

A Study of J. D. Salinger

—About the suffering youths—

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Introduction

I cannot forget the vivid emotion I felt when I read "Franny" written by J. D. Salinger for the first time. I was deeply impressed by the profound study of human conflict between love and egotism rather than the simple story of one attractive college girl. Franny, on the verge of a nervous breakdown, seeks for something which can save her from her miserable condition.

"...in which vivid human characters are involved in the basic human conflict between love and what Salinger's Esmé calls spualor ... that is, evil, trouble, inhumanity and sin..."⁽¹⁾

J. D. Salinger was born in New York City in 1919 to a Jewish father and a Christian mother and spent most of his life in and around it. He has experienced personally the most civilized life in the world and has been troubled by the factors which ruin human life. The twentieth century can be said to be the period of machine civilization. After the war America took a leading position in the world and owing to remarkable industrial development, she consolidated her national power all the more. In *The Lonely Crowd*, David Riesman refers to many difficult sufferings in our inner lives. According to his opinion one of the characteristics of upper-class people in recent America is "other-directed men" who are content with only their material lives. They cannot have mental stability within their inner lives and are always conscious of the lives of others. It is how others think and how they behave that are important to them. They are in agony by a vague feeling of unrest. D. L. Stevenson says as follows;

"...it is a crisis in a character's life or personality peculiar to upper-middle-class, mid-century America. It is related to our sense of the heightened vulnerability of men and women to emotional disaster."⁽²⁾

(1) Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph L. Blotner, *The Fiction of J. D. Salinger*, (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), p. 3.

(2) David L. Stevenson, "Mirror of Crisis," *Salinger*, Introduced and edited by H. A. Grunwald, (New York, 1962), p. 38.

As for Salinger, in the jacket of *Franny and Zooey*, he says, "I live in Westport with my dog." In real life, however, they say he neither lives in Westport nor has a dog in his house. By these words, I can imagine such sort of men as "other-directed men": that is, Salinger may also be one of those who can neither have their mental stability nor lead their lives by their own belief. This spiritual tragedy is mainly caused by the abuse of freedom and civilization. In this civilized society, the struggle for existence is so hard that some people cannot endure it. They are too sensitive to watch people struggling. Salinger describes how these sensitive youths find their ways to go out into the society. They watch society with their pure eyes and try to search for something to give them inner stability in order to live in the modern world. For example, in his first and only novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*, Salinger writes about the loneliness of a boy student named Holden Caulfield, who cannot endure the egotism of the grown-ups around him. He has no desire for the future except the very childish dream ...to be "the catcher in the rye". As many boys cherish in their childhood, he has neither the dream of becoming a great man nor a famous man. He only wants to save the children playing in the field from the danger. Salinger feels sympathy with Holden who is seriously sick in mind and understands his desire.

Salinger named this illness "banana fever". H. A. Grunwald comments on this illness, "...the disease has two symptoms: a kind of incapacity to purge one's emotion, and a chronic hypersensitivity or sense of loss."⁽³⁾ Those suffering from this illness, the victims of "banana fever", are described in his works as rather eccentric people and Salinger manages to find the remedy for this illness. Seymour Glass is driven to suicide, Holden Caulfield cannot bear the phoniness of his friends and his teachers, and Franny Glass feels nausea to other people's egocentricity.

Salinger precisely and impressively observes these youths who deviate from ordinary people. Observing each phase of the cause and the actual condition, I want to follow Salinger's development through their salvation, in other words, the remedy of the "banana fever."

By the way, Salinger is known for his minor works: the only novel, two short novels, and about thirty short stories, published over a period of almost twenty years. For this paper, I chose three works as texts: "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" published in 1948, *The Catcher in the Rye* in 1950, and "Franny" in 1955.

(I)

"A Perfect Day for Bananafish", one of the most famous and discussed short stories, is significant in two points. First, it is the first story about the Glass family

(3) William Wiegand, "The Cures for Banana Fever", *Salinger*, p. 115.

and second, he is successful in describing impressively a man who is ruined by the cruelty of the materialistic elements which surround him.

Here I want to introduce the Glass family briefly. They consist of nine members. The parents, Les Glass who is a Jewish and Bessie Gallagher, a fat Irish lady, and seven children with brilliant characters. The oldest, and psychotic Seymour may be introduced later. The second son Buddy is a writer as shy and as cynical as Seymour. The next child and the first daughter is Boo Boo Glass. The twins, Waker and Walt, follow her. Waker becomes a Catholic priest and Walt is a good-natured man and the favorite of the mother. The sixth child Zooey becomes a TV actor. The youngest child is Frances, a lovely girl called Franny. They are all charming and distinguished and closely knitted with the strong love.

“The fact that the Glass family is large and closely knit is also important to the feelings Salinger cares most about. The essential reality for him subsists in personal relations, when people, however agonizingly, love one another...Their subject is the power to love, pure and-in children and the childlike-simple, but in aware people, pure and complicated.”⁽⁴⁾

“A Perfect Day for Bananafish” is mainly written about Seymour. He was born in February in 1917 and at the age of fifteen, he enters Columbia and takes a Ph. D. in English Department. On June 4, 1942, he gets married to Muriel Fedder.

The whole story is divided into three parts. In the first scene, in which Seymour Glass does not appear, his personal history and the present background of his life is presented in a long telephone conversation between his wife Muriel and her mother Mrs. Fedder. Then the story shifts to a beach scene, where the last and most significant key to solve his suffering is symbolically described in the bananafish story. And lastly, the scene moves to the suicide of Seymour, which is the climax of this story.

A fashionable resort place in Florida is the scene of this story and I can easily imagine the atmosphere of the hotel where intolerable impudent people, suggested by the advertising man, gather around. According to the telephone conversation, Seymour seems to me a pale, skinny, delicate, nervous man in his thirties. The reason Mrs. Fedder is very anxious for her daughter is that he has just come out of a military hospital but has not completely recovered from dementia. Originally Seymour likes to spend an extraordinary meditative life. It is, however, interrupted by his marriage to Muriel. His unusual sensitivity cannot be reconciled with the actual world. Since he cannot live except in the imaginative world, he looks to Muriel to help his effort to reconcile himself to the actual world. Muriel, however, is a very practical kind of woman whose main concern is to spend her time reading a woman's sex magazine. Seymour is at the far end of her comprehension. To say comparatively

(4) Marvin Laser and Norman Fruman, *Studies in J. D. Salinger*, (New York, 1963), p. 210.

Muriel is much stronger than he to live through the world. Muriel seems to be eccentric to everyone in the Glass family. For example, in the following passage, I can imagine her figure.

“I’ve met the girl. She’s a zero in my opinion but terrific-looking...I don’t know anything about the romance itself at all, except that they apparently met when Seymour was stationed at Monmouth last winter.....She told me she just wishes Seymour would relate to more people.”⁽⁵⁾

Boo Boo hates the day when Seymour gets married to Muriel, saying “I hate 1942. I think I’ll hate 1942 till I die.”⁽⁶⁾ In this way Seymour cannot spiritually communicate with his wife, in spite of loving her. Answering the question of Sybil when Seymour happens to meet her on the beach in Florida, he says “She (=Muriel) may be in any one of a thousand places.⁽⁷⁾ He cannot enter into these thousand places. It is only Sybil a little girl of four, who can communicate with him at the time.

On the beach, they are talking about the bananafish. According to him, it has a habit of swimming into a hole and eating too many bananas to get out again and thus die of banana-fever in the hole.

“Well, they swim into a hole where there’s lots of bananas. They’re very ordinary-looking fish when they swim in. But once they get in, they behave like pigs. Why, I’ve known some bananafish to swim into a bananahole and eat as many as seventy-eight bananas. ...Naturally, after that they’re so fat they can’t get out of the hole again. Can’t fit through the door.”⁽⁸⁾

The story of bananafish is nothing but Seymour’s fantasy, but Sybil believes what Seymour tells her about the bananafish.

“I just saw one.”

“Saw what, my love.”

“A bananafish.”

“My God, no!” said the young man. “Did he have any bananas in his mouth?”

“Yes,” said Sybil. “Six.”⁽⁹⁾

Suddenly, Seymour picks up Sybil’s feet and kisses the arch, and says to her

(5) J. D. Salinger, *Raise High the Roof Beams, Carpenters and Seymour An Introduction*, (London, 1963), pp. 9-10.

(6) *Ibid.*, p. 11.

(7) J. D. Salinger, “A Perfect Day for Bananafish”, *Nine Stories*, (The New American Library, U. S. A., 1963), p. 13.

(8) *Ibid.*, p. 16.

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 17.

"You just keep your eyes open for any bananafish. This is a *perfect* day for bananafish."⁽¹⁰⁾ Swimming, she suddenly cried and went back to the hotel by herself, and then he came back to his room.

It is Sybil, a little girl, that brought him the chance to commit suicide. He feels something touching by her innocent obedience. An innocent remark of Sybil frightens Seymour and makes clear the actual situation for him. As Leslie Fielder says, "In 'A Perfect Day for Bananafish' he (=Salinger) shows how Seymour Glass, a not entirely vicious adult, is awakened by the innocence of a child to enough awareness of the lost world he inhabits to kill himself!"⁽¹¹⁾

Seymour notices that he ate too many bananafish and he cannot live again in this world. He knows that he has failed in finding the way to live in this world. Just before the suicide, he quarrels with a woman in the elevator from his wild fancy. By nature he is full of fancy. The actual world only causes him to suffer, therefore he escapes from the actuality and tries to find comfort in the imaginative world where fancy has much meaning. The quarrel with the woman shows his last struggle against the world. Consoled neither by his wife nor the little girl, he gives up the struggle between the two worlds and withdraws from the real world.

Anyway, the suicide should be regarded as an escape from reality. However, Seymour considers it the best salvation to settle his problem. I think Salinger shows a very negative and shocking end in the first stage.

(II)

Before the publication of "Franny" Salinger wrote one novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*, which seems to be the last description of his savior of child's innocence.

Seymour Glass was unable to keep up with the actual life. His solution of suffering is completely negative. Then Salinger offers a much younger suffering youth, Holden Caulfield in *The Catcher in the Rye*. He once wanted to escape from actual life like Seymour. However, he is barely relieved from suffering when his nervous depression grows worse.

Holden Caulfield, the hero of this story is now in hospital under medical treatment. This is written in a style of the first person narrative of Holden and he looks back upon the three days before when he runs away from his third school, Pencey Prep School, (he had flunked out of Elkton School and Whooton School by then) and wanders in New York, where, his family lives.

On the opening page, the hero of this novel says, "I'm not going to tell you my whole goddam autobiography of anything, I'll just tell you about this madam stuff

(10) *Ibid.*, p. 16.

(11) Leslie Fielder, "The Eye of Innocence," *Salinger*, pp. 234-235.

that happened to me around last Christmas".⁽¹²⁾ In this way, the story begins with the telling of one boy-student.

Just before the Christmas vacation, he runs away from school but he is unwillingly to go home, because he has been expelled from other schools before. So he is afraid of his parents scolding him about it. He has several experiences of being expelled from school. So he wanders in New York City for three days and nights.

On a cold Saturday afternoon, a few days before vacation, Holden visits Mr. Spencer, a teacher of history, who is favorably disposed toward Holden. Mr. Spencer advises him, "Life is a game, boy. Life is a game that one plays according to the rules".⁽¹³⁾ Then Mr. Spencer picks up the poor history of Holden and begins to read loudly, which hurts the delicate sense of Holden. The teacher asks him, "Do you blame me for flunking you, boy?"⁽¹⁴⁾ I think this is all to justify his cruel act and to protect his unfair reading. In despair, Holden regrets his calling on Mr. Spencer and goes back to the dormitory. In the dormitory, however, Holden only finds his two close friends, Stradlater and Ackley: the former has an interest only in his smartness and his dates, while the latter comes to Holden's room to chatter in spite of Holden's miserable condition. What is worse, he is shocked to learn that Stradlater's date is Jane Gallagher whom he had once loved.

Disappointed with it all, he sets out to New York and stays at a hotel and calls up a call girl. He acts in a night club in Greenwich Village as if he were a grown-up. Contrary to his pretense of being a grown-up, his childish and ingenuous figure is gradually shown to us. For example, he asks where the ducks on Central Park Lake go to during winter.

"Do you happen to know where they go in the winter-time, by any chance? ...I mean does somebody come around in a truck or something and take them away, or do they fly away by themselves...go south or something?"⁽¹⁵⁾

Holden wants to call up his sister Phoebe, and Jane Gallagher. The reason why he tries to pretend to be some one to take Sally to the movie and talk with Car Luce, who is a snob, is nothing but an attempt to find his identity. He wants to recognize where he belongs.

Holden realizes that there is a great gap between the dehumanized society and the world in which he wants to live. He cannot find mental peace anywhere. Disappointed with everything again, Holden comes back home and sees his sister Phoebe. She tells him that "You don't like *anything* that's happening"⁽¹⁶⁾ and asks him what

(12) J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*, (London 1951), p. 1.

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 13.

(14) *Ibid.*, p. 16.

(15) *Ibid.*, p. 86.

(16) *Ibid.*, p. 176.

he wants to be in the future. He answers that he wants to be "the catcher in the rye."

Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids and nobody's around...nobody big, I mean...except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff ...I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and *catch* them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be. I know it's crazy."⁽¹⁷⁾

I think he means by these words that he wants to be the only grown-up in the field of rye among innocent children to protect them from the evil of the world. He knows that his dream in which he wants to let the children stay in the world of innocence and love is "crazy" and nonsense. Therefore, Holden wants to be a deaf-mute and to live where nobody knows him. He thinks of escaping to the West.

"I'd be somewhere out west where it was very pretty and sunny and where nobody'd know me and I'd get a job. I figured I could get a job at a filling station somewhere, putting gas and oil in people's cars...I thought what I'd do was, I'd pretend I was one of those deaf-mutes...and later on, if I wanted to get married or something, I'd meet this beautiful girl that was also a deaf mute and we'd get married...If we had any children we'd hide them somewhere."⁽¹⁸⁾

Holden doesn't want to be in contact with a wife and he wants to be alone. Then, from where does this feeling of isolation come? Holden is a boy of seventeen and this age is important to consider.

"I act quite young for my age sometimes. I was sixteen then, and I'm seventeen now, and sometimes I act like I'm about thirteen. It's really ironical because I'm six-foot-two-and-a-half and I have grey hairs...I've had them ever since I was a kid...Sometimes I act a lot older than I am...I really do...but people never notice it. People never notice anything."⁽¹⁹⁾

One of the examples which Holden hates is the phoniness of grown-ups. Holden thinks Pencey School is "full of phoney". "...all you do is study, so you can learn enough to be smart enough to be able to buy a goddam Cadillac some day."⁽²⁰⁾ I can see here the typical modern people mentioned by Riesman. Salinger explains about

(17) *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180.

(18) *Ibid.*, pp. 205-206.

(19) *Ibid.*, p. 13.

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 137.

the dehumanized world as follows:

“Take most people, that’re crazy about cars. They worry if they get a little scratch on them, and they’re always talking about how many miles they get to a gallon, and if they get a brand-new car already they start thinking about trading it in for one that’s even newer. I don’t even like old cars. I mean they don’t even interest me. I’d rather have a goddam horse. A horse is at least *human*, for God’s sake.”⁽²¹⁾

They want to have cars, symbols of the machine civilization. They are indifferent to spiritual happiness. Even religion is used as the means of commercialism. A rich graduate of Pencey School says to the students.

“He told us we ought to think of Jesus our buddy and all. He said *he* talked to Jesus all the time...I can just see the big phoney bastard shifting into first gear and asking Jesus to send him a few more stiffs.”⁽²²⁾

Holden does not feel anything pious in this speech. He only sees the pretence of love. In Radio City Music Hall where Holden enters to pass time, he witnesses one more example of phoniness. Reviewing the performances of the Christmas pageant on the stage, he thinks that “old Jesus probably would’ve puked if he could see it.”⁽²³⁾ He is also disappointed with the lady sitting next to him. The picture is about an English who loses his memory in the war. The lady keeps weeping all the time. “The phonier it got, the more she cried.”⁽²⁴⁾ Though she may seem to be a kind-hearted mother, she is not so kind because she won’t take her child, who is bored, to the bathroom.

One of the main reasons Holden escapes Elkton Hills is because he is surrounded by phonies. Holden cannot stand the headmaster, Mr. Haas, who gives a phoney smile, shaking hands with those whose parents seem rich.

In this way, Holden gradually notices the feeling of isolation between his inner world and the ugly world of grownups. He is suffering from the difference and wants “to recapture his identity and his hopes for belonging.”⁽²⁵⁾

He is also a victim of “banana fever,” but I can realize the development from Seymour’s renunciation of the world. Holden will live on in the quest for happiness, with confidence in humanity, no matter how he rebels against the materialism and ugliness of reality. Though Holden’s distrust for other people may be never solved in the actual loveless world, he will be able to live even with this conservative solution for life.

(21) *Ibid.*, p. 136.

(22) *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.

(23) *Ibid.*, p. 143.

(24) *Ibid.*, p. 145.

(25) Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

(III)

Franny Glass is the youngest daughter and she is a student of a woman's college. She comes to enjoy the weekend of a Yale football game with her boyfriend, Lane Cauntell whom she calls a "section man." She explains what the "section man" is; he is usually a graduate student and if a professor is absent he takes over the class, where he selfishly talks away about some literary man he writes about in his thesis for his M. A. and displeases the students. "Where I go, the English Department has about ten little section men running around ruining things for people."⁽²⁶⁾ From this explanation, I can imagine that Lane is evidently the type who talks eloquently and boastfully about his paper on Flaubert which he has got back with an "A" mark. She is disgusted with his self-satisfaction, and his behavior of speaking and eating. At last, she cries out as follows;

"I'm sick of ego, ego, ego. My own and everybody else's. I'm sick of everybody that wants to get somewhere, do something distinguished and all, be somebody interesting."⁽²⁷⁾

What is intolerable to her is all the surroundings including Lane. At this time she felt very desperate. Her nerves have been weakened by dissatisfaction with everything that surrounds her. Students are all "section men" and professors are not real poets. Lane envies that Franny has poets such as Malius and Esposito in the English Department of her college. As for the poets, however, Franny defines them as follows;

"If you're a poet, you do something beautiful. I mean you're supposed to *leave* something beautiful after you get off the page and everything."⁽²⁸⁾

In this way, Franny is conscious that she is also a victim of "banana fever" like Seymour and Holden. She is impatient with other people as well as herself. She herself cannot get rid of the world caused by her own "ego". She struggles to shake off her vanity.

In an extremity of spiritual crisis, Franny searches for help in a religious book, called "The Way of a Pilgrim," in which the author, a Russian peasant in the eighteenth Russia, disguises himself as a beggar. This story tells the reader that if we hope to be relieved from our suffering, we need to pray for it incessantly with an open mind.

(26) J. D. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, (London, 1962), p. 15.

(27) *Ibid.*, p. 29.

(28) *Ibid.*, p. 19.

“All you have to have in the beginning is quantity. Then, later on, it becomes quality by itself. On it’s own power or something.”⁽²⁹⁾

By repeating the “Jesus Prayer” so often, we can get an automatic response of our heart. Finally she recognizes the prayer to be like Nembutsu.

“...in the Nembutsu sects of Buddhism, people keep saying ‘Namu Amida Butsu’ over again...which means ‘Praises to the Buddha’ or something like that ...and the *same thing* happens.”⁽³⁰⁾

She herself says that she does not know if Christ exists in the world. When her nervous depression grows worse, she manages to find a philosophy of life, that is, she struggles to get *satori*. But finally, Franny falls down and loses her mind.

“...lay still, looking at the ceiling. Her lips began to move, forming soundless words, and they continued to move.”⁽³¹⁾

After going back to her house she locks herself in her room and refuses to let her parents see her. She ignores them and only repeats the prayers over and over. She thinks everything is “phoney.” She is disgusted with those individuals who resign themselves to the phoniness of society.

In fact, Franny’s real motive for praying is her agony which is caused by the suspicion of her own egoism rather than by other people’s egoism as represented by Lane’s and her college professor’s. She is struggling because she wants to get rid of her own egoism.

Her brother Zooey understands her agony and tells her that they have a complex of being superior to other people since they appeared in the radio cast of “It’s a Wise Child” when they were children. Anyway, they are not intolerable if others are same to them, and he asks her what ego is.

“...it would take Christ himself to decide what’s ego and what isn’t. This is God’s univese, buddy, not your’s and he has the final say about what is ego and what isn’t.”⁽³²⁾

Zooey advises her to concentrate on Jesus if she hopes to say the Jesus prayer. Reminding Franny of what Seymour asked in their childhood that they should polish the shoes for the Fat Lady, Zooey says as follows;

(29) *Ibid.*, p. 37.

(30) *Ibid.*, p. 38.

(31) *Ibid.*, p. 43.

(32) *Ibid.*, p. 139.

"There isn't anyone anywhere that isn't Seymour's Fat Lady. Don't you know that?...And don't you know...listen to me, now don't you know who that Fat Lady really is?...Ah, buddy. It's Christ Himself. Christ Himself, buddy."⁶³

She is struck by something that the symbolical Fat Lady means.

Conclusion

Salinger describes suffering youths in the dehumanized modern civilization. There is something to isolate them from society. The first outsider, Seymour Glass is beaten by Muriel, the embodiment of the cruel modern civilization, and has to kill by himself. It is a very negative salvation from his suffering but I can regard this act of self-destruction as one kind of salvation. The second outsider, Holden Caulfield is happier than Seymour, for he can barely escape from such an actual world as Seymour is driven from. At the end of his agonizing wandering, he cannot give up his quest for happiness in spite of the knowing of his failure.

"...the girl-savior appears too late to save Seymour, oldest of the Glass family; and reaches an appropriate climax in *The Catcher in the Rye*, where the savior is the little sister and the myth achieves its final form."⁶⁴

Mr. Antolini advises him that "Many, many men have been just as troubled morally and spiritually as you are right now."⁶⁵ I don't think he understands Holden properly. In the house of Mr. Antolini, Holden is shocked by the strange airs of his teacher.

"Then something happened. I don't even like to talk about it. I woke up all of a sudden...I felt something on my head, some guy's hand. Boy, it really scared hell out of me. What it was Mr. Antolini's hand. What he was doing was, he was sitting of the floor right next to the couch, in the dark and all, and he was sort of petting me or patting me on the goddam head. Boy, I'll bet I jumped about a thousand feet."⁶⁶

Holden, shaking and sweating, goes down by the elevator. He is such a boy as "When something pervertly like that happens, I start sweating like a bastard. That kind of stuff's happened to me about twenty times since I was a kid. I can't stand it."⁶⁷

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁶⁴ Leslie Fiedler, "Up From Adolescence", *Salinger*, p. 60.

⁶⁵ Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*, p. 196.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 198-199.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

Judged by ordinary standards he is not an excellent pupil. What he seeks after may be found in his sister Phoebe and the innocent children. Holden can find truth and innocence in his sister Phoebe. He hates all the hypocrisy, conceit, phoniness and fear. He is the very rebel against the ugliness of the adult world.

When Holden visits his sister Phoebe, he buys a record called "I Know My Love" for her. While he is taking for a walk in a park, however, he drops it and it breaks to pieces. All that he can do is to take them in his coat pocket. When he tells her about it, she answers.

"Gimme the pieces," she said. "I'm saving them." She took them right out of hand and then she put them in the drawer of the night table. She kills me."⁽³⁸⁾

This is the same love that Holden feels to such frail animals as ducks in Central Park. And at the same time, this feeling streams to the central theme...that is he wants to be the only grown-up to protect children from the evil of the world which is full of hypocrisy. To his eyes, the adults only seem to be something filthy and grotesque. In short, Holden, symbolizing the youth who loses all interest and hope in the future, finally feels affection for Phoebe on the carousel.

"I felt so damn happy all of a sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going round and round. I was damn near bawling, I felt so damn happy, if you want to know the truth. I don't know why. It was just that she looked so damn *nice*, the way she kept going round and round, in her blue coat and all. God, I wish you could've been there."⁽³⁹⁾

The depth of Holden's love is shown in his final words, when he sits in the psychiatric ward musing over his adventures.

"If you want to know the truth, I don't *know* what I think about it...I sort of *miss* everybody I told about. Even old Stradlater and Ackley, for instance. I think I even miss that goddam Maurice. It's funny. Don't ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody."⁽⁴⁰⁾

It is ironic incongruity to leave Holden alone in his room in the psychiatric ward. It is not Holden himself but the actual society in which the young adolescent is struggling that should be examined for sickness of the mind.

"What Salinger did was carry on his record from sixteen-year-old Holden's search to the world of adults, as well as children and adolescents, in *Nine Stories*. Here, too, is the suffering from the lack of love, from the inability to feel

(38) *Ibid.*, p. 170.

(39) *Ibid.*, p. 219.

(40) *Ibid.*, p. 220.

love, and the torment of it drives the characters to answers of suicide, immersion in memory and alcohol, and, finally, mysticism.”⁽⁴⁾

Then, the third outsider, Franny presents the most obvious predicament of the outsider. She, however, is much happier than Holden. Because she, at least, has companions, the Glass children. They are the outsiders who ask for a spiritual, better life than the life that the present, materialistic world affords. Therefore, she is safe when she lives among the Glass family. However, once she leaves home and lives among the vulgarians, she is disgusted by man's egoism which she does not perceive when she is with her family.

In the extremity of suffering, she realizes that fidelity gives its solution. This is, after all, the same one that Holden finds; the love for his fellow men. Holden only feels it vaguely but Franny is precisely inspired by her brother Zooey. At the end of *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden shows us that he tries to love his fellow men. This kind of love can be seen vividly in Franny. In the story, I can see “Fat Lady.” Who is “Fat Lady”?

“Fat Lady” is everyone who is suffering and troubled in this world. It is Seymour who created this lady, the word “Fat Lady.”

When Zooey was a little boy, he wouldn't try to shine his shoes one day because of his tiredness. Then Seymour advised him to shine them for “Fat Lady”. Zooey couldn't understand what Seymour meant, but gradually he has come to realize it. The lady is sitting on the porch all day, swatting flies. She may have cancer and she is listening to her radio going fullblast from morning till night. Seymour told Zooey to shine his shoes for an ugly, disgusting-looking lady like “Fat Lady.”

Salinger shows a positive solution for suffering people. In the modern world, it is difficult for them to protect themselves from the destructive power of the vulgar society. Therefore, it is significant that he shows their final reconciliation with such a society in Christian love. Consequently, the reconciliation of suffering people with society is obtained when their quest for love is connected with Christianity. Thus, it is the pure love of Christ that can give people true spiritual happiness.

In the introduction, I mentioned that Salinger treated the youths suffering from “banana fever”; the complete escape from this modern world and that Salinger tried to find the cure for this terrible disease. Through studying this paper, I can see two ways of salvation; one is the salvation by the innocence of children and the other is one by Christianity. This latter salvation is suggested mainly in *Franny and Zooey*.

Since this is God's world, we should devote our lives to God. It is not us but God who will decide right and wrong. In this way we must face bravely and accept this reality as it is. It is the best way to save ourselves.

(4) Laser and Fruman *op. cit.*, p. 84.

Taking a glimpse at Salinger's world, it can be concluded that he sympathizes with the characters in his works because they have spiritual worries common to all human beings. These are worries which must be experienced by us all.

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