

Titlea finny and gene are exact opposites

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Title A Separate Peace introduces two main characters; Finny and Gene in the novel "A Separate Peace" by John Knowles.

In the end, Finny who is fit and strong Dies while Gene who seems to be weak and has bad traits like jealousy survives. While Finny seems physically stronger and better than Gene, he is emotionally weaker and ends up dying, whereas Gene who is physically weaker than Finny is emotionally stronger and is better at confronting reality. Finny is physically stronger than Gene, good-natured, has an effulgent aura and self - confident. Finny and Gene are exact opposites with Finny being physically stronger than Gene, while Gene is emotionally stronger than Finny. Finny is physically stronger than Gene, he plays more sports than he does and has accomplished great achievements like he broke the swimming record.

Finny breaks the school record by . 7 seconds but he doesn't tell anybody or brag about it. Finny seems shocked when he beat the record: "' Well, how did I {Finny} Do?' I {Gene} looked at the watch; he had broken A. Hopkins Parker's record by .

7 seconds" (P. 43). Finny then tells Gene not to tell anybody about it "' It's just between you and me. Don't say anything about it, too. . . anyone.'" (P. 44). Finally, Gene is surprised by Finny not wanting to gloat and tell others about it, then realizing that Finny is good-natured and humble "' Not say anything about it! When you just broke the school record!' ' Sh-h-h-h-h!' he {Finny} shot a blazing, agitated glance at me {Gene}. I stopped and looked at him up and down. He didn't look directly back at me.

' You're too good to be true,' I {Gene} said after a while." (P. 44).

After that Gene talks about Finny's accomplishment took root in his mind and grew rapidly in the darkness where he was forced to hide it, which I will talk about in the next paragraph. This reinforces the point that Finny is physically strong and also connects with his trait of being good-natured and doesn't brag about it and rub it into others faces. Another example of Finny being physically stronger is that Finny is amazing at blitzball. While playing blitzball Gene mentions how physically strong Finny is: " In a non-stop game he also had the natural advantage of a flow of energy which I never saw interrupted. I never saw him tired, never really winded, never overcharged and never restless. At dawn, all day long, at midnight, Phineas always had a steady and formidable flow of usable energy.

" (P. 39-40). Finny is clearly physically strong but he dies in the end, but Gene has a lot of weaknesses that keep him alive. Gene has a variety of prodigious weaknesses, but he is inured to it over the course of the novel. Gene has an inner darkness, he is jealous with Finny and has a rivalry with him. Gene comes to realize his jealousy for Finny after he gets in trouble: " This time he wasn't {Finny} going to get away with it.

I could feel myself becoming unexpectedly excited at that" (P. 27). Gene also comes to the realization of him creating a false jealousy between him and Finny: " Any fear I had ever had of the tree was nothing beside this. It wasn't my neck, but my understanding which was menaced. He had never been jealous of me a second.

Now I knew that there never was and never could have been any rivalry between us. I was not of the same quality as he" (P. 59).

Gene comes to realize he created this fake jealousy and competition and creates a false feeling of enmity between himself and Finny. Gene's weaknesses turn out to be his strengths and because Finny's main weakness is that he's unable to confront reality, it ultimately leads to his death. Gene thinks to himself after Finny gets in trouble: " I couldn't help envying him that a little, which was perfectly normal. There was no harm in envying even your best friend a little" (P. 25). Gene has a passivity with his inner darkness and jealousy for Finny and with his somewhat design action he is fine with this and this supposed weakness later turns out to be his strength.

Finny thinks the war is fake and created by fat old men. Finny is incongruous with his own reality with Gene and he can't even come to the realization of the war that's going on around him. " Do you really think that the United States of America is in a state of war with Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan?" (P. 115), Finny told Gene as it was a joke. Finny then goes on about the roaring twenties and how ' they' created the war: " That's what this whole war story is.

A medical drug. Listen, did you ever hear of the ' Roaring Twenties'?" (P. 115).

Finny goes on about how they also created the depression: " So then they tried Prohibition and everybody just got drunker, so then they really got desperate and arranged the Great Depression." (P. 115). When Gene is

surprised and doesn't know who ' they' are who created the war that Finny is talking about, and he responds with the crazy illusion that fat old men created it: " The fat old men who don't want us crowding them out of their jobs.

They've made it all up." (P. 115). Finny and other boys are talking about the contentious topic of Finny injuring his leg because of Gene.

Finny can't handle the truth of what Gene did to him, and he runs out the room angry, leading to his death: "' You get all your facts!' I had never seen Finny crying, {Gene talking here} ' You collect every f—ing fact there is in the world!' He {Finny} plunged out the doors... Then these separate sounds collided into the general tumult of his body falling clumsily down the white marble stairs". The Final and most salient piece of evidence are when Finny can't confront the reality that Gene hurt him, and after the boys are implausible that Gene hurt him, Finny ran from his problems and ending up hurting himself even more than before resulting in his death. Gene survives because his apparent weaknesses turn out to be his strengths. All of this leads to a point that John Knowles was trying to make tacit, of to survive in this world you need to be emotionally strong, not just physically strong. Knowles is suggesting that humans not only need to be physically strong, but they need to be emotionally strong and stable.

We see a very strong and good-natured kid like Phineas, but he ends up dying not because he was maimed or because he wasn't physically strong enough, but because he wasn't emotionally strong enough. Gene's weaknesses turned out to be his strengths throughout the book with his

inner darkness and a false sense of jealousy helping him confront reality where Phineas can't and hides from it with lies and running from the truth.