discarded flute, learned to play, challenged Apollo, god of music/poetry, Muses were judges, Apollo won, skinned Marsyas alive.

I used to write in café sometimes, poems on menus, read all over town, or talked out before ever written down, one day a girl brought in his latest book, I opened it, gorgeous rhymes, made a face, crash, my cup upset, 20 upward looks mine only met, his that gold archaic lion’s book. Basically, the person took every skill that he worked so hard to get, and “heard the lucked nerve’s elemental twang. They found me dangling where his golden wind inflicted so much music on the lyre that no one could have told you what he sang.”

Anne Sexton – Worked as high school teacher, poetry should be a shock to the senses. Embrace life’s terrible changes

The Fortress – Kid is perfect, under the pink covers, asleep, but the mole, under the left eye, to foul up the picture. The wind’s still blowing, signifying the constant threat of nature, She wants to protect her, but it’s out of her hands. Life’s changes will happen, from inside or out, nothing anyone can do. When the world goes nutz, what ark (Noah) can she fill? She cannot promise that she can protect her forever, but she does promise the child love, and time “will not take that away”

Rita Dove – faculty at U of Virginia, blend oral traditions with literary concerns, autobiographical. Range through centuries of the African American historical past, but also talks about other subjects.

Grape Sherbet – Dad appears with his masterpiece on Memorial Day, recipe’s a secret, everyone’s celebrating, having fun, enjoying sherbert, putting salt on a melon that makes it sweeter. However, the grandmother, who is diabetic, cannot take part int eh festivities, and doesn’t agree with it. Her disappointment can be seen easily. Now, after the child as grown up, he understood that his father wanted to plant these memories while he had a chance, because now, the opportunity is gone...