

# Catcher in the rye

## chapter 14



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Catcher in the Rye – Chapter 14 “ Old Maurice unbuttoned his whole uniform coat. All he had on underneath was a phony shirt collar, but no shirt or anything.” This is one of the rare instances when Holden’s definition of “ phony” is seen. Maurice is dressed in his complete work uniform, yet beneath the outer layer that everyone will see is absolutely nothing, save for a fake collar. He is not donning a real uniform, but pieces of it, which shows that he might not take his job as seriously as he may let others believe.

“ The goddam movies. They can ruin you. I’m not kidding.” This quote is made after the scene in which Holden imagines what he would do to Maurice if he had the chance, and the things to make it happen. That, and if he really had been shot in the stomach, instead of punched. This falls under Holden’s views of what is, or is not, phony. The whole scene he imagined was phony. There was not even the slimmest chance that it could happen, even if he did have what it took to follow through with it. He found the perfect definition of phony within himself; he thought of a complete scenario, played it through in his mind, and then came back to reality again.

Furthermore, he blamed something else on vastness of his imagination.

While movies may have been the core of it, Holden was the one to let his imagination run away with him.

“ What I really felt like, though, was committing suicide. I felt like jumping out the window. I probably would’ve done it, too, if I’d been sure somebody’d cover me up as soon as I landed. I didn’t want a bunch of stupid rubbernecks looking at me when I was all gory.” This quote shows a bit of a reflection on how Holden views himself, though it can be interpreted in two ways. One, his overall feelings are that he would feel ashamed for committing suicide, and not wanting others to know how weak he is. Two, he could feel that he is too

high above those that would be interested in his committing suicide. Either way, he does not want the involvement of others in his extremely personal affairs.

Holden's character grows a little bit more in this chapter. The opening scene of the chapter shows Holden thinking about and talking out loud to his deceased younger brother Allie. Holden's sense of guilt towards his younger brother is obvious in this section. While Holden says that he sometimes talks to Allie when he feels depressed, it seems that by doing this it only feeds his depression.

Holden seems even more vulnerable in this chapter, by the way he reacts to Maurice and Sunny, and by his thoughts regarding suicide towards the end of the chapter. He lets his weakness show by crying during his encounter with Maurice, and then by showing that Maurice intimidates him. He blames a large portion of his reactions on the fact that he was wearing his pajamas. Sunny is the teenage prostitute, and Maurice is her pimp. Sunny, despite her little girlish voice, is frightening, but not as much as Maurice is. Maurice is, as Holden describes, a "real ... dirty moron." Maurice had gone to Holden's hotel room to demand money that Holden claimed he did not owe him. Sunny did not back either of them up, but proceeded to take the money from Holden's wallet, much to his dismay. The interaction between the three of them brought out Holden's weak side, showing him to be not as well-together as he can tend to let on to others.