

***A Separate Peace* Key Quotations/Rhetorical Analysis**

Chapter 1

"I started the long trudge across the fields ...at any other time I would have felt like a fool slogging through mud and rain, only to look at a tree" (13).

"Nothing endures, not a tree, not love, not even a death by violence" (14).

"That was my sarcastic summer, 1942" (15).

Chapter 2

"The Master was slipping from his official position...and such flows were one of Finny's reasons for living" (22).

"Phineas was the essence of this careless peace" (24).

"It was hypnotism...There was no harm in envying even your best friend a little" (25).

"He had gotten away with everything...that must have been it" (28).

"It was only long after that I recognized sarcasm as the protest of people who are weak" (29).

Chapter 3

"Right from the start, it was clear no one had ever been better adapted to a sport...Naturally. He was my roommate and my best friend" (40).

"I should have told him then that he was my best friend...which contains the truth" (48).

Chapter 4

"The next morning I saw dawn for the first time...Phineas, still asleep on his dune, made me think of Lazarus, brought back to life by the touch of God" (49-50).

"I'd kill myself out of jealousy envy." (52)

"My misery was too deep to speak any more... Not rely absolutely, that was obliterated as a possibility, just rely on a little, some solace, something surviving in the ruins" (52-53).

"It was all cold trickery, it was all calculated, it was all enmity" (53).

"Phineas was without question the best athlete, so in that way we were even. But while he was a very poor student I was pretty good athlete, and when everything was thrown into scales they would end tilt definitely toward me" (55).

"The Suicide Society continued to meet every evening, and I continued to attend, because I didn't want Finny to understand me as I understood him" (56).

"I said nothing, my mind exploring the new dimensions of isolation around me. Any fear I had ever had of the tree was nothing beside this" (59).

“Holding firmly to the trunk, I took a step toward him, and then my knees bent and I jounced the limb. ... With unthinking sureness I moved out on the limb and jumped into the river , every trace of my fear of this forgotten” (60).

Chapter 5

"That evening I put on his cordovan shoes...I felt like some nobleman, some Spanish grandee" (62).

"Not in this conversation, not in this room...I felt like a wild man who had stumbled in from the jungle to tear the place apart" (69).

Chapter 6

"Peace had deserted Devon...for it scattered the easygoing summer spirit like so many fallen leaves" (72).

"We had never used the Naguamsett...and then threw itself with little spectacle over a small waterfall beside the diving dam, and into the turbid Naguamsett" (76).

"Listen, pal, if I can't play sports,...to become a part of Phineas" (85).

Chapter 7

"...it seemed appropriate that my baptism there ...in the middle of a fight" (86)

"They seemed to be having a wonderful time,...they were going places" (97).

"It was a night made for hard thought...I thought instead, in the light of those cold points, of the decision facing me" (101).

"...the warm yellow light streaming from under my own door...illuminating the dust and splinters of the hall floor" (102).

Chapter 8

"I could hardly believe it,...He needed me" (108).

"For the war was no longer eroding the peaceful summertime stillness...peace had come back to Devon for me" (109).

'What I mean is, I love winter, and when you really love something, then it loves you back, in whatever way it has to love' (111).

'Because I've suffered' (116).

"Next to the house there was a patriarchal elm tree, against the trunk of which Finny leaned and shouted at me as I ran a large circle around him" (119)

Chapter 9

“What deceived me was my own happiness; for peace is indivisible, and the surrounding world confusion found no reflection inside me. So I ceased to have any real sense of it" (123).

“You usually listened to Leper’s quiet talking with half a mind, but this theory of his brought me to close attention. How did it apply to me, and to Phineas? How, most of all, did it apply to Leper?” (125).

“He drew me increasingly away from the Butt room crowd, away from Brinker and Chet and all other friends, into a world inhabited by just himself and me, where there was no war at all, just Phineas and me alone among all the people of the world, training for the Olympics of 1944” (127).

“We’ll sacrifice one of the prizes,” and Phineas, seizing the Iliad. He sprinkled the pages with cider to make them more flammable, touched a match to them and a little jet of flame curled upward. The Games, alight with Homer and cider, were open” (135).

“—for on this day even the schoolboy egotism of Devon was conjured away – a wreath made from evergreen trees which Phineas placed on my head. It wasn’t the cider which made me surpass myself, it was this liberation we had torn from the gray encroachments of 1943, the escape we had concocted, this afternoon of momentary, illusory, special and separate peace” (136-137).

Chapter 10

"Leper's [home] was one of those hearths perched by itself on a frozen hillside" (139).

"You always were a savage underneath...like that time you knocked Finny out of the tree' (145).

"I wanted to see Phineas, and Phineas only...This was the only conflict he had ever believed in" (153).

'That's what it was like, if you want to know. The two of them looked as black as --as black as death standing up there with this fire burning all around them" (174)

Chapter 12

“‘This is something I think boys of your generation are going to see a lot of,’ he said quietly, ‘and I will have to tell you about it now. Your friend is dead’” (193).

"I did not cry then or ever about Finny...I could not escape a feeling that this was my own funeral, and you do not cry in that case" (194).

“His father nodded slightly, looking at the floor, and then said, ‘You have to do what you think is the right thing, but just make sure it’s the right thing in the long run, and not just for the moment...We’re all proud of you, and we’re all – old guys like me—we’re all darn jealous of you too’” (99-200).

Chapter 13

"I never killed anybody and I never developed an intense level of hatred for the enemy. Because my war ended before I ever put on a uniform; I was on active duty all my time at school; I killed my enemy there" (204).