

The people in
seymour glass???
s ???tragic life???
involved in many
ways by changi...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A Perfect Day for Bananafish is a small piece from the lives of Muriel and Seymour Glass. These two characters are married and have driven from their hometown, New York to Florida where they are on an unexpected vacation.

This is a story which brings confusion as well as deeper meaning to emotions a person must have experienced, personally, during a terrible event such as war. Salinger has written the story in an abnormal manner, but still makes the occurrences in the story seem common. The opening of the story takes place in the hotel room where the first character, Muriel is busy pampering herself while waiting for a phone call. We read that she only picks up the phone after five rings and absolutely takes her time to get to it.

You could assume that she is quite popular and that she is not surprised by the phone ringing for her. Her mother on the other side of the phone is clearly worried about Muriel as she immediately starts the conversation with "I've been worried to death about you." and "Are you all right, Muriel?" (86). We as readers learn at this scene that Seymour was in the war and have spent some time in a veteran's hospital. From the conversation of Muriel and her mother we can conclude that he has tried funny things with Muriel's father's car and that he is in a world of his own especially in relation to death. Her mother is neurotic about Seymour and his troubles, but cold at the same time. These two women are perfect examples of being materialistic by the way they talk about fashion and thinking that everything can be bought.

The story then changes to the beach where Seymour is chitchatting with a little girl. Sybil Carpenter is a little girl Seymour finds friendship from and could possibly also be attracted to. She resembles innocence and this is what Seymour is looking for. The difference between adulthood and childhood is the way you would experience life and the ability to see deeper meanings. Seymour finds qualities in Sybil he does not find in Muriel. The world Sybil lives in is much different from the one Muriel is in. Mrs. Carpenter is young Sybil??'™'s mother and is not paying much attention to her daughter??'™'s pleasures.

She applies suntan lotion to Sybil and afterwards moves back into the hotel to take care of her own materialistic pleasures such as drinking a martini. Like Muriel, Mrs. Carpenter pays more attention to herself and do not consider herself as responsible for the immature person she needs to look after. In connection to Sybil and Seymour, both needs the support, but are typically overlooked. The color blue is an important symbol of purity in this story as Seymour sees Sybil??'™'s bathing suit as blue, but it does not bother him that it is yellow in reality. Colors of his trunks are also blue. The symbolic meaning of these colors is quite unclear.

Blue is a color frequently linked with inexperience and holiness. He sees the traits of virtuousness and simplicity in both, himself and Sybil. He swims with Sybil in the blue waters of the ocean where he experiences divine purity of being young and still innocent. This occurrence moved Seymour in either a positive or negative way. He could have thought that there are in fact still people out there, whom are not materialistic, but Sybil is still young and

when she grows up it is most likely that she will also become materialistic like her mother.

Thus, he decided that he no longer wants a physical part in this world and wants to make a break from the reality of materialism he finds in most adults. He, himself used to be materialistic and do not want to be that way anymore. Seymour is very pale and ???..

. he needs the sun.??? (90) symbolizes the material chase of getting too much sun. Muriel is inside because she is badly burned while Seymour is protecting himself against the sun just like Sybil is protected by tanning oil. Their skins are tender and being burned by the sun keeps them from having fun. So, we can associate being burned as wanting too much of something that is not good for you.

The woman in the elevator had ??? zinc??? on her nose which tells you that she also most probably burned referring to materialism. Seymour covers himself with a bathing rope to protect himself against the sun, but this is in fact a comparison of how he protects himself from the materialistic world. The war changed many things in Seymour??'™s life. He went the war as a normal person, but came out as a changed man. This change caused him to not want to be in his physical existence. Seymour is by himself on an isolated piece of the beach. He secludes himself from other adults. He loved his wife and he used to get pleasure from being materialistic, but he experienced something during the war that makes him think differently about previous matters.

He now lives in his own world and is lonely and as Muriel??'™'s mother says “ Seymour may completely lose control of himself.” (87). Seymour uses ??? bananafish???' as a metaphor for physical needs and pleasures.

He suspects himself of having ??? banana fever???' and therefore he kills himself. After the scene with Sybil, we cannot exactly point out if he does have mental issues. Perhaps he is psychologically wobbly, or he is probably lonely and likes youngsters and has been judged wrongly by materialistic people like Muriel??'™'s mother.

When Seymour in fact accuses the woman in the elevator of staring at his feet, and telling her that she is a ??? god-damned sneak???' (96) we see that he has not been judged wrongly and that he is rather mentally unstable as he kills himself right after this particular scene. This could have been the last signs to him that he has ??? banana fever???' and will have to kill himself to get relieve himself from it. Although it is all in his mind, it was busy taking over his world and he could no longer be part of it as he was very different than the rest of the adults. He could not spend time with youngsters for the rest of his life, just to make an escape of the reality of his insecurity.

Seymour cannot see his life with his wife any longer as they are now looking for different ethics in life. He feels guilt for not being with her, but rather spends time with Sybil in whom he now found the same ethics of life he is looking for. It basically contrasts the world of greediness like Muriel, Muriel??'™'s mother and Mrs.

Carpenter would experience it to the world of Sybil??'™'s emergent life. Muriel cannot understand his feelings and why he has changed so severely into a

mentally ill person. When he walks into the room to kill himself and finds her sleeping he does not wake her. It is an indication that the marriage has lost close connection. She is dead to the world of Seymour???'s troubles, because she is so trapped in her own materialistic desires, and therefore she is missing what is crucial to his life. Sybil on the other hand says that she has ??? seen??? one of these ??? bananafish???(95) and Seymour finds more of a connection towards her. He actually thinks that Sybil is talking about him as this ??? bananafish??? which she has ??? seen???.

This makes him feel remorse and he gets obsessed with the feeling. The deeper meaning to the ??? bananafish??? could perhaps also be a metaphor for soldiers killing their opponents and then cannot take the responsibility anymore and then kill themselves. Seymour says ??? They lead a very tragic life??? (94) which indicates that he is having a tough time fitting in with the society yet again. Him looking at his wife, asleep, before he fires the pistol to his temple shows us that this was according to him a ??? perfect day??? for taking away his guilt. (1, 350 words)