

Seminario de Drama

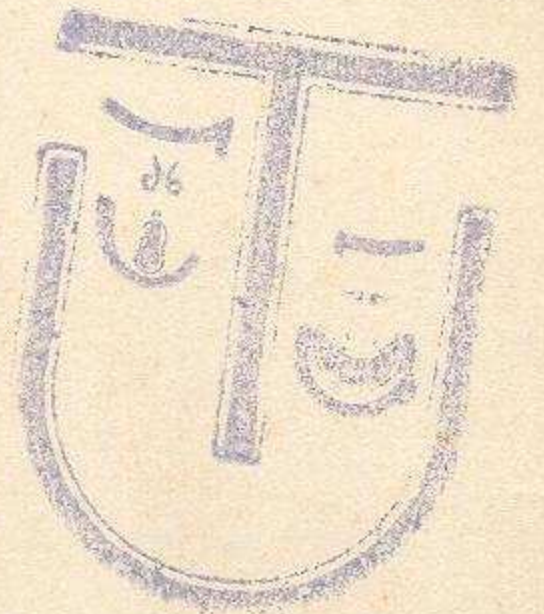
Estudio de

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THE CATCHER IN THE RYE

a three-act play
by Aubrey Goodman

adapted from the novel by J.D. SALINGER.



SEMINARIO MULTIDISCIPLINAR
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PRODUCTION NOTES.

1. The setting. This is a memory play, and the sets do not have to be complete, but they DO have to be realistic. For instance, in Antolini's scene, Holden may only remember a sofa, a bar, a table and a painting: that is all that is necessary for the set. The room at Pencey Prep and Phoebe's room should be complete.
2. The scenes on the train, in the phone booth and at the Biltmore can be played far downstage; there should be time for all scene changes.
3. Between the scenes in the second and third Acts, Holden's voice is heard. These bits should be recorded.
4. The theme music is heard between each scene.

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

Holden Caulfield
Mr. Spencer
Robert Ackley
Stradlater
Mrs. Morrow
Phoebe Caulfield
Sally Hayes
Mrs. Caulfield
Faith Cavendish
Maurice
Mr. Antolini
Sunny
Carl Luce
A Waitor
Lillian Simmons
Commander Blop

SCENES

Prologue

ACT ONE

Scene 1. Pencey Prep. A Saturday afternoon in December.

Scene 2. The same. Later that evening.

ACT TWO

Scene 1. A train. Immediately afterwards.

Scene 2. Phoebe's room at the Caulfield's apartment in New York City. Midnight.

Scene 3. A phone booth at Grand Central Station. Immediately following.

Scene 4. A hotel room. Immediately following.

ACT THREE

Scene 1. Mr. Antolini's apartment. Sunday afternoon.

Scene 2. A booth at the Biltmore Lounge. Immediately following.

Scene 3. Central Park. Immediately following

Epilogue

ACT ONE

(As the houselights dim out, the audience hears the melody of "Comin Thro The Rye" played on a violin. The lights are out; the music gets softer, but is heard throughout the prologue. A spotlight comes up on Holden Caulfield, who is standing before the curtain. He wears a tweed jacket and a striped necktie; he has a crew-cut; he is sixteen years old. Holden is honest, highly sensitive, intelligent; and he has a tremendous sense of humor, especially about himself. We like Holden. We like him very much.)

HOLDEN: If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of stuff, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them.

Besides, I'm not going to tell you my whole autobiography or anything. I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around last Christmas. Where I want to start telling is the day I left Pencey Prep, which is this school in Agerstown, Pennsylvania. It was a Saturday afternoon, a couple of days before our Christmas vacation started.

(The light has slowly been fading out on Holden, and all is dark by the time he has finished his last sentence. In the dark, the curtain goes up quickly, and the lights come up slowly on Scene One.)

SCENE ONE.

(Holden's room at Pencey Prep. A large sitting room with a fireplace, two desks with lamps and books and papers, a day-bed used as a sofa, an easy chair with a reading lamp by it, a book case filled with Holden's books, penants on the walls, two windows looking out on the campus. There is a door stage-right leading to the hall and a door stage-left to the bedroom. The time is five o'clock in the afternoon of a cold, gray December Saturday.)

As the lights come up, Mr. Spencer looks in the door from the hall. Mr. Spencer is a Master at Pencey; he is an elderly gentleman and carries a briefcase. He is carrying an overcoat over his arm.)

SPENCER: Caulfield!

(There is no answer. Mr. Spencer comes into the room, crosses and looks into the bedroom, turns and is about to leave when Holden comes in. He wears an overcoat and muffler.)

HOLDEN: Oh, hello, sir. How are you, Mr. Spencer? (He throws his coat and muffler on the daybed.) Won't you sit down, sir?

SPENCER: I think I'll do that, boy. (He sits in easy chair.) I'm coming down with the grippe.

HOLDEN: Don't you feel well, sir?

SPENCER: My boy, if I felt any better I'd have to send for the doctor. (He practically knocks himself out laughing, chuckling. Holden laughs too, politely.)

HOLDEN: Well, it certainly is nice of you to come by like this, sir. I was going to drop by your house to tell you and Mrs. Spencer goodbye before I left, though, anyway.

SPENCER: I thought you might be over at the football game, but I was coming by this way and...

HOLDEN: I went into New York with the fencing team. I'm the manager. Very Big Deal - ha ha.

(There is a pause. Mr. Spencer is serious.)

SPENCER: So you're leaving us, eh?

HOLDEN: Yes, sir. I guess I am.

(Spencer nods to himself.)

SPENCER: What did the Headmaster say to you, boy? I understand you had quite a little chat.

HOLDEN: Yes, we did. We really did. I was in his office for around two hours, I guess.

SPENCER: What did he say to you?

HOLDEN: Oh....well, about Life being a game and all. And how you should play it according to the rules. He was pretty nice about it. I mean he didn't hit the ceiling or anything. He just kept talking about Life being a game and all. You know.

SPENCER: Life is a game, boy. Life is a game that one plays according to the rules.

HOLDEN: Yes, sir. I know it is. I know it.

SPENCER: Has the Headmaster written to your parents yet?

HOLDEN: He's writing them on Monday.

SPENCER: Have you yourself communicated with them?

HOLDEN: No, sir, I haven't communicated with them, because I'll probably see them Wednesday night when I get home.

SPENCER: And how do you think they'll take the news?

HOLDEN: Well...they'll be pretty irritated about it. They really will. This is about the fourth school I've gone to. (He shakes his head.) Boy.

SPENCER: I had the privilege of meeting your mother and dad when they had their little chat with the Headmaster some weeks ago. They're grand people.

HOLDEN: Yes, they are. They're very nice.

SPENCER: What's the matter with you, boy? How many subjects did you carry this term?

HOLDEN: Five, sir.

SPENCER: Five. And how many are you failing in?

HOLDEN: Four. I passed English all right, because I had all that Beowulf and Lord Randal My Son stuff when I was at the Whooton School. I mean I didn't have to do any work in English at all hardly, except write compositions once in a while.

Seminario de Drama

SPENCER: I flunked you in history because you knew absolutely nothing.

HOLDEN: I know that, sir. Boy, I know it. You couldn't help it.

SPENCER: Absolutely nothing. But absolutely nothing. I doubt very much if you opened your textbook even once the whole term. Did you? Tell the truth, boy.

HOLDEN: Well, I sort of glanced through it a couple of times.

SPENCER: (Very sarcastic) You glanced through it, eh? (He picks up his briefcase and takes a paper from it.) I have your, ah, exam paper here. We studied the Egyptians from November 4th to December 2nd. You chose them for the optional essay question. Would you care to hear what you had to say?

HOLDEN: No, sir, not very much.

SPENCER: (Reading) The Egyptians were an ancient race of Caucasians residing in one of the north ~~western~~ ^{northern} sections of Africa. The latter as we all know is the largest continent in the Eastern Hemisphere. The Egyptians are extremely interesting to us today for various reasons. Modern science would still like to know what the secret ingredients were that the Egyptians used when they wrapped up dead people so that their faces would not rot for innumerable centuries. This interesting riddle is still quite a challenge to modern science in the twentieth century. (He stops reading and puts the paper down.) Your essay, shall we say, ends there. However, you dropped me a little note, at the bottom of the page.

HOLDEN: I know I did.

SPENCER: (Reading) Dear Mr. Spencer. That is all I know about the Egyptians. I can't seem to get very interested in them although your lectures are very interesting. It is all right with me if you flunk me as I am flunking everything else except English anyway. Respectfully yours, Holden Caulfield. (He puts the paper down and stares at Holden.) Do you blame me for flunking you, boy?

HOLDEN: No, sir! I certainly don't.

SPENCER: How do you feel about all this, boy? I'd be very interested to know. Very interested.

HOLDEN: You mean about my flunking out of Pencey and all?

SPENCER: If I'm not mistaken, I believe you also had some difficulty at the Whooton School and at Elkton Hills.

HOLDEN: I didn't have too much difficulty at Elkton Hills. I didn't flunk out or anything. I just quit, sort of.

SPENCER: Why, may I ask?

HOLDEN: Why? Oh, well it's a long story, sir. I mean it's pretty complicated. It was a very phoney place.

SPENCER: Do you have any particular qualms about leaving Pencey?

HOLDEN: Oh, I have a few qualms, all right. Sure...but not too many. Not yet, anyway. I guess it hasn't really hit me yet. It takes things a while to hit me. All I'm doing right now is thinking about going home Wednesday. I'm a moron.

SPENCER: Do you feel absolutely no concern for your future, boy?

HOLDEN: Oh, I feel some concern for my future, all right. Sure. Sure, I do. (He thinks for a moment.) But not too much, I guess.

SPENCER: You will. You will, boy. You will when it's too late.

(This remark depresses Holden.)

HOLDEN: I guess I will.

SPENCER: I'd like to put some sense in that head of yours, boy. I'm trying to help you. I'm trying to help you, if I can.

HOLDEN: I know you are, sir. Thanks alot. No kidding. I appreciate it. I really do.

(Robert Ackley enters. Ackley is eighteen, tall, thin and sort of crummy. He is bored with everyone. He always gives the impression that he is tired.)

ACKLEY: Oh, hello, Mr. Spencer.

SPENCER: How are you, boy? I didn't know that you roomed with Caulfield.

ACKLEY: I room across the hall, sir.

HOLDEN: Look, sir. Don't worry about me. I mean it. It'll be all right. I'm just going through a phase right now. Everybody goes through phases and all, don't they?

SPENCER: I don't know, boy. I don't know.

HOLDEN: (Puts his hand on Spencer's shoulder) Sure, sure they do. I mean it, sir. Please don't worry about me. Okay?

SPENCER: Would you like to come over to the house with me now for a cup of hot chocolate? I'm sure Mrs. Spencer would.....

HOLDEN: I would. I really would, but the thing is, I have to go over to the gym. I have quite a bit of equipment over at the gym that I have to take home with me. Thanks, though. Thanks, alot, sir.

(Holden and Spencer shake hands. Holden feels a little sad.)

HOLDEN: I'll drop you a line, sir. Take care of your grippe.

SPENCER: Goodbye, boy.

HOLDEN: Goodbye, sir.

SPENCER: (Going out the door) And good luck!

(Holden goes to closet, pulls out steamer trunk, opens it and hangs clothes from closet in it during the next. Ackley stretches out on the daybed and looks at a magazine.)

HOLDEN: Guess I'll start packing my stuff.

ACKLEY: What'd old Spencer want?

HOLDEN: Came to tell me goodbye, that's all. Told me about Life being a game again. Game! Some game! If you get on the side where all the hot-shots are, then it's a game alright - I'll admit that. But if you get on the other side, where there aren't any hot-shots, what's a game about it? Nothing. No game.

ACKLEY: (Holding up the magazine.) Hey, look! Here's an advertisement for Pencey.

HOLDEN: (Crosses to daybed) Lemme see. (He looks at ad.) God, look at that! I could puke. I really could. They must advertise in about a thousand magazines, always showing this hot-shot guy on a horse jumping over a fence. Like as if all we ever do here at Pencey is play polo. I've never even seen a horse anywhere near this place.

ACKLEY: Listen to this. (Reading:) "Since 1888 we have been molding boys into splendid, clear-thinking young men."

HOLDEN: (Going back to packing his trunk) Molding! They don't do any damn more MOLDING here than they do at any other school. And I don't know anybody here that's so splendid and clear-thinking and all. Maybe two guys. If that many. And they probably CAME here that way.

ACKLEY: What was that stuff you told old Spencer about your equipment? You don't even keep your equipment at the gym.

HOLDEN: I know it. I just felt depressed. I'm the most terrific liar you ever saw in your life. It's awful. If I'm on my way to the drugstore to buy a magazine even, and somebody asks me where I'm going, I'm liable to say I'm going to the opera. It's terrible. (Holden goes over and takes a red hunting cap out of the pocket of his overcoat.) You go to the game?

ACKLEY: I had to study.

HOLDEN: This last game is such a big deal. I guess we'll all have to commit suicide or something if Pency loses. (He puts on the hat and goes over to the bookcase.)

ACKLEY: Where the hellja get that hat?

HOLDEN: New York.

ACKLEY: How much?

HOLDEN: A buck.

ACKLEY: You got robbed. (Holden takes a book from the bookcase.) Up home we wear a hat like that to shoot DEER in, for Chrissake. That's a deer shooting hat.

HOLDEN: Like hell it is. (He takes it off and looks at it, closing one eye, like he is taking aim at it.) This is a pe~~o~~ple shooting hat. I shoot people in this hat. (He puts the hat on again, takes the book over to the easy chair and sits down.) God, it's dark in here. (He turns on the lamp by his chair.)

ACKLEY: (Walking around the room, examining books on the desk, stuff on the dresser.) How was the fencing? We win or what?

HOLDEN: (Reading, not looking up) Nobody won.

ACKLEY: What?

HOLDEN: (Still not looking up) Nobody won.

ACKLEY: Nobody won?! How come?

HOLDEN: (Not looking up) I left the goddam foils and stuff on the subway.

ACKLEY: On the SUBway! Ya LOST them, ya mean?

(Ackley comes over and stands in Holden's light.)

HOLDEN: It wasn't all my fault. We got on the wrong subway. I had to keep getting up, to look at a goddam map on the wall. The whole team ostracized me all the way back. It was pretty funny, in a way. Hey, Ackley, I've read this sentence about twenty times.

ACKLEY: (Not moving) Think they'll make you pay for them?

HOLDEN: I don't know and I don't give a damn. How bout sitting down or something, Ackley kid. You're right in my light.

ACKLEY: (Not moving) What the hellyya reading?

HOLDEN: Goddam book.

ACKLEY: Any good?

HOLDEN: This sentence I'm reading is terrific.

(Ackley sits down at one of the desks. Holden puts the book down and pulls his hat down over his eyes.)

HOLDEN: (Very hoarse) I think I'm going blind. Mother darling, everything's getting so dark in here.

ACKLEY: (Turns on desk lamp. It is nearly dark in the room) You're nuts. I swear to God.

HOLDEN: (Sliding way down in the chair.) Mother darling, give me your hand. Why won't you give me your hand?

ACKLEY: When are you gonna grow up?

HOLDEN: (Groping about in front of him, like a blind person) Mother darling, why won't you give me your hand?

ACKLEY: (Holding up a knee supporter) Who belongsa this?

HOLDEN: (Pulls the hat up over his eyes) Stradlater.

ACKLEY: Your folks know you got kicked out yet?

HOLDEN: Nope.

ACKLEY: Where the hell's Stradlater at, anyway?

HOLDEN: (Yawning) Down at the game. He's got a date.

ACKLEY: The great Stradlater. Hey. Lend me your scissors a second, willya? Ya got'em handy?

HOLDEN: No. I packed them already.

ACKLEY: Get em a second, willya? I got this hangnail I wanta cut off.

(Holden goes to the trunk. He pulls at one of the drawers, but it is stuck. He pulls harder and the drawer falls out on the floor. Ackley laughs.)

HOLDEN: You have a damned good sense of humor, Ackley kid. You know that? (He hands him the scissors) Lemme be your manager. I'll get you on the goddam radio.

(Holden sits down again in the easy-chair. Ackley begins to cut his fingernails.)

HOLDEN: How bout using the desk or something? Cut em over the desk, willya? I don't feel like walking on your crumby nails in my bare feet tonight.

ACKLEY: (Still cutting his nails over the floor) Who's Stradlater's date?

HOLDEN: I don't know. Why?

ACKLEY: No reason. Boy, I can't stand that sonuvabitch. He's one sonuvabitch I really can't stand.

HOLDEN: He's crazy about YOU. He told me he thinks you're a goddam prince.

ACKLEY: He's got ~~this~~ this superior attitude all the time. You'd think he'd...

HOLDEN: Do you mind cutting your nails over the desk, hey? I've asked you about fifty...

ACKLEY: He's got this goddam superior attitude all the time. I don't even think the guy is intelligent. He thinks he is. He thinks he's about the most...

HOLDEN: Ackley! For Chrissake! Willya please cut your crumby nails over the desk? I've asked you fifty times.

(Ackley cuts his nails over the desk.)

HOLDEN: The reason you're sore at Stradlater is because he said that stuff about brushing your teeth once in a while. He didn't mean to insult you, for cryin out loud. He didn't say it right or anything, but he didn't mean anything insulting. All he meant was you'd look better and FEEL better if you sort of brushed your teeth once in a while.

ACKLEY: I brush my teeth. Don't gimme that.

HOLDEN: No, you don't. I've watched you, and you don't. Stradlater's all right. You don't know him, that's the trouble.

ACKLEY: I still say he's a sonuvabitch. He's a conceited sonuvabitch.

HOLDEN: He's conceited, but he's very generous in some things. He really is. Look. Suppose, for instance, Stradlater was wearing a tie or something that you liked. Say that he had on a tie that you liked a helluva lot - I'm just givin you an example now. You know what he'd do? He's probably take it off and give it to you. He really would. Or- you know what he'd do? He'd leave it on your bed or something. But he'd GIVE you the tie. Most guys would probably ju st.....

ACKLEY: Hell! If I had his dough, I would too.

HOLDEN: No, you wouldn't. (He shakes his head.) No you wouldn't, Ackley kid. If you had his dough, you'd be one of the biggest...

ACKLEY: Stop calling me "Ackley kid". God damn it. I'm old enough to be your lousy father.

HOLDEN: No, you're not. In the first place, I wouldn't let you in my goddam family.

ACKLEY: Well, just cut out callin me.....

(Stradlater barges in through the door. He wears an overcoat and muffler. Stradlater is eighteen, very handsome, very smooth.)

STRADLATER: Howsa boy, Ackley? (He crosses into bedroom.)

ACKLEY: (To Holden) See ya later.

HOLDEN: Okay.

(Ackley leaves. Stradlater comes back into room, unbuttoning his shirt.)

STRADLATER: Hey, Holden, how's about lending me your hound's tooth jacket tonight? I spilled some stuff all over my gray flannel.

HOLDEN: Okay. But don't stretch it with your shoulders and all.

STRADLATER: (Takes his shirt off) I won't stretch it.

HOLDEN: Where's your date?

STRADLATER: Over in the annex. I gotta shine my shoes. Hey, where's the shoe polish?

HOLDEN: In the box under the bed.

(Stradlater goes into the bedroom. Holden goes to phonograph and puts on record: "Just One Of Those Things". Stradlater comes back in with shoes and shoepolish. He spreads a newspaper out on the rug, sits down and polishes his shoes.)

STRADLATER: Hey. Wanna do me a big favor?

HOLDEN: (Not too enthusiastic) What?

STRADLATER: You goin' out tonight?

HOLDEN: I might. I might not. I don't know. Why?

STRADLATER: I got about a hundred pages to read for history for Monday. How 'bout writing a composition for me, for English? I'll be up the creek if I don't get the damn thing in by Monday, the reason I ask. How 'bout it?

HOLDEN: I'm the one that's flunking out of this place, and you're asking me to write you a composition! That's very ironical. Very ironical. That kills me.

STRADLATER: Yeah, I know. The thing is, though, I'll be up the creek if I don't get it in. Be a buddy. Be a buddyroo. Okay?

HOLDEN: (After a pause) What on?

STRADLATER: Anything. Anything descriptive. A room. Or a house. Or something you once lived in or something - you know. Just as long as it's descriptive as hell. (He yawns.) Just don't do it TOO good, is all. That Hartzell thinks you're a hot-shot in English, and he knows you're my roommate. So I mean don't stick all the commas and stuff in the right place.

HOLDEN: I guess that's why I can write such a good composition. Because I stick all the commas in the right places. Honest to God.

(Holden puts the record back at the beginning and turns it up. He puts on his hat and begins to tap-dance.)

HOLDEN: (Tap dancing furiously, all over the room) I'm an exhibitionist. I'm the goddam governor's son. He doesn't want me to be a tap dancer. He wants me to go to Oxford. But it's in my goddam blood, tap dancing. (Stradlater laughs.) It's the opening night of the Ziegfield Follies. (Holden is nearly out of breath) The leading man can't go on. He's drunk as a bastard. So who do they get to take his place? Me, that's who. The little ole goddam governor's son!

STRADLATER: Whereja get that hat?

HOLDEN: (Breathless, turns off the phonograph.) Got it in New York this morning for a buck. Like it?

STRADLATER: Sharp. Listen, are you gonna write that composition for me?

HOLDEN: It's highly probable. Yes, I'd say it's highly probable.
(Holden grabs Stradlater in a half-nelson.)

HOLDEN: Liberate yourself from my vise-like grip.

(Stradlater does so.)

HOLDEN: Who's your date?

STRADLATER: (Stands up, puts paper in wastebasket) Dud thaw's girl's roommate. Hey, I almost forgot. She knows YOU!

HOLDEN: Who does?

STRADLATER: My date.

HOLDEN: What's her name?

STRADLATER: I'm thinking....uh...Jean Gallagher.

HOLDEN: (He nearly drops dead) JANE Gallagher! You're damn right I know her. She practically lived right next DOOR to me summer before last. Up in Maine. Where is she? I oughta go down and say hello to her or something. Where is she? In the annex?

STRADLATER: Yeah.

(Stradlater goes into bedroom with the shoe polish.)

HOLDEN: How'd she happen to mention me? Does she go to B.M. now? She said she might go there. She said she might go to Shipley too. I thought she went to Shipley. How'd she happen to mention me?

STRADLATER: (In bedroom) I don't know.

HOLDEN: Jane Gallagher. (He can't get over it.) Jesus H. Christ. (Stradlater comes back into the room, rubbing Vitalis into his scalp.) She's a dancer. Ballet and all. She used to practice two hours every day, eight in the middle of the hottest weather and all. I used to play checkers with her all the time.

STRADLATER: You used to play WHAT with her all the time?

HOLDEN: Checkers.

STRADLATER: CHECKERS, for Chrissake!

HOLDEN: Yeah. She wouldn't move any of her kings. What she'd do, when she'd get a king, she wouldn't move it. She'd just leave it in the back row. She'd get them all lined up in the back row. Then she'd never use them. She just liked the way they looked when they were all in the back row.

(Stradlater comes back into the room and finishes dressing, brushes his hair in front of mirror over dresser during the next.)

HOLDEN: Her mother belonged to the same club we did.

STRADLATER: (Not very interested) Yeah?

HOLDEN: I oughta go down and at least say hello to her.

STRADLATER: Why don'tcha?

HOLDEN: I will. In a minute. Her mother and father were divorced. Her mother was married again to some booze hound. Skinny guy with hairy legs. I remember him. He wore shorts all the time. Jane said he was supposed to be a playwright or something, but all I ever saw him do was booze all the time and listen to every single mystery program on the radio. And run around the goddam house, naked. With JANE around and all.

STRADLATER: (Interested) Yeah?

HOLDEN: She had a lousy childhood. I'm not kidding. Jane Gallagher. I oughta go down and say hello to her, at least.

STRADLATER: Why the hell DON'tcha, instead of keep saying it?

HOLDEN: (Walks over and looks out the window.) I'm not in the mood right now. Did she enjoy the game?

STRADLATER: Yeah, I guess so. I don't know.

HOLDEN: Did she tell you we used to play checkers all the time, or anything?

STRADLATER: I don't know. I only just MET her.

HOLDEN: Listen. Give her my regards, williya?

STRADLATER: Okay.

(Holden sits down in chair and watches Stradlater for a moment.)

HOLDEN: Hey. Don't tell her I got kicked out, willya?

STRADLATER: (Looking around at Holden. Very nice. He understands.) Okay. (He takes Holden's jacket from the closet and puts it on.)

HOLDEN: Jesus, now, try not to stretch it all over the place.

STRADLATER: I won't. Where the hell's my cigarettes?

HOLDEN: On the desk. Under your muffler. (Holden is sort of nervous.) Listen, whereya going on your date with her? Ya know yet?

STRADLATER: I don't know. New York, if we have time. She only signed out for nine-thirty.

HOLDEN: (Concerned, but trying to joke.) The reason she did that, she probably just didn't know what a handsome charming bastard you are. If she'd KNOWN she probably would've signed out for nine-thirty in the morning.

STRADLATER: (Smiling at Holden) Goddam right. No kidding, now. (He is putting on his overcoat) Do that composition for me. Don't knock yourself out or anything, but just make it descriptive as hell. Okay?

HOLDEN: Ask her if she still keeps all her kings in the back row.

STRADLATER: Okay. Take it easy now.

(Stradlater bangs out the door. Holden sits still for a moment, thinking. He puts his red cap on, moves to victrola and puts on a record. A slow, sad, jazz tune. He goes to the window and looks out. It is nearly dark outside now. The lights all dim out, slowly, but for five seconds there is a blue spotlight on Holden, standing looking out the window. Then it is dark.)

SCENE TWO.

(It is later that evening. Holden is alone in his room; his trunk is packed; he is closing one of his suitcases. He puts it by the trunk. Then he takes a large cardboard box from the closet and begins to pack all the books from the bookcase. Ackley barges into the room; he wears an overcoat.)

ACKLEY: God, it's cold out there. (He takes off his coat.) Hey, there was a letter for you down in the box. I brought it up.

HOLDEN: Thanks. (He goes over and takes the letter from Ackley.)

ACKLEY: Who's it from?

HOLDEN: Well, give me time to OPEN it, Ackley!

(Holden opens the letter; there are some bills in it which he puts in his pocket.)

ACKLEY: Who's it from?

HOLDEN: It's from my grandmother. She sent me some money for my birthday.

ACKLEY: You birthday! Your birthday was two months ago.

HOLDEN: Yeah, I know, but the thing is, see, my grandmother's old as hell and she doesn't have all her marbles anymore. She's nice and all, but she gets mixed up and sends me money for my birthday about four times a year. She never even goes out of the house except to go to some matinee or something.

ACKLEY: Ya know those two letter ya got yesterday?

HOLDEN: Yeah?

ACKLEY: Who were they from? Ya mind telling me?

HOLDEN: You are the nosiest guy I know, Ackley, you know that?

ACKLEY: Well, don't TELL me if you don't want to. I just...

HOLDEN: One of them was a letter from my little sister, Phoebe. Asking me to come see her in this play she's in at her school next week.

ACKLEY: Yeah? Who was the other one from?

HOLDEN: The other one was from this girl I know, Sally Hayes, asking me over to trim her Christmas tree on Christmas Eve.
SATISFIED?

ACKLEY: I'm not really interested. I just wondered. What're ya doing?

(Holden is packing books.)

HOLDEN: What's it look like?

ACKLEY: You've got more books than anybody I know. You read all those books?

HOLDEN: I'm quite illiterate, but I read alot.

ACKLEY: Yeah, I noticed. Who's your favorite author?

HOLDEN: My favorite author is my brother, D.B., and my next favorite is Ring Lardner.

ACKLEY: I just read for fun. Or when I HAVE to. What kinda books ya like best? Serious ones or sad or funny ones?

HOLDEN: What I really like best is a book that's at least funny once in a while. I've read a lot of classical books like "The Return Of The Native" by Thomas Hardy, and I like them, and I've read a lot of war books and mysteries and all, but they don't knock me out too much.

ACKLEY: Yeah? Well, what kinda book do you like best?

HOLDEN: Well, what really knocks me out is a book that, when you're all done reading it, you wish the author that wrote it was a terrific friend of yours and you could call him up on the phone whenever you felt like it. That doesn't happen much, though. I wouldn't mind calling old Ring Lardner up, except that D.B. told me he's dead.

ACKLEY: Yeah. I see what you mean.

HOLDEN: (Putting the last books in the box.) You take that book "Of Human Bondage" by Somerset Maugham, though. I read it last summer. It's a pretty good book and all, but I wouldn't want to call Somerset Maugham up. I don't know. He just isn't the kind of a guy I'd want to call up. I'd rather call old Thomas Hardy up. I like that Eustacia Vye.

ACKLEY: What I mean is, do you have any favorite book? I might have read it.

Gatsby . Old Gatsby. Old sport. That kills me.

ACKLEY: I like stories about prize-fighters. And war stories.

HOLDEN: Well, I don't. I don't like anything at all about war. Or about fighting. I've only been in about two fights in my life, and I lost BOTH of them. I'm ~~not~~ too tough. I'm a pacifist, if you want to know the truth.

ACKLEY: Yeah? So am I. I don't want to get drafted.

HOLDEN: My brother, D.B., was in the Army four goddam years. He was in the war, too - he landed on D-Day and all - but I really think he hated the Army worse than the war. I was practically a child at the time, but I remember when he used to come home on furlough and all, all he did was lie on his bed, practically. He hardly even came into the living room.

ACKLEY: What was he? An aviator?

HOLDEN: No. When he went overseas and was in the war and all, he didn't get wounded or anything and he didn't have to shoot anybody. All he had to do was drive some cowboy general around all day in a command car. He once told me that if he'd had to shoot anybody, he wouldn't've known which direction to shoot in.

ACKLEY: My father says there won't be any more wars, because of this new atomic bomb.

HOLDEN: I'm sort of glad they've got the atomic bomb invented. If there's ever another war, I'm going to sit right the hell on top of it. I'll volunteer for it. I swear to God I will.

(He ties the box with some cord.)

ACKLEY: Hey, where were ya at supper? I couldn't find ya.

HOLDEN: I lost my appetite. All of a sudden.

ACKLEY: We went to the movies. Cary Grant.

HOLDEN: The movies! Don't even mention movies to me. I could puke everytime I even think about the movies. D.B., my brother, you know, he writes for the goddam movies now. He didn't USE to. He used to be a regular writer when he was home.

ACKLEY: Ya mean your brother knows some of those MOvie stars?

HOLDEN: He wrote this terrific book of short stories, "The Secret Goldfish", in case you've never heard of him. It was about this little kid, one of the stories was, that wouldn't let anybody look at his goldfish because he'd bought it with his own money. It killed me. Now he's out in Hollywood, D.B, being a prostitute. If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies. Don't even mention them to me.

ACKLEY: I don't know. I like the movies. And I like most of all to go to Radio City Music Hall. I like the Rockettes.

HOLDEN: I like them okay when they're all in line, with their arms around each others' waist, and kicking their heads off and everything. But EVERY time I go, some one behind me says "You know what that is? That's precision!" God. The thing I REALLY like at Radio City is the guy that plays the kettle drums in the orchestra. I've watched that guy since I was about eight years old. My sister, Phoebe, and I, if we were with our parents and all, we used to move our seats and go way down so we could watch him. He's the best drummer I ever saw. He only gets a chance to bang them a couple of times during the whole piece, but he never looks bored when he isn't doing it. Then when he does bang them, he does it so nice and sweet, with this nervous expression on his face. One time when we went to Washington with my father, Phoebe sent him a post card, but I'll bet he never got it. We weren't too sure how to address it.

ACKLEY: You act like a child sometimes, Holden. Ya know that?

HOLDEN: I act quite young for my age sometimes....everybody says that, especially my father. It's partly true, but it isn't ALL true. People always think something's ALL true. I don't give a damn, except that I get bored sometimes when people tell me to act my age. Sometimes I act a lot older than I am...I really do...but people never notice it. People never notice anything.

ACKLEY: Anyway, you should've come to the movies with us. I like Cary Grant. You should've come. It was grand.

HOLDEN: Grand! There's a phoney word. I could puke every time I hear it. There are two words I hate....GRAND and MARVELOUS. They're so phoney.

ACKLEY: Ernest Morrow went with me. He's lots of fun.

HOLDEN: Ernest Morrow?! Ernest Morrow is doubtless the biggest bastard that ever came here to Pencey in the whole crumby history of the school. Ernest Morrow! He's always going down the corridor snapping his soggy wet towel at people's - really trying to hurt somebody with it - Ernest Morrow! I'm surprised at your taste, Ackley kid. You take a guy like Ernest Morrow that's always snapping towels at people - I mean really trying to hurt them - they don't just stay a rat when they're a kid. They stay a rat their whole life. Ernest Morrow! He's about as sensitive as a goddam toilet seat.

(Holden takes his other suitcase, puts it on daybed and begins to pack clothes from the dresser.)

ACKLEY: What'cha do all evening?

HOLDEN: I went for a walk about seven. Went up to the football field and stood by that crazy old cannon.

ACKLEY: Why the hellja do that?

HOLDEN: I guess I was trying to feel some kind of goodbye. You know, I mean I've left schools and places I didn't even know I was leaving them. I hate that. I don't care if it's a sad goodbye or a bad goodbye, but when I leave a place I like to KNOW I'm leaving. If you don't, you feel even worse.

ACKLEY: Yeah. I know what you mean.

(Ackley puts a record on the phonograph; a slow, sad jazz record. Then he goes to desk and picks up paper.)

ACKLEY: What's this?

HOLDEN: Composition I wrote.

ACKLEY: Yeah? What's it about?

HOLDEN: Ya wouldn't be interested, Ackley. I'm thinking of your welfare, kid.

ACKLEY: Sure I'm interested. What's it about?

HOLDEN: Well, it had to be a description. So what I did, I wrote about my brother Allie's baseball mitt. You see, Allie had this left-handed fielder's mitt. The thing that was descriptive about it, though, was that he had poems written all over the fingers and the pocket and everywhere. In green ink.

ACKLEY: Why'd he do that?

HOLDEN: He wrote them on it so that he'd have something to read when he was out in left field and nobody was up at bat.

ACKLEY: Yeah?

HOLDEN: He's dead now. He got leukemia and died when we were up in Maine on July 18, 1952. You'd have liked him. He was two years younger than I was, but he was about fifty times as intelligent. His teachers were always writing my mother how intelligent he was. They meant it too. But it wasn't just that he was the most intelligent member of the family. He was also the nicest, in lots of ways. Like he never got mad at anybody.

People with red hair are supposed to get mad very easily, but Allie never did, and he had red hair. I'll tell you what kind of red hair he had. Once, when I was twelve, I was learning to play golf, and I remember one afternoon when I was about to tee off, I had a hunch that if I turned around I'd see Allie. So I did, and sure enough, he was sitting on his bike outside the fence - there was this fence that went all around the course - and he was sitting there, about a hundred and fifty yards behind me, watching me tee off. That was the kind of red hair he had.

God, he was a nice kid though. He used to laugh so hard at something he thought of at the dinner table, that he'd just about fall off his chair.

I was only thirteen when he died, and they were going to have me psychoanalyzed and all, because I broke all the windows in the garage. I don't blame them. I really don't. I slept in the garage the night he died, and I broke all the windows with my fist. I even tried to break all the windows on the station wagon we had that summer, but my hand was already broken and everything by that time, and I couldn't do it. It was a very stupid thing to do, but I hardly even knew what I was doing. And you didn't know Allie. My hand still hurts me once in a while. When it rains and all.

(There is a pause. Ackley is deeply moved by this. Suddenly, the door flies open and Stradlater barges in, breaking the mood, bringing them back to present reality.)

STRADLATER: Where the hell is everybody? It's like a goddam morgue around here.

(He crosses into bedroom.)

ACKLEY: I have to write a letter.

(Holden nods, and Ackley leaves. Holden turns off the phonograph. Stradlater comes back into the room, takes off his shirt. He has a very good physique and he enjoys showing it off. He goes to desk and picks up the paper, rubbing his chest.)

STRADLATER: (After a moment) For Chrissake, Holden! This is about a goddam baseball glove!

HOLDEN: (Lying on the daybed. Cold as hell:) So what?

STRADLATER: Wuddaya mean SO WHAT? I toldja it had to be about a room or a house or something.

HOLDEN: You said it had to be descriptive. What the hell's the difference if it's about a baseball glove?

STRADLATER: (Sore as hell) God damn it! You always do everything backasswards! No wonder you're flunking out of here. You don't do ONE DAMN THING the way you're supposed to. I mean it. Not one damn thing.

HOLDEN: All right. Give it back to me, then.

(Holden goes over, takes the paper and tears it up.)

STRADLATER: What the hellja do that for?

(Holden doesn't answer him, but goes and lies down on the daybed. Stradlater picks up a newspaper from the desk, sits in the easy chair and reads the sport section. Holden, lying on his back, lights a cigarette.)

HOLDEN: You're back pretty goddam late if she only signed out for nine-thirty. Did you make her late signing in?

STRADLATER: (Reading the paper) Coupla minutes. Who the hell signs out for 9:30 on a Saturday night?

HOLDEN: Did you go to New York?

STRADLATER: Ya crazy? How the hell could we go to New York if she only signed out for 9:30?

HOLDEN: That's tough.

STRADLATER: Listen. If you're gonna smoke in the room, how 'bout going down to the can and do it? YOU may be getting the hell out of here, but I have to stick around long enough to graduate.

HOLDEN: (Not moving) Did you give her my regards?

STRADLATER: (Looking at the paper) Yeah.

Seminario de Drama

HOLDEN: What'd she say? Did you ask her if she still kept all her kings in the back row?

STRADLATER: NO, I didn't ask her. What the hell ya think we did all night - play checkers?

HOLDEN: (After a pause) If you didn't go to New York, where'd ya go with her?

STRADLATER: Nowhere. We just sat in the basketball coach's car all night. You know. Ed Banky.

HOLDEN: (After another pause, his voice is nearly shaking) What'd you do? Give her the time in Ed Banky's car?

STRADLATER: What a thing to say. Want me to wash your mouth out with soap?

HOLDEN: DID you?

STRADLATER: (Smiling at Holden.) That's a professional secret, buddy.

(Holden lunges at Stradlater, pulls him out of his chair; they roll on the floor, until Stradlater ends up sitting on Holden's chest, holding Holden's wrists to the floor over his head.)

STRADLATER: (Yelling) What the hell's the matter with you?

HOLDEN: Get your lousy KNEES off my CHEST! (He is almost crying) Go on, get OFFa me! You crumby bastard. You sonuvabitch!

STRADLATER: (Angry) Shut up, now, Holden. Just shut up now.

HOLDEN: You don't even know if her name is Jane or JEAN, ya goddam moron!

STRADLATER: Now, SHUT UP, Holden. God damn it. I'm WARNING you. If you don't shut up, I'm gonna slam you one.

HOLDEN: Get your dirty stinking moron knees off my chest.

STRADLATER: If I letcha up, will you keep your mouth shut?

(No response)

STRADLATER: Holden, if I letcha up, will ya keep your mouth shut?

HOLDEN: (Quietly) Yes.

(STRADLATER lets him up)

(They both stand up)

HOLDEN: You're a dirty stupid sonuvabitch of a moron.

STRADLATER: (Shaking his finger in Holden's face) Holden. GODDAMN it! I'm warning you, now. For the last time. If you don't keep your yap shut, I'm gonna....

HOLDEN: (He is practically screaming, crying) WHY should I? That's the trouble with all you morons. You never want to discuss anything. That's the way you can tell a moron. They never want to discuss anything intelligent.....

(Stradlater hauls off and hits Holden in the face, knocking him down. Holden lies there, doesn't move.)

STRADLATER: (Worried) You asked for it, God damn it.

HOLDEN: (Crying with rage) You stupid moron. Stupid goddam moron.

STRADLATER: Listen. Get up and go wash your face. Ya hear me?

HOLDEN: Go wash your own ugly face! And on the way stop off and see Mrs. Rudolph Schmidt! Mrs. Rudolph Schmidt, the janitors wife! She's only about sixty-five!

STRADLATER: Go clean yourself up. I'm going to bed. You okay ?

HOLDEN: (Getting up) Go to hell.

(Stradlater goes into the bedroom and shuts the door. Ackley comes in. He is wearing pajamas and carries a toothbrush in his hand.)

ACKLEY: JESUS! What the hell happened to YOU?

HOLDEN: I had a little tiff with Stradlater. Listen, do you feel like playing a little Canasta?

ACKLEY: You're still BLEEDING, for Chrissake. You better put something on it.

HOLDEN: It'll stop. Listen. Ya wanna play a little Canasta or dontcha?

ACKLEY: CanASTa? Do you know what time it is?

HOLDEN: It isn't late. It's not even eleven yet. It's only about ten-thirty.

ACKLEY: ONLY around! Listen. I gotta get up early and go to church in the morning. You guys start hollering and fighting in the middle of the....what was the fight about, anyhow?

HOLDEN: (Resuming his packing) It's a long story. I don't wanna bore you, Ackley. I'm thinking of your welfare. Hey, is it okay if I sleep in Ely's bed tonight? He won't be back til tomorrow night.

ACKLEY: I don't know when the hell he's coming back.

HOLDEN: What the hell do you mean, you don't know when he's coming back? He never comes back til Sunday NIGHT, does he?

ACKLEY: No, but I can't just tell somebody they can sleep in his BED if they want to.

HOLDEN: (Goes to Ackley and pats him on the shoulder) You're a prince, Ackley kid. You know that?

ACKLEY: No, I mean it - I can't just tell somebody they can sleep...

HOLDEN: You're a real prince. You're aces. You're a gentleman and a scholar, kid.

(Holden starts packing again.)

ACKLEY: What the hell was the fight about, anyhow?

HOLDEN: About you.

ACKLEY: ABOUT ME?!

HOLDEN: Yeah. I was defending your goddam honor. Stradlater said you had a lousy personality. I couldn't let him get away with that kind of stuff. (He closes the bag) Well, I'm all packed.

ACKLEY: (Excited) He did? No kidding? He did?

HOLDEN: (Goes over and looks out the window) No, I'm only kidding ya, Ackley. Boy, do I feel rotten. (Turns around to Ackley) Tell me thr story of your fascinating life, Ackley kid.

ACKLEY: What are you gonna do-- sleep in Ely's bed?

HOLDEN: I may. I may not. Don't worry about it.

ACKLEY: I'm not WORRIED about it. Only, I'd hate like hell if Ely came in all of a sudden and found some guy.....

HOLDEN: Relax. I'm not gonna sleep there. I wouldn't abuse your goddam hospitality..

(Holden goes over and shakes Ackley's hand. Ackley pulls his hand away)

ACKLEY: What's the big idea?

HOLDEN: No idea. I just want to thank you for being such a goddam prince, that's all. You're Aces, Ackley kid. You know that?

ACKLEY: Wise guy. Someday somebody's gonna bash your...

HOLDEN: WAIT A MINUTE! NOW I know what I'm gonna do!

ACKLEY: What?

HOLDEN: (Taking his coat from the closet. Checks the drawers in the dresser) I've got everything packed. Why the hell should I stick around here til Wednesday?

ACKLEY: You're not LEAVING NOW, are you?

HOLDEN: You're damn right I am. I can't stick it out another minute in the dump.

ACKLEY: Where're ya going? Home?

HOLDEN: No, I'm going to hole up in some hotel where nobody knows me til Wednesday. Then I'll go home. Maybe. I don't know.

ACKLEY: Holden, you can't just...

HOLDEN: (Putting on his coat, his muffler and his red hat) Well, I'm doing it, Ackley kid. I'm doing it. Listen, do me a favor. On Tuesday the men'll come for the trunk and the box. Show'em where it is, willya?

ACKLEY: Sure, but..

HOLDEN: And if I've left anything else here, willya put it in a box or something and mail it home? Willya?

ACKLEY: Sure, but....

HOLDEN: (Picks up the two suitcases) I can get a train into New York in a few minutes. I'll walk down to the station.

ACKLEY: Listen, Holden, what if somebody sees you?

HOLDEN: What if they do? They've alREADY kicked me out! (He puts the bags down and shakes hands with Ackley) Goodbye, Ackley.

ACKLEY: Holden, dontcha think...

HOLDEN: Maybe I'll see ya again sometime.

ACKLEY: Holden, don't....

(Holden goes to the door and opens it.)

HOLDEN: (Yelling) SLEEP TIGHT, YA MORONS!

(Holden goes out, slamming the door behind him. The dazed Ackley sinks into a chair as

THE CURTAIN FALLS.)

END OF ACT ONE

.ACT TWO

(The houselights dim out; the music is heard.)

VOICE: I was quite lucky when I got to the station, because I only had to wait about ten minutes to get a train.

(During the next, the music fades away as the sound of a train is heard. The lights come up slowly on Holden, who is sitting on a seat on the train. The seats are the kind that can be pushed back so that two people can sit facing each other. Holden has his feet up on the seat across from him, and he is looking at a magazine.)

VOICE: Usually I like riding on trains, especially at night, with the lights on and the windows so black. If I'm on a train at night, I can even read one of those dumb stories with a lot of phoney lean-jawed guys named David in it, and a lot of phoney girls named Linda or Marcia that are always lighting all the goddam Davids' pipes for them. I can even read one of those lousy stories on a train at night, usually.

(During the next, Holden reacts to what he is reading.)

VOICE: Then I saw this article that made me feel terrible. It was all about hormones. It described how you should look, your face and eyes and all, if your hormones were in good shape, and I didn't look that way at all. I looked exactly like the guy in the article with lousy hormones. So I started getting worried about my hormones.

Then I found this other article about how you can tell if you have cancer or not. It said that if you had any sores in your mouth that didn't heal pretty quickly, it was a sign that you probably had cancer. I'd had this sore on the inside of my lip for about TWO WEEKS. So I figured I was getting cancer. That magazine was some little sheerer-upper. I figured I'd be dead in a couple of months. Because I had cancer. I really did. I was even positive I would be. It certainly didn't make me feel too gorgeous.

(A woman, about forty or forty-five, very goodlooking, walks by Holden. She is going back to New York from a party. She's all dressed up. She sees Holden's bag on the rack.)

WOMAN: Excuse me, but isn't that a Pency Prep sticker?

HOLDEN: Yes, it is.

WOMAN: (Sits down opposite Holden. She has a nice voice.) Oh, do you go to Pency?

HOLDEN: Yes, I do.

WOMAN: Oh, how lovely! Perhaps you know my son then. Ernest Morrow. He goes to Pencey.

HOLDEN: Yes, I do. He's in my class.

WOMAN: Oh, how nice! I must tell Ernest we met. May I ask your name, dear?

HOLDEN: Rudolph Schmidt.

WOMAN: Do you like Pencey?

HOLDEN: Pencey? It's not too bad. It's not PARADISE or anything, but it's as good as most schools. Some of the faculty are pretty conscientious.

WOMAN: Ernest just adores it.

HOLDEN: I know he does. Ernest adapts himself very well to things. He really does. I mean he really knows how to adapt himself.

WOMAN: (Interested as hell) Do you really think so?

HOLDEN: Ernest? Sure.

WOMAN: (She takes off her gloves, revealing hands lousy with rocks.) I just broke a nail, getting out of a cab. (She smiles a nice smile at Holden.) Ernest's father and I sometimes worry about him. We sometimes feel he's not a terribly good mixer.

HOLDEN: How do you mean?

WOMAN: Well, he's a very sensitive boy. He's really never been a terribly good mixer with other boys. Perhaps he takes things a little more seriously than he should at his age.

HOLDEN: (Gives her a look, then:) Would you care for a cigarette?

WOMAN: (She looks all around) I don't believe this is a smoker, Rudolph.

HOLDEN: That's all right. We can smoke till they start screaming at us.

(They light cigarettes. Mrs. Morrow has quite a bit of charm.)

WOMAN: (Looks at Holden for a moment) I may be wrong, but I believe your nose is bleeding, dear.

HOLDEN: (Nods and takes out his handkerchief) I got hit with a snowball. One of those very icy ones.

WOMAN: Oh dear.

HOLDEN: Old Ernie, he's one of the most popular boys at Pencey. Did you know that?

WOMAN: No, I didn't.

HOLDEN: (Nods) It really took everybody quite a long time to get to know him. He's a funny guy. A STRANGE guy. In lots of ways. Know what I mean? Like when I first met him. When I first met him, I thought he was kind of a snobbish person. That's what I thought. But he isn't. He's just got this very original personality that takes you a little while to get to know him.

(Mrs. Morrow doesn't say anything; Holden has her glued to her seat.)

HOLDEN: Did he tell you about the elections? The class elections?

(She shakes her head. She is almost in a trance.)

HOLDEN: Well, a bunch of us wanted old Ernie to be president of the class. I mean he was the unanimous choice. I mean he was the only boy who could handle the job. But this other boy - R.D. Anderson - was elected. And the REASON he was elected, the simple and obvious reason, was because Ernie wouldn't let us nominate him. Because he's so darn shy and modest and all. He reFUSED....Boy, he's REALLY shy. You oughta try to make him get over that. (Holden looks at Mrs. Morrow) Didn't he tell you about it?

WOMAN: No. No, he didn't.

HOLDEN: (Nods) That's Ernie. He wouldn't. That's the one fault with him - he's too shy and modest. You really oughta get him to try to relax occasionally. Would you care for a cocktail? We can go in the club car. All right?

WOMAN: (Not snotty, she's too charming to be snotty) Dear, are you allowed to order drinks?

HOLDEN: Well, no, not exactly, but I can usually get them on account of my heighth. And I have quite a bit of gray hair.

(Holden turns sideways and shows her his gray hair; Mrs. Morrow is fascinated.)

HOLDEN: C'mon, join me, why don't you?

WOMAN: I really don't think I'd better. Thank you so much though, dear. Anyway, the club car's most likely closed. It's quite late, you know. Tell me, Rudolph, what is your favorite course at Pencey?

HOLDEN: Well, English, I guess. It's my best subject. I mean it's my most interesting course.

WOMAN: Oh really? What have you read this year? I'd be very interested to know.

HOLDEN: Well, most of the time we were on the Anglo-Saxons. Beowulf, and old Grendel, and Lord Randal My Son, and all those things. But we had to read outside books for extra credit once in a while. I read THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE by Thomas Hardy and ROMEO AND JULIET and JULIUS....

WOMAN: Oh, ROMEO AND JULIET! Lovely! Didn't you just love it?

HOLDEN: Yes, I did. I liked it quite a lot. There were a few things I didn't like about it, but it was quite moving, on the whole.

WOMAN: What didn't you like about it? Can you remember?

HOLDEN: Well, I'm not too crazy about Romeo and Juliet. I mean I like them, but - I don't know. They get pretty annoying sometimes. I mean I felt much sorrier when old Mercutio got killed than when Romeo and Juliet did. The thing is, I never liked Romeo too much after Mercutio gets stabbed by that other man - Juliet's cousin - I don't remember his name.

WOMAN: Tybalt?

HOLDEN: That's right. Tybalt. I always forget that guy's name. It was Romeo's fault. I mean I liked him best in the play, old Mercutio. I don't know. All those Montagues and Capulets, they're all right - especially Juliet - but Mercutio, he was - it's hard to explain. He was very smart and entertaining and all. The thing is, it drives me crazy when somebody gets killed - especially somebody very smart and entertaining and all - and it's somebody else's fault. Romeo and Juliet, at least it was their own fault.

WOMAN: I see what you mean, dear.

(There is a pause. Then Mrs. Morrow asks Holden the question he knows she is going to ask.)

WOMAN: Ernest wrote that he'd be home on Wednesday, that Christmas vacation would start on WEDnesday. (She is not being nosy; she really looks worried.) I hope you weren't called home suddenly because of illness in the family.

HOLDEN: No. Everybody's fine at home. It's me. I have to have this operation.

WOMAN: Oh! I'm SO sorry.

HOLDEN: It isn't very serious. I have this tiny little tumor on the brain.

WOMAN: (She puts her hand to her mouth, horrified!) Oh, NO!

HOLDEN: Oh, it'll be all right and everything. It's right near the outside. And it's a very tiny one. They can take it out in about two minutes.

(Holden looks out the window)

WOMAN: Do you live in New York, Rudolph?

HOLDEN: Yes, I do.

WOMAN: Perhaps you might like to come and visit us next summer at Gloucester. I know Ernest would love to have you. And our house is right down by the beach.

HOLDEN: Why, thank you very much. I'd love to. I really would. Only the thing is, next summer I'm going to South America.

WOMAN: How THRILLING!

HOLDEN: Yeah, I'm quite excited about it myself. (A pause.)
I'm going with my grandmother!

(BLACKOUT)

VOICE: (In the darkness the music plays behind the voice.)
It was about midnight when I got to New York, and I didn't feel like going to some hotel. So I decided I'd take a chance and sneak up to our apartment to see my sister, Phoebe. It was a Saturday night, and I knew that Mother and Daddy would be out somewhere. And I knew that the maid wouldn't hear me come in, because she's sort of deaf. Her brother stuck a straw in her ear when she was about three years old. So I checked my bags at Grand Central and went up to the apartment.

SCENE TWO.

(Holden turns the light on in Phoebe's room. It is a very nice room for a young girl; Phoebe is asleep in her bed. Her clothes are laid out for the next morning on a chair by her bed. Holden loves Phoebe; we love her too. Holden goes over and looks at her for a minute; then he sits on her bed and touches her lightly on the shoulder. Phoebe is wearing blue pajamas with elephants embroidered on the collar.)

HOLDEN: (Quietly) Wake up, Phoebe.

PHOEBE: (She wakes up immediately and throws her arms around Holden's neck.) HOLDEN! (Holden gives her a sort of peck on the cheek) Whenja get HOME?

HOLDEN: Not so loud. Just now. How are ya anyway?

PHOEBE: I'm fine. Did you get my letter? I wrote you a five page.....

HOLDEN: Yeah...not so loud. Thanks. How's the play? What'd you say the name of it was?

PHOEBE: A Christmas Pageant for Americans. It stinks, but I have practically the biggest part. (She is very excited, very wide-awake) It starts out when I'm dying. The ghost comes in on Christmas Eve and asks me if I'm ashamed and everything. You know. For betraying my country and everything. I'm Benedict Arnold. Are you coming to it? (She sits way up in bed.) That's what I wrote you about. Are You?

HOLDEN: Sure I'm coming. Certainly I'm coming.

PHOEBE: Daddy can't come. He has to fly to California. Listen guess what I did this afternoon! Guess what....Holden, Mother said you'd be home WEDNESDAY. She said WEDNESDAY!

HOLDEN: I got out early. Not so loud. You'll wake everybody up.

PHOEBE: What time is it? They won't be home till very late, Mother said. They went to a party in Norwalk, Connecticut. Holden, GUESS what I did this afternoon! What movie I saw! Guess!

HOLDEN: I don't know. Listen. Didn't they say what time they'd.....

PHOEBE: THE DOCTOR! It's a special movie they had at the Lister Foundation. Just this one day they had it - today was the only day. It was all about this doctor in Kentucky and everything that sticks a blanket over this child's face that's a cripple and can't walk. Then they send him to jail and everything. It was excellent.

HOLDEN: Listen a second. Didn't they say what time they'd....

PHOEBE: He feels sorry for it, the doctor. That's why he sticks this blanket over her face and everything and makes her suffocate. THEN they make him go to jail for life imprisonment. But this child that he stuck the blanket over its head comes to visit him all the time and thanks him for what he did. He was a mercy killer. Only, he knows he deserves to go to jail because a doctor isn't supposed to take things away from God. This girl in my class' mother took us. Alice Holmborg. She's my best friend. She's the only girl in the whole..

HOLDEN: Wait a second, WILLya? I'm asking you a question. Did they say what time they'd be back or didn't they?

PHOEBE: No, but not till very late. Daddy took the car and everything so they wouldn't have to worry about trains. We have a radio in it now! Except that Mother said that nobody can play it when the car's in traffic.

(Now Holden relaxes and lights a cigarette.)

HOLDEN: So it was a good picture, huh?

PHOEBE: Swell, except Alice had a cold, and her mother kept asking her all the time if she felt grippy. Right in the middle of the PICTURE. Always in the middle of something important, her mother'd lean all over me and everything and ask Alice if she felt grippy. It got on my nerves.

HOLDEN: D.B. coming home for Christmas?

PHOEBE: He may and he may not, Mother said. It all depends. He may have to stay in Hollywood and write a picture about Annapolis.

HOLDEN: (Exasperated) AnnApolis, for God's sake!

PHOEBE: It's a love story and everything. Guess who's going to be in it. What movie star. Guess.

HOLDEN: I'm not interested. Annapolis, for God's sake. What's D.B. know about Annapolis, for God's sake? What's that got to do with the kind of stories he writes? Boy, that stuff drives me crazy. That Goddam Hollywood. (He notices that Phoebe has some adhesive tape on her arm.) What'd you do to your arm?

PHOEBE: This boy, Curtis Weintraub, that's in my class. Pushed me while I was going down the stairs in the park. Wanna see? (She starts to take it off.)

HOLDEN: Leave it alone! Why'd he push you down the stairs?

PHOEBE: I don't know. I think he hates me. This other girl and me, Selma Atterbury, put ink and stuff all over his windbreaker.

HOLDEN: That isn't nice. What are you - a CHILD, for God's sake?

PHOEBE: NO, but everytime I'm in the park, he follows me. He's always following me. He gets on my nerves.

HOLDEN: He probably likes you. That's no reason to put ink and all...

PHOEBE: I don't want him to like me. (She stares at Holden for a minute.) Holden, how come you're not home WEDnesday?

HOLDEN: What?

PHOEBE: How come you're not home WEDnesday? You didn't get kicked out or anything, did you?

HOLDEN: I told you. They let us out early. They let the whole.....

PHOEBE: You DID get kicked out! You DID! (She hits him on the leg with her fist.) You did! Oh, HOLDEN! (Phoebe has her hand over her mouth; she is very emotional.)

HOLDEN: Who said I got kicked out? Nobody said I

PHOEBE: You DID. You DID. (She hits him again with her fist.) Daddy'll KILL you. (She flops over on her stomach and puts the pillow over her head.)

HOLDEN: Cut it out, now. Nobody's gonna kill me. Nobody's even gonna - C'MON, Phoebe, take that goddam thing off your head. Nobody's gonna kill me.

PHOEBE: (Her head still under the pillow.) Daddy's gonna kill you.

HOLDEN: Nobody's gonna kill me. Use your head. In the first place, I'm going away. What I may do, I may get a job on a ranch or something for a while. I know this guy whose grandfather's got a ranch in Colorado. I may get a job out there. I'll keep in touch with you and all when I'm gone. If I go. C'mon. Take that thing off your head. C'mon, hey, Phoebe. Please. Please, willya?

(Holden tries to pull the pillow off, unsuccessfully.)

HOLDEN: Phoebe, PLEASE. C'mon outa there. C'mon hey...
...hey, Phoebe. C'mon out. (Phoebe won't though!)
All right. I gotta make a phone call anyway. Remember Sally Hayes? (No response) I told you about her. Do you know what she did? (No response) She wrote me a letter and asked me over to trim her Christmas tree. Hey, Phoebe?

PHOEBE: (Her head still under the pillow) Daddy's gonna kill you.

HOLDEN: No, he's NOT. Hey, c'mon OUT.

(Phoebe doesn't move. Holden goes to the phone on the dressing table. He picks up the receiver and dials a number. The audience hears exactly what Holden hears.)

MAN: Hello?

HOLDEN: May I speak to Sally, please?

MAN: This is Sally's father. Do you know what time it is? Who is this?

HOLDEN: This is Holden Caulfield. Is Sally asleep, Mr. Hayes? I'm sorry to be calling so late but it's.....

MAN: Just a minute.

(A pause. Holden calls over to Phoebe: Hey, Phoebe! Take that thing off your head. Wanta suffocate or something?)

SALLY: Hello.

HOLDEN: Sally?

SALLY: Yes - who is this?

HOLDEN: Holden Caulfield! How are ya?

SALLY: Holden! I'm fine! How are you?

HOLDEN: Swell. Listen. How are ya, anyway? I mean, how's school?

SALLY: Fine. I mean - you know.

HOLDEN: Yeah. I know. Listen. I was wondering if you'd like to meet me tomorrow afternoon for a drink at the Biltmore.

SALLY: I'd LOVE to. GRAND. What time?

HOLDEN: What? Oh, how about four-thirty? That okay?

SALLY: Marvelous. I'll be there.

HOLDEN: Great. Well, I'll see you tomorrow then, Sally.

SALLY: Four-thirty. Goodnight, Holden. And thankyou for calling.

HOLDEN: G'night, Sally.

(They both hang up. Holden lights another cigarette and sits at the foot of Phoebe's bed. Phoebe takes the pillow off her head, but she does not sit up.)

PHOEBE: Daddy'll KILL you.

HOLDEN: No, he won't. The worst he'll do, he'll give me hell again, and then he'll send me to that goddam military school. That's all he'll do to me. And in the FIRST place, I won't even be around. I'll be away. I'll be - I'll probably be in Colorado on this ranch.

PHOEBE: Don't make me laugh. You can't even ride a horse.

HOLDEN: Who can't? Sure I can. They can teach you in about two minutes. (Phoebe is picking at her arm.) Stop picking at that. Who gave you that haircut?

PHOEBE: None of your business. I suppose you failed in every single subject again.

HOLDEN: No, I didn't. I passed English.

PHOEBE: Oh, Holden, why did you DO it?

HOLDEN: Oh God, Phoebe, don't ask me. A million reasons why. It was one of the worst schools I ever went to. It was full of phonies and mean guys. You never saw so many mean guys in your life. For instance, if you were having a bull session in somebody's room, and somebody wanted to come in, nobody'd let them in if they were some dopy pimply guy. Everybody was always LOCKING their door when somebody wanted to come in. And they had this goddam secret fraternity that I was too yellow not to join. There was this one pimply, boring guy, Robert Ackley, that wanted to get in. He kept trying to join, and they wouldn't let him. I don't even feel like talking about it. It was a stinking school take my word.

(Phoebe sits up and listens; she doesn't say anything, but she is listening to every word Holden says, and the funny part is, somehow she knows what Holden is talking about.)

HOLDEN: Even the couple of NICE teachers on the faculty, they were phonies too. There was this one old guy, Mr. Spencer. His wife was always giving you hot chocolate and all that stuff, and they were pretty nice. But even old Spencer was a goddam phony.

PHOEBE: Don't swear so much.

HOLDEN: The whole place would've made you puke, I swear it would. Then, on Veteran's Day. They have this day, Veteran's Day, that all the jerks that graduated from Pencey around 1776 come back and walk all over the place, with their wives and children and everybody. You should've seen this one old guy that was about fifty. What he did was, he came in our room and knocked on the door and asked if we'd mind if he used the bathroom. The bathroom was at the other end of the corridor - I don't know why he asked US. You know what he said? He said he wanted to see if his initials were still in one of the can doors. What he did, he carved his stupid goddam sad old initials in one of the can doors about ninety years ago, and he wanted to see if they were still there. So my roommate and I walked him down to the bathroom and all, and we had to stand there while he looked for his initials in all the can doors. He kept talking to us the whole time, telling us how when he was at Pencey they were the happiest days of his life, and giving us alot of advice for the future and all. BOY, did he depress me! I don't mean he was a bad guy - he wasn't. But you don't have to be a bad guy to depress somebody. You can be a GOOD guy and do it. All you have to do to depress somebody is give them a lot of phoney advice while you're looking for your initials in some can door - that's all you have to do. I don't know. God, Phoebe! I can't explain. I just didn't like anything that was HAPPENING at Pencey. I can't explain.

PHOEBE: You don't like ANYTHING that's happening.

(This remark depresses Holden even more.)

HOLDEN: Yes I do. Yes I do. SURE I do. Don't say that. Why the hell do you say that?

PHOEBE: Because you don't. You don't like any schools. You don't like a million things. You DON'T.

HOLDEN: I do! That's where you're wrong. That's exactly where you're wrong. Why the hell do you have to say that?

PHOEBE: Because you don't.

(Phoebe leans over and switches on the small radio on the table by her bed. Soft quiet music.)

HOLDEN: Yes I do.

PHOEBE: Name one thing.

HOLDEN: One thing? One thing I like alot?

PHOEBE: Yes.

HOLDEN: Okay. (He thinks a moment.) One thing I like alot, you mean? (Phoebe just looks at him.) C'mon, answer me. One thing I like alot, or one thing I just like?

PHOEBE: One thing you like alot.

HOLDEN: All right. (He thinks a moment.) Gimme a minute to think.

PHOEBE: You can't even think of one thing.

HOLDEN: Yes, I can. Yes, I can.

PHOEBE: Well, do it then.

HOLDEN: I like Allie. And I like doing what I'm doing right now. Sitting here with you, and talking, and thinking about stuff, and...

PHOEBE: Allie's DEAD - you always say that! If somebody's dead and everything, and in heaven, then it isn't really...

HOLDEN: I know he's dead! Don't you think I know that? I can still like him, though, can't I? Just because somebody's dead, you don't just stop liking them! Especially if they were about a thousand times nicer than the people you know that're ALIVE and all.

(Phoebe doesn't say anything; when she doesn't have anything to say, old Phoebe doesn't say a goddam word.)

HOLDEN: Anyway, I like it now. I mean right now. Sitting here with you and talking and horsing...

PHOEBE: That isn't anything REALLY!

HOLDEN: It is so something REALLY! Certainly it is! Why the hell isn't it? People never think anything is anything REALLY! I'm getting goddam sick of it.

PHOEBE: Stop swearing. All right. Name something else. Name something you'd like to BE. Like a scientist. Or a LAWYER or something.

HOLDEN: I couldn't be a scientist. I'm no good inscience.

PHOEBE: Well, a lawyer, then - like daddy.

HOLDEN: Lawyers are all right, I guess. But it doesn't appeal to me. I mean they're allright if they go around saving innocent guys' lives all the time, and like that, but you don't DO that kind of stuff if you're a lawyer. All you do is make alot of dough and play golf and play bridge and buy cars and drink martinis and look like a hot-shot. And besides. Even if you DID go around saving guys lives and all, how would you know if you did it because you really WANTED to save guys' lives, or because you did it because what you REALLY wanted to do was be a terrific lawyer, with everybody slapping you on the back and congratulating you in court when the trial was over, the reporters and everybody, the way it is in the dirty movies? How would you know you weren't being a phony? The trouble is, you WOULDN'T.

PHOEBE: But, Holden, what do you want to DO?

HOLDEN: You know what I'd really like to do, Phoeb? I'd like to live all by myself in a cabin way off in the woods someplace. I'd ask all of you - you and Mother and Daddy and D.B. - to come out and visit me in the summertime and on Christmas vacation and Easter vacation. And I'd let D.B. come out and visit me for a while if he wanted a nice, quiet place for his writing, but he couldn't write any movies in my cabin, only stories and books. I'd have this rule that nobody could do anything phony when they visited me. If anybody tried to do anything phony, they couldn't stay.

(Phoebe sits way up in bed.)

PHOEBE: I'm taking belching lessons from this girl, Phyllis Margulies. Listen.

(Holden listens for a moment; he hears SOMETHING, but it isn't much.)

HOLDEN: Good.

(Phoebe turns the music louder.)

HOLDEN: C'mon. You feel like dancing?

PHOEBE: You have shoes on.

HOLDEN: I'll take 'em off. C'mon.

(Phoebe jumps out of bed and waits for Holden to slip his loafers off. Then they dance. They dance very nicely, very pretty.)

PHOEBE: I'm improving, aren't I?

HOLDEN: And how.

(They try a few fancy steps, turns, dips, etc.)

HOLDEN: Hey, Phoebe. Ya been over to the park lately?

PHOEBE: Yes. I went last Sunday to roller-skate.

HOLDEN: Well, you know those ducks on that little lake? Were they there?

PHOEBE: I don't know. I didn't notice. Why?

HOLDEN: I was just wondering where they went in the winter-time.

(They stop dancing. Phoebe jumps back into bed, and Holden turns off the radio. Holden lights a cigarette.)

PHOEBE: Feel my forehead!

HOLDEN: Why?

PHOEBE: FEEL it! Just feel it once.

(Holden does so.)

PHOEBE: Does it feel feverish?

HOLDEN: No. Is it supposed to?

PHOEBE: Yes. I'm making it. Feel it again.

HOLDEN: (Not feeling anything, but not wanting Phoebe to get an inferiority complex.) I think it's starting to now.

PHOEBE: (Nods) I can make it go up over the thermometer.

HOLDEN. Thermometer. Who said so?

PHOEBE: Alice Holmborg showed me how. You cross your legs and hold your breath and think of something very very hot. A radiator or something. Then your whole forehead gets so hot you can burn somebody's hand.

HOLDEN: (Pulling his hand away.) Thanks for TELLing me!

PHOEBE: Oh, I wouldn't've burned YOUR hand. I'd have stopped before it got too.....SHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

(She sits way up in bed, very suddenly; this scares Holden.)

HOLDEN: What's the matter?

PHOEBE: (In a very loud whisper) It's THEM! The front door!

(Holden jumps up, runs over and turns off the light, fanning the air, trying to get the smoke out of the room. Phoebe turns off the lamp by her bed and Holden grabs his shoes and dives under the bed. Mrs. Caulfield comes into the room, turns the light on. She is dressed-up. She is very nice, but she is tired and nervous; we like her very much. Phoebe pretends to be asleep.)

MRS.: Phoebe? Now, stop that. I saw the light, young lady.

PHOEBE:(Opening her eyes) Hello! I couldn't sleep. Did you have a good time?

MRS: (You can tell that she didn't.) Marvelous. Why are you awake, may I ask? Were you warm enough?

PHOEBE: I was warm enough. I just couldn't sleep.

MRS.: Phoebe, have you been smoking a cigarette in here? Tell me the truth please, young lady.

PHOEBE: What?

MRS.: You heard me.

PHOEBE: I just lit one for one second. I just took One PUFF. Then I threw it out the window.

MRS: Why? May I ask.

PHOEBE: I couldn't sleep.

MRS.: I don't like that, Phoebe. I don't like that at all. Do you want another blanket?

PHOEBE: (You can tell she is trying to get rid of her.) No thanks. G'night!

MRS.: (She is tucking Phoebe in.) How was the movie?

PHOEBE: Excellent. Except Alice's mother. She kept leaning over and asking her if she felt grippy during the whole entire movie. We took a taxi home.

MRS.: Let me feel your forehead.

PHOEBE: I didn't catch anything. She didn't have anything. It was just her mother.

MRS.: Well. Go to sleep now. How was your dinner?

PHOEBE: Lousy.

MRS.: You heard what your father said about using that word. What was lousy about it? You had a lovely lamb chop. I walked all over Lexington Avenue just to...

PHOEBE: The lamb chop was all right, but Charlene always BREATHES on me whenever she puts something down. She breathes all over the food and everything. She BREATHES on everything.

MRS.: Well, go to sleep. Give Mother a kiss. Bid you say your prayers?

PHOEBE: I said them in the bathroom. G'night!

MRS.: Good night. Go right to sleep now. I have a splitting headache.

PHOEBE: Take a few aspirins. Holden'll be home on Wednesday, won't he?

MRS.: So far as I know. Get under there, now. Way down.

(Mrs. Caulfield gives Phoebe another kiss and walks to the door. She turns back to Phoebe.)

MRS: Goodnight. Go right to sleep now.

PHOEBE: I will. G'night!

(Mrs. Caulfield switches off the light, and shuts the door. After a few moments, Holden climbs out from under the bed and is slipping on his shoes when Phoebe switches on the lamp by her bed.)

PHOEBE: Don't go NOW. Wait'll they're asleep.

HOLDEN: No. Now's the best time. She'll be in the bathroom and Daddy'll turn on the news or something. Listen,

Phoeb, you got any dough? I might need some. I just might.

PHOEBE: Just my Christmas money. I haven't done any shopping at ALL yet.

HOLDEN: Oh, I don't want to take your Christmas dough.

PHOEBE: You want some?

HOLDEN: I don't want to take your Christmas dough.

PHOEBE: (Opening the drawer in her bed-side table.) I can lend you some. (She stops a moment.) If you go away, you won't see me in the play.

HOLDEN: Yes, I will. I won't go away before that. You think I wanna miss the play?

PHOEBE: (Holding Holden's hand and putting some money in it) Here.

HOLDEN: Hey, I don't need all of this. Just let me have two bucks. I already have quite a lot. I just might...

PHOEBE: You take it all. You can pay me back. Bring it to the play. It's only eight dollars and eighty-five cents. SIXty-five cents. I spent some.

(Suddenly Holden grabs Phoebe and hugs her. He is about to cry, but he recovers quickly.)

HOLDEN: Hey, listen, Phoebe. Meet me tomorrow at our meeting place in the park at six o'clock. Can you be there then?

PHOEBE: It's Sunday. I'll be there.

(Holden takes the red hunting cap from his overcoat pocket and puts it on Phoebe's head.)

HOLDEN: Here. I gotta present for you.

PHOEBE: Oh, THANKS, Holden. I love it. It's wonderful.

(Holden stands up, ready to leave.)

PHOEBE: Holden, please don't go. You can sleep in here with me. PLEASE don't go.

HOLDEN: I've got to. But listen. Meet me tomorrow.

PHOEBE: Okay.

HOLDEN: And I'll pay you back your money. Listen, Phoebe...

PHOEBE: Holden, PLEASE don't go.

HOLDEN: I have to, Phoebe. I'll see you tomorrow. Don't forget.

(Phoebe sits up, puts her arms about Holden's neck and kisses him on the cheek.)

HOLDEN: Phoebe, don't worry about me. Everything'll be okay.

PHOEBE: You don't have to go.

HOLDEN: G'night.

(Holden switches off the light; all is dark.)

VOICE: I went back over to Grand Central and got my bags. It was pretty late, after one o'clock, but I wasn't sleepy, and I didn't feel like checking into some crazy hotel. So I thought about who I could call up. Then I remembered this address I had. This guy I met at a party last summer gave it to me. He went to Princeton, and it was the address of this girl that he brought to a dance at Princeton, and they nearly kicked him out for it. Because she used to be a stripper or something. Anyway, I went over to a phone booth.

SCENE THREE

(Lights come up on Holden, standing in a phone booth, looking in a telephone directory. His bags are outside the booth.)

VOICE: Her name was Faith Cavendish, and she lived at the Stanford Arms Hotel on Sixty-Fifth and Broadway. A dump, no doubt.

(He deposits the coin, dials the number. The audience hears the buzz of the phone ringing, and after ten buzzes, someone picks up the phone. We hear Faith Cavendish' voice, but, like Holden, we never see her.)

FAITH: (None too friendly) HELLO!

HOLDEN: (Makes his voice very deep and smooth) Hello. Is this Miss Faith Cavendish?

FAITH: Who's THIS? Who's calling me up at this crazy goddam hour?

HOLDEN: (This scares him a little, but he goes on being smooth) Well, I know it's quite late. I hope you'll forgive me, but I was very anxious to get in touch with you.

FAITH: Who IS this?

HOLDEN: Well, you don't know me, but I'm a friend of Eddie Birdsell's. He suggested that if I were in town sometime, we ought to get together for a cocktail or two.

FAITH: (She is a real tigree over the phone, damn near yelling) WHO? You're a friend of WHO?

HOLDEN: Edmund Birdsell. Eddie Birdsell.

FAITH: I don't know anybody by that name, Jack. And if you think I enjoy being woke up in the middle of the....

HOLDEN: Eddie BIRDsell? From Princeton?

FAITH: (Running the name over in her mind) Birdsell...Birdsell...from Princeton...Princeton College?

HOLDEN: That's right.

FAITH: You from Princeton College?

HOLDEN: Well....(he hesitates)..approximately.

FAITH: Oh. .. How IS Eddie? This is certainly a peculiar time to call a person up, though. Jesus Christ.

HOLDEN: He's fine. He asked to be remembered to you.

FAITH: Well, thank you. Remember me to HIM. He's a grand person. What's he doing now?

HOLDEN: Oh, you know. Same old stuff. Look, would you be interested in meeting me for a cocktail somewhere?

FAITH: By any chance, do you have any idea what TIME it is? What's your name, anyhow? May I ask? You sound a little on the young side.

HOLDEN: (He laughs suavely) Well, thank you for the compliment. Holden Caulfield's my name.

FAITH: Well, look, Mr. Cawffle. I'm not in the habit of making engagements in the middle of the night. I'm a working gal.

HOLDEN: Tomorrow's Sunday.

FAITH: Well, ANYway. I gotta get my beauty sleep. You know how it is.

HOLDEN: I thought we might have just one cocktail together. It isn't too late.

FAITH: Well, you're very sweet. Where ya callin from? Where ya at now, anyways?

HOLDEN: Me? I'm in a phone booth.

FAITH: Oh. (A very long pause.) Well, I'd like awfully to get together with you sometime, Mr. Cawffle. You sound very attractive. You sound like a very attractive person, but it IS late.

HOLDEN: I could come up to your place.

FAITH: Well, ordinarily, I'd say GRAND. I mean I'd love to have you drop up for a cocktail, but my roommate happens to be ill. She's been laying here all night without a wink of sleep. She just closed her eyes and all. I mean.

HOLDEN: Oh. That's too bad.

FAITH: Where ya stoppin at? Perhaps we could get together for cocktails tomorrow.

HOLDEN: I can't make it tomorrow. Tonight's the only time I can make it.

FAITH: Oh. Well, I'm awfully sorry.

HOLDEN: I'll say hello to Eddie for you.

FAITH: Willya do that? I hope you enjoy your stay in New York. It's a grand place.

HOLDEN: I know it is. Thanks. Goodnight.

(He hangs up, leans back in the booth, very depressed. The lights fade out on him. The blue spotlight is on him for a few seconds. Then it is dark.)

SCENE FOUR.

(Maurice, a fat bellboy, about forty-five years old, turns on the lights in the hotel room. Holden comes in behind him. It is a very cheap room: iron bed, telephone table by bed with a telephone and lamp, a desk, a dresser, a door to the closet and a door to the bathroom. Maurice puts Holden's bag on the bed, turns on the light, checks the drawers and dresser during the next.)

HOLDEN: (Looking around the room.) What a crummy room! It smells like somebody just tossed their cookies in here. (Maurice opens the window a little) You like working here?

MAURICE: It's okay.

HOLDEN: (Sits on bed.) You ever go over to Central Park?

MAURICE: Sometimes.

HOLDEN: You ever pass by the lagoon in Central Park? Down by Central Park South?

MAURICE: the WHAT?

HOLDEN: The lagoon. That little lake, like, there. Where the ducks are.

MAURICE: Yeah, what about it?

HOLDEN: Well, you know the ducks that swim around in it? In the springtime and all? Do you happen to know where they go in the wintertime, by any chance?

MAURICE: Where WHO goes?

HOLDEN: The ducks. Do you know, 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?

MAURICE: (Very impatient) How the hell should I know? How the hell should I know a stupid thing like that? What are ya tryin to do, buddy - kid me?

HOLDEN: Well, don't get sore about it!

MAURICE: Who's sore? Nobody's sore. (He thinks a moment.) The FISH don't go no place. They stay right where they are, the fish. Right in the goddam lake.

HOLDEN: The fish - that's different. The fish is different. I'm talking about the ducks.

MAURICE: What's **D**ifferent about it? Nothin's **D**ifferent about it. It's tougher for the **F**ISH, the winter and all, than it is for the ducks, for Chrissake. Use your head, for Chrissake!

HOLDEN: (Thinks a moment.) All right. What do they do, the fish, when that whole lake's a solid block of ice, people **S**KATING on it and all?

MAURICE: What the hellaya mean what do they do? They stay right where they are, for Chrissake.

HOLDEN: They can't just ignore the ice. They can't just **I**GNORE it.

MAURICE: Who's ignoring it? Nodbody's **i**gnORing it! They live right **I**N the goddam ice. It's their nature, for Chrissake. They get frozen in one position for the whole winter.

HOLDEN: Yeah? What do they eat then? I mean, if they're frozen **S**SOLID, they can't swim around looking for **F**OOD and all.

MAURICE: Their **B**ODIES, for Chrissake - what's a matter with ya? Their bodies take in nutr**i**tion and all, right through the goddamned seaweed and stuff that's in the ice. That's their **N**ature, for Chrissake. See what I mean?

HOLDEN: Oh.

MAURICE: Listen. If you was a fish, Mother Nature'd take care of **Y**OU, wouldn't she? **R**IGHT! You don't think them fish just **D**IE when it gets to be winter, do ya?

HOLDEN: No, but....

MAURICE: You're goddam right they don't.

(Maurice waits for a tip. Holden takes out his wallet and gives Maurice a dollar.)

MAURICE: Jesus! Thanks alot.

HOLDEN: That's okay.

(Maurice goes to the door and Holden opens his suitcase. Maurice lingers at the door, finally turns around to Holden who is taking his pajamas from the suitcase.)

MAURICE: (Quietly) You innarested in having a good time, fella?

(Holden is both surprised and shocked, embarassed, by this. He turns and looks at Maurice.)

MAURICE: Or is it too late for you?

HOLDEN: How do you mean?

MAURICE: Y'innarested ina little tail t'night?

HOLDEN: ME?

MAURICE: How old are you, chief?

HOLDEN: Why? Twenty-two.

MAURICE: Uh huh. Well, how about it? Y'innarested? Five bucks a throw. Fifteen bucks the whole night.

HOLDEN: (It is against his principles, but he is so depressed he isn't even thinking) Okay.

MAURICE: Okay WHAT? A throw or all night? I gotta know.

HOLDEN: A throw.

MAURICE: Okay. I'll send a girl up in a few minutes.

HOLDEN: Hey, is she good-looking? I don't want any old bag.

MAURICE: No old bag.

HOLDEN: Who do I pay?

MAURICE: Her. I'll send her right up.

(Maurice leaves. Holden is pretty nervous. He picks up his pajamas, wonders what to do with them, finally puts them back in his suitcase. He goes to mirror and runs a comb through his short crew-cut.)

VOICE: I was pretty nervous. You see, I'm a virgin. I'd had quite a few chances to lose my virginity, but I never did. Something always happened. I always stopped.

(Holden sits in chair, strikes a false casual pose and lights a cigarette. He drops the pose. He is worried.)

VOICE: God, I was nervous. I felt awful. I felt like I had to talk to somebody who could maybe tell me what to do. And then I thought about this Mr. Antolini, who was a teacher at Elkton Hills.

(Holden goes to table by bed and looks up Antolini's number in the directory.)

VOICE: He's married now and lives in New York with this very wealthy wife who's about a hundred times older than he is. Anyway, we used to play tennis together in the summer and all, and he was a good friend of mine. So I decided to call him up.

(Holden picks up the phone. We hear exactly what he does.)

OPERATOR: Your call please.

HOLDEN: Lackawanna 5-6888, please.

(The phone buzzes twice, and we hear Mr. Antolini answer it. He is laughing, and we hear the sounds of people talking and

laughing behind him.)

ANTOLINI: (Laughing) Oh, that's terrific, Tom...ha ha ha HELLO!

HOLDEN: Hello, Mr. Antolini?

ANTOLINI: None other than!

HOLDEN: This is Holden.

ANTOLINI: HOLDen! My GOD!

HOLDEN: Did I wake you up? It's pretty late.

ANTOLINI: Great GOD no! We're entertaining some people from Buffalo tonight. Some friends of Mrs. Antolini's. Some buffalos, as a matter of fact. How are you?

HOLDEN: Not so good. I got booted from Pencey.

ANTOLINI: Oh, NO, Holden! Not AGAIN!

HOLDEN: Yeah. I haven't told Mother and Dad yet. I just got into town. I didn't know what to do, Mr. Antolini.

ANTOLINI: Are you okay? I gather you haven't been home yet.

HOLDEN: No, I haven't. I want to think about things.

ANTOLINI: Holden, you come on and stay the night with us. Where are you now?

HOLDEN: Well, I'm okay now. I'm spending the night with a friend. Look. Mr. Antolini, would it be okay if I came over to see you tomorrow afternoon about three o'clock? I'd like to talk things over with you. Will you be there?

ANTOLINI: OF COURSE I'll be here.

HOLDEN: Thanks an awful lot. Oh. And please don't call home and tell them I'm in town. I'm not supposed to get home till Wednesday.

ANTOLINI: I understand. Are you sure you don't want to come over here now?

(There is a knock at the door.)

HOLDEN: Yes, sir. But thankyou anyway.

ANTOLINI: SURE now?

(Knocking again.)

HOLDEN: Well, I'm sort of tied up right now. I'll see you tomorrow. Okay?

ANTOLINI: Wonderful. Now, don't you hurry, Holden. We'll fix you up fine.

HOLDEN: Okay. Thanks alot. I'll see you tomorrow. Goodnight.

ANTOLINI: Goodnight, Holden.

(Holden hangs up, rushes to the door, trips over his bag. He opens the door. Sunny, a thin girl of eighteen, stands there. She has dyed blonde hair, wears a polo coat, and she is chewing gum. She has a teeny-whiney voice.)

SUNNY: You the guy Maurice said?

HOLDEN: Is he the bellboy?

SUNNY: Yeah.

HOLDEN: (Nonchalant) Yes, I am. Come in, won't you?

(Sunny comes in, takes her coat off and chucks it on the bed. She is wearing a green dress. She sits down sort of sideways on the chair by the desk, crosses her legs and jiggles one foot up and down.)

HOLDEN: Would you care for a cigarette?

SUNNY: I don't smoke.

HOLDEN: Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Jim Steele.

SUNNY: Ya got a watch on ya? Hey, how old are you, anyways?

HOLDEN: Me? Twenty-two.

SUNNY: Like fun you are.

HOLDEN: How old are you?

SUNNY: Old enough to know better. Ya got a watch on ya?

(Very suddenyl, Sunny stands up and pulls her dress over her head. She is wearing a pink slip. Holden is very uncomfortable, depressed; he feels very peculiar. He is embarassed.)

SUNNY: Ya got a watch on ya?

HOLDEN: (Trying not to look at her) No. No, I don't. (He sinks into a chair) What's your name?

SUNNY: Sunny. Let's go, hey.

HOLDEN: Don't you feel like talking for awhile? Are you in a very big hurry?

SUNNY: (Looking at Holden as if he is a madman.) What the heck ya wanna TALK about?

HOLDEN: I don't know. Nothing special. I just thought you might care to chat for awhile.

(Sunny sits back down again on the desk chair, crosses her legs, jiggles her foot nervously.)

HOLDEN: Would you care for a cigarette now?

SUNNY: I don't smoke. I toldja. Listen, if you're gonna talk, DO it. I got things to do.

HOLDEN: (Lights a cigarette, tries to be casual.) You don't come from New York, do you?

SUNNY: Hollywood. (She gets up, crosses to bed and picks up her dress.) Ya got a hanger? I don't want to get my dress all wrinkly. It's brand-clean.

HOLDEN: Sure. (He takes the dress and hangs it in the closet.) Do you work every night? (He realizes what a terrible question this is AFTER he has asked it.)

SUNNY: (She is walking around the room.) Yeah. (She picks up a menu from the top of the desk and studies it.)

HOLDEN: What do you do during the day? (He sits down again.)

SUNNY: (Shrugs her shoulders.) Sleep. Go to the show. (She puts down the menu and looks at Holden.) Let's go, hey. I haven't got all.....

HOLDEN: Look. I don't feel very much like myself tonight. I've had a rough night. Honest. I'll pay you and all, but do you mind if we..if we..DON'T?

SUNNY: (Coming over to his chair.) Whatsa matter?

HOLDEN: Nothings the matter. (He is getting very nervous.) The thing is, I had an operation very recently.

SUNNY: Yeah? (A pause.) Where?

HOLDEN: On my wuddayacallit - my chlavichord.

SUNNY: Yeah? Where the hell's that?

HOLDEN: The clavichord? Well, actually, it's in the spinal canal. I mean it's quite a ways down in the spinal canal.

SUNNY: Yeah? That's tough. (She sits down in Holden's lap. He is very uncomfortable.) You're cute.

HOLDEN: I'm still recuperating.

SUNNY: You look like a guy in the movies. You know. Whosis. YOU know who I mean. What the heck's his name?

HOLDEN: I don't know.

SUNNY: SURE you know. He was in that picture with Mel-vine Douglas? That falls off this boat? YOU know who I mean.

HOLDEN: No, I don't. I go to the movies as seldom as I can.

(Sunny whispers something into Holden's ear and laughs.)

HOLDEN: Look! I just told you! I just had this operation!

SUNNY: (Still sitting in his lap, giving him this very dirty look.) Listen. I was SLEEPin when that crazy Maurice woke me up. If you think I'm...

HOLDEN: I SAID I'd pay you for coming. I really will. I have plenty of dough. It's just that I'm practically just recovering from a very serious....

SUNNY: What the heck did you tell that crazy Maurice you WANTED a girl for then? If you just had a goddam operation on your goddam wuddayacallit? HUH?

HOLDEN: I thought I'd be feeling a lot better than I do. I was a little premature in my calculations. No kidding. I'm sorry. If you'll just get up a second, I'll get my wallet. I mean it.

(Sunny stands up, sore as hell. Holden gets his wallet from the top of the dresser and hands her a five dollar bill.)

HOLDEN: Thanks alot. Thanks a million.

SUNNY: This is a five. It costs ten.

HOLDEN: He said five. I'm sorry - I really am - but that's all I'm gonna shell out.

SUNNY: (Shrugs her shoulders, then says in a very cold, elegant voice) Do you mind getting me my frock? Or would it be too much trouble?

(Holden gets her dress and she grabs it away from him. She puts it on, swearing to herself. Then she picks up her polo coat and walks to the door.)

SUNNY: So long, crumb-bum! (She goes out, slamming the door behind her.)

HOLDEN: So long, Sunny.

(Holden takes his pajamas from the bag and goes into the bathroom. We hear him singing the tune of "Comin Thro The Rye" very loud. There is a banging on the door. The singing stops. Then Holden sings again, very nervous, ignoring the banging. But he is interrupted. Someone, and we all know WHO, is banging on the door and won't go away! Holden comes out into the bedroom. He is wearing his pajamas. He stands in front of the door, frightened.)

HOLDEN: (A loud whisper) Who's there?

(Louder knocking. Holden opens the door half-way. Maurice and Sunny are standing there.)

HOLDEN: (His voice is shaking.) What's the matter? Wud~~da~~ya want?

MAURICE: Nothing much. Just five bucks.

HOLDEN: I paid her already. I gave her five bucks. Ask her.

MAURICE: It's ten bucks, chief. I told you that. Ten bucks.

HOLDEN: You did not tell me that. you said five bucks. I distinctly...

MAURICE: Open up, chief.

HOLDEN: (Holding the door) What FOR?

(Holden tries to slam the door, but Maurice crashes through and gives Holden a shove that practically knocks him down.)

MAURICE: Let's go, chief.

(Maurice and Sunny walk into the room. Maurice talks to Holden, backing him across the room.)

MAURICE: All right, chief. Let's have it. I gotta get back to work.

HOLDEN: I told you about ten times. I don't owe you a cent. I already gave her five.

MAURICE: Let's have it.

HOLDEN: Why should I give her another five bucks? You're trying to chisel me!

MAURICE: (Standing very close to Holden.) Nobody's tryna chisel nobody.

HOLDEN: (Folding his arms, obstinate.) NO.

MAURICE: Let's have it, chief.

HOLDEN: I said NO!

MAURICE: Chief, you're gonna force me inna roughin ya up a little bit. I don't wanna do it, but that's the way it looks. You owe us five bucks.

HOLDEN: I DON'T owe you five bucks. If you rough me up, I'll yell like hell. I'll wake everybody in the hotel. The police and all.

MAURICE: Go ahead! Yell your head off! FINE! Want your parents to know you spent the night with a whore? High-class kid like you?

HOLDEN: (He is really scared now.) Leave me alone. If you'd SAID ten, it'd be different. But you distinctly...

MAURICE: (Very loud) Are you gonna let us have it?

HOLDEN: (Arms folded) Leave me alone. Get the hell out of my room.

(Sunny has been watching all this from the other side of the room, chewing her gum. She notices Holden's wallet on the dresser.)

SUNNY: Hey, Maurice, want me to get his wallet? It's right on the wutchamacallit.

MAURICE: (Looking at Holden.) Yeah. Get it.

HOLDEN: Hey! LEAVE MY WALLET ALONE?

(As Sunny dashes to the dresser, Holden starts to go over and stop her. Maurice grabs him, twists his arm, pushes him back.)

SUNNY: (Taking the five dollar bill from the wallet.) I awreddy got it. (She waves the bill at Holden.) See? All I'm takin is the five you owe me. I'm no crook.

HOLDEN: (He is nearly hysterical) NO! You're not CROOKS! You're just stealing....

MAURICE: (Gives Holden a shove) Shut up.

SUNNY: (SHE is getting a little nervous.) Leave him alone, hey. C'mon, hey. We got the dough he owes us. C'mon.

(Maurice doesn't move. He just stands very close to Holden, looking at him.)

SUNNY: C'mon, Maurice.

MAURICE: (Not moving.) I'm coming.

SUNNY: I MEAN it, Maurice, hey. Leave him alone.

MAURICE: Who's hurtin' anybody?

(MAURICE puts his hand on Holden's shoulder.)

HOLDEN: (Squirming, shaking Maurice's hand off his shoulder) Get your HAND offa me! You goddam dirty moron!

MAURICE: What's that? (He puts his hand behind his ear, like a deaf person.) What's that? What am I?

HOLDEN: (Hysterical.) You're a dirty moron. You're a stupid chiseling moron, and in about two years you'll be one of those scraggy guys that come up to you on the street and ask for a dime for coffee. You'll have snot all over your dirty, filthy, overcoat and you'll be...

(Maurice slaps Holden across the face, very hard, and gives him a vicious shove that knocks him down. Holden lies on the floor, helpless, whimpering.)

SUNNY: MAURICE! Let's get OUTa here! C'mon!

MAURICE: Okay.

(Maurice and Sunny leave. Holden, still sniffling, picks himself up, moves to the door and locks it. Fastens the chain guard.)

VOICE: I didn't feel too gorgeous.

(He turns out the big light. Only the lamp by the bed is on. He walks to the window and looks down.)

VOICE: What I really felt like doing was committing suicide. I felt like jumping out of the window. I probably would have 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.

(Holden climbs into bed.)

VOICE: I felt terrible. Lonesome. Like I was all by myself. It was an awful feeling. I wished that I was at home in my own bed.

(Holden turns out the lamp. We hear him sobbing quietly as

THE CURTAIN FALLS.)

END OF ACT TWO.

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

(The next afternoon. The curtain rises on the living room of Mr. Antolini. There is a bar, a sofa, a coffee table, a modern painting. The doorbell is ringing. Mr. Antolini crosses off-stage to the door. He is about thirty, quite handsome, wearing a dressing gown. He carries a drink in his hand. There are empty glasses and napkins strewn about the room.)

MR. A.: (Off) HOLDEN! My GOD! You've grown another twenty inches. Fine to see you. Come in.

HOLDEN: (Coming into the room with Mr. A.) How are you, Mr. Antolini? How's Mrs. Antolini?

MR. A.: We're both just dandy. Now let me have that coat. (Holden takes off his overcoat and Antolini takes it off-stage to closet. Off-stage:) I expected to see a day old infant in your arms. Snowflakes in your eyelashes. Nowhere to turn. (He comes back into the room) Excuse the mess. Mrs. Antolini's still in the sack. We were entertaining some friends of hers last night. From Buffalo. Some buffalos, as a matter of fact. (Holden laughs.) Cigarette? (Offers the cigarette box) Are you smoking now?

(They both sit on sofa; Holden takes a cigarette.)

HOLDEN: Thanks. Just once in a while. I'm a moderate smoker.

MR. A. : (Lighting the cigarettes from a table lighter) I'll bet you are. (They sit back.) So. You and Pencey are no longer one. What was the trouble? I'll show you the door in short order if you flunked English, you little ace composition writer.

HOLDEN: Oh, I passed English all right. It was mostly literature though. I only had to write about two compositions the whole term. I flunked Oral Expression though. They had this course you had to take, Oral Expression. THAT I flunked.

MR. A. : WHY?

HOLDEN: Oh, I don't know. That digression business got on my nerves. It just about drove me crazy.

MR. A. : What digression business?

HOLDEN: See, it's this course where each boy in class has to get up in class and make a speech. You know. Spontaneous and all. And if the boy digresses at all, you're supposed to yell "Digression" at him as fast as you can. It just about drove me crazy. I got an F in it.

MR. A. : Why?

HOLDEN: Oh, I don't know. That digression business got on my nerves. The trouble with me is, I LIKE it when somebody digresses. It's more interesting and all.

Mr. A.: You don't care to have somebody stick to the point when he tells you something?

HOLDEN: Oh, sure. I like somebody to stick to the point and all. But I don't like them to stick TOO much to the point ALL the time. The boys that got the best marks were the ones that stuck to the point all the time - I admit it. But there was this one boy, Richard Kinsella. He didn't stick to the point too much and they were always yelling "DIGRESSION!" at him. It was terrible, because, in the first place, he was a very nervous guy, and his lips were always shaking whenever it was his time to make a speech, and you could hardly HEAR him if you were sitting way in the back of the room. But I liked his speeches better than anybody else's. And he practically flunked the course! He got a D plus, because everyone was always yelling "DIGRESSSION!" at him.

For instance, he made this speech about this farm his father bought in Vermont. They kept yelling "Digression" at him the whole time he was making it, and this teacher, Mr. Vinson, gave him an F on it because he hadn't told what kind of vegetables and animals and stuff grew on the farm. What he did was, he STARTED telling you all about this farm, and then all of a sudden, he'd start telling you about this letter his mother got from his uncle, and how his uncle got polio and all when he was forty-two years old, and how he wouldn't let anyone come to see him in the hospital, because he didn't want anybody to see him with his brace on. It didn't have too much to do with the farm - I admit it - but it was NICE. I don't know. It's hard to explain.

MR.A.: Holden..one short, faintly stuffy, pedagogical question. Don't you think there's a time and a place for everything? Don't you think if someone starts out to tell you about his father's farm, he should stick to his guns, THEN get around to telling you about his uncle's brace? OR, if his uncle's brace was such a provocative subject, shouldn't he have selected it in the first place as his subject - not the farm?

HOLDEN: Yes. I don't know. I guess he should, if that interested him most. But lots of times you don't KNOW what interests you most till you start talking about something that DOESN'T interest you most. I mean you can't help it sometimes. What I think is, you're supposed to leave somebody alone if he's at least being interesting and he's getting all excited about it. I like it when somebody gets excited about something. It's nice. You didn't know this teacher, Mr. Vinson. Hee could drive you crazy sometimes, him and the goddam class. I mean he's keep telling you to UNify and SIMplify all the time#. Some things you just can't DO that to. I mean you can't hardly ever simplify and unify something just because somebody WANTS you to. You just didn't know this guy, Mr. Vinson. He was very intelligent and all, but you could tell he didn't have too much brains.

(Antolini gets up, goes to bar and fixes himself another drink.)

MR.A.: I had lunch with your Dad a couple of weeks ago. Did you know that?

HOLDEN: No, I didn't.

MR.A.: You're aware, of course, that he's terribly concerned about you.

HOLDEN: I know it. I know he is.

MR.A.: Apparently, before he phoned me, he's just had a long, rather harrowing letter from your latest headmaster, to the effect that you were making absolutely no effort at all. Cutting classes. Coming unprepared to all your classes. In general, being an all-around...

HOLDEN: I didn't cut any classes. You weren't allowed to cut any. There were a couple of them that I didn't attend once in a while, like that Oral Expression I told you about, but I didn't cut any.

MR.A.: (Sits down again) Frankly, I don't know what the hell to say to you, Holden.

HOLDEN: I know. I'm very hard to talk to. I realize that.

MR.A.: I have a feeling that you're riding for some kind of a terrible, terrible fall. But I don't honestly know what kind... Are you listening to me?

HOLDEN: Yes.

MR.A.: It may be the kind where, at the age of thirty, you sit in some bar hating everybody who comes in looking as if he might have played football in college. Then again, you may pick just enough education to hate people who say "It's a secret between he and I" or "He don't". Or you may end up in some business office, throwing paper clips at the nearest stenographer. I just don't know.

HOLDEN: You make it sound hopeless. You make it all sound so terrible.

MR.A.: Do you know what I'm driving at, at all?

HOLDEN: Yes. Sure. But you're wrong about that hating business. You really are. I don't hate too many guys. What I may do, I may hate them for a LITTLE while, like this guy ~tradrater I knew at Pencey, and this other boy, Robert Ackley. I hated THEM once in a while - I admit it- but it didn't last too long, is what I mean. After a while, if I didn't see them in the dining hall for a couple of meals, or if they didn't come into the room, I sort of missed them. I mean I sort of missed them.

MR.A.: All right. Listen to me a minute now...I may not word this as memorably as I'd like to, but I'll write you a letter about it in a day or two. Then you can get it all straight. But listen now, anyway. This fall I think you're riding for - it's a special kind of a fall. A horrible kind. The man falling isn't permitted to feel or hear himself hit bottom. He just keeps falling and falling. The whole arrangement's designed for men who, at some time or other in their lives, were looking for something their own environment couldn't supply them with. Or they THOUGHT their own environment couldn't supply them with. So they gave up looking. They gave up before they ever really got started. Do you follow me?

HOLDEN: Yes, sir.

MR.A.: Sure?

HOLDEN: *Yes.*

MR.A.: I don't want to scare you, but I can very clearly see you dying nobly, one way or another, for some highly unworthy cause. If I write something down for you, will you read it carefully? And keep it?

HOLDEN: Yes. Sure.

(Antolini goes to bar and writes on a pad.)

MR.A.: Oddly enough, this wasn't written by a practicing poet. It was written by a psychoanalyst named Wilhelm Stekel. Here's what he...are you still with me?

HOLDEN: Yes, sure I am.

MR.A.: Here's what he said: "The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of the mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one."
(He hands Holden the slip of paper.)

HOLDEN: Thanks. I'll keep it. I'll think about it.

MR.A.: I think that one of these days you're going to have to find out where you want to go. And then you've got to start going there. You can't afford to lose a minute. Not you.

(Holden nods.)

MR.A.: And I hate to tell you, but I think that once you have a fair idea where you want to go, your first move will be to apply yourself in school. You'll have to. You're a student.. whether the idea appeals to you or not. You're in love with knowledge. And I think you'll find, once you get past all the Mr. Vineses and their Oral Comp...

HOLDEN: Mr. Vinsons.

MR.A.: All right - Mr. Vinsons. Once you get past all the Mr. Vinsons, you're going to start getting closer and closer - that is, if you WANT to, and if you look for it and wait for it - to the kind of information that will be very, very dear to your heart.

Among other things, you'll find that you're not the first person who was ever confused and frightened and even sickened by human behavior. Many, many men have been just as troubled morally and spiritually as you are right now. Happily, some of them kept records of their troubles. You'll learn from them - if you WANT to. Just as someday, if you have something to offer, someone will learn something from you. It's a beautiful reciprocal arrangement. And it isn't education. It's history. It's poetry.

(He gets up and walks about the room.)

I'm not trying to tell you that only educated and scholarly men are able to contribute something to the world. It's not so. But I do say that educated and scholarly men, if they're creative and brilliant to begin with - which, unfortunately, is rarely the case - tend to leave infinitely more valuable records behind them than men who are MERELY brilliant and creative. They tend to express themselves more clearly, and they usually have a passion for following their thoughts through to the end. And..most important.. nine times out of ten they have more humility than the unscholarly thinker. Do you follow me?

HOLDEN: Yes, sir.

MR.A.: Something else an academic education will do for you. If you go along with it any considerable distance, it'll begin to give you an idea what size mind you have. What it'll fit, and, maybe, what it won't. After a while, you'll have an idea what kind of thoughts your particular size mind should be wearing. For one thing, it may save you an extraordinary amount of time trying on ideas that don't suit you, that aren't becoming to you. You'll begin to know your true measurements and dress your mind accordingly.

(Mr. Antolini looks at Holden; Holden nods.)

MR.A.: Listen to me. I didn't mean to give you a sermon. I must have bored you to death. (He pats Holden's knee.)

HOLDEN: Oh no, sir.

MR.A.: I'd like to help you, if I can, Holden.

HOLDEN: Well, there is one thing that's been bothering me lately.

MR.A.: What's that?

HOLDEN: Well, I've been wondering about those ducks down on the lake at Central Park. I've been wondering where they went in the wintertime when the lake is all frozen over. I mean, does somebody come and take them away in a truck, or do they just fly away someplace? Do you happen to know?

MR.A.: (After a pause.) Holden, are you feeling all right? You look awfully tired.

HOLDEN: Well, I had a pretty rough night last night. I hope I haven't bothered you, Mr. Antolini.

MR.A.: Good God, NO, Holden. You're one of my favorite people. I hope some of the things I've said have made some sense to you.

HOLDEN: Oh, they have. I mean it.

MR.A.: Well, I hope so. How're all your women?

HOLDEN: They're okay, I guess.

MR. A.: How's that Sally Hayes?

HOLDEN: She's fine. I have a date with her in just a few minutes.

MR.A.: Good. That's a step in the right direction. What about that other girl? The one you told me about? Up in Maine?

HOLDEN: Oh - Jane Gallagher. I haven't seen her for quite a long time.

MR.A.: Holden, have you let your family know you're in town?

HOLDEN: No, I haven't. Not yet. I don't know. I ALMOST called them up this morning. But I didn't.

MR.A.: Why not?

HOLDEN: Well, in the first place, they wouldn't've been home. Every Sunday morning they go out and stick a bunch of flowers on Allie's grave. I went out there with them a couple of times, but I cut it out. I don't enjoy seeing him in that cemetery. Surrounded by dead guys and tombstones and all. It wasn't too bad when the sun was out, but twice - TWICE- we were there when it started to rain. It was awful. It rained on his tombstone, and it rained on the grass on his stomach. It rained all over the place. All the visitors that were visiting the cemetery started running like hell over to their cars. That's what nearly drove me crazy. All the visitors could get in their cars and turn on their radios and then go someplace nice for dinner ----everybody except Allie. I couldn't stand it. I know it's only his body and all that's in the cemetery, and his soul's in heaven and all that, but I couldn't stand it anyway. I just wish he wasn't there.

Boy, when you're dead, they REALLY fix you up. I hope to hell when I die somebody has sense enough to just dump me in the river or something. ANYthing except sticking me in a goddam cemetery. Surrounded by dead guys. People coming and putting flowers on your stomach on Sunday. What I mean is, who wants flowers when you're dead? NOBODY.

Mr. A.: Holden, you know you have to go home. There's nothing else for you to do. You know that, don't you?

HOLDEN: Well, that's not exactly right. I had this idea this morning that I got pretty excited about. It's sort of crazy.

MR.A.: What kind of an idea?

HOLDEN: Well, I thought I'd hitchhike out West. I'd go down to Holland Tunnel and bum a ride, and then I'd bum another one, and then another one and another one. And in a couple of days I'd be out West where it was pretty and sunny and nobody'd know me. And then I'd 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 these deaf-mutes. That way I wouldn't have to have any stupid conversations with anybody. If anybody wanted to tell me something, they'd have to write it on a piece of paper and shove it over to me. They'd get bored as hell doing that after a while, and then I'd be through with having useless conversations for the rest of my life.

MR.A.: Holden. Wait a minute. Do you mean that you seriously can consider such a...

HOLDEN: (Very excited.) Then I'd build me a little cabin somewhere with the dough I made and live there for the rest of my life. I'd build it right near the woods, but not in them, because I'd want it to be sunny as hell all the time. I'd cook all my own food, 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. She'd come and live in my cabin with me, and if she wanted to say anything to me, she'd have to write it on a piece of paper, like everybody else. If we had any children, we could hide them somewhere. We could buy a lot of books and teach them how to read and write by ourselves. We could....

MR.A.: Holden, you're not SERIOUS! You're just..you're just DREAMING! People don't do things like that.

HOLDEN: why not?

MR.A.: A life like that just isn't real. It doesn't exist. A person has to learn to adjust. Get me?

HOLDEN: (Depressed.) I guess so.

MR.A.: Now I want you to go home tonight.

HOLDEN: You won't call up and tell them I'm here, willya?

MR.A.: No, I won't do that. This is something for you to do by yourself. **Believe me, Holden, the sooner you go home, the better you'll feel.**

HOLDEN: I don't know, sir. I just don't know.

(Holden looks at his watch and stands up.)

HOLDEN: Gosh, I've got to be going. I don't want to be late for my date. Tell Mrs. Antolini hello for me.

MR.A.: I'll do that. (They are walking toward the door.) Now, Holden, call me up sometime in the next couple of days. I want to hear from you.

HOLDEN: Okay. And, Mr. Antolini, thank you very much for talking to me like this and....

MR.A.: Don't mention it. We want to get you back on your feet. Just think over some of the things I've said. And.....go home. Go home, Holden. And **let me** hear from you.

HOLDEN: You'll hear from me. Goodbye, sir, and thanks again.

MR.A.: Call me up now.

HOLDEN: I will.

MR.A.: That's the spirit.

(They go off; the lights fade out. Darkness.)

VOICE: I felt terrible. I understood all that stuff Mr. Antolini told me, but I didn't see how it applied to ME. I still didn't know WHAT to do. I took a cab over to the Biltmore, and right out in front I ran into old Carl Luce. He was my senior counselor when I was at the Whooton School, and the only thing he ever did, though, was give us these sex talks and all, late at night when there was a bunch of guys in his room. He knew quite a lot about sex, especially perverts and all. He was always talking about a lot of creepy guys that go around with girls' pants sewed in the lining of their hats. He lost his virginity when he was fourteen years old. He really did. In Nantucket. And he had the largest vocabulary at the Whooton School. They gave us a test. Anyway, he said he had a date, but that he'd come in and have a drink with me. I was glad to see him. I was sort of lonesome.

SCENE TWO.

(A booth-table at the Biltmore Lounge. Holden and Carl are seated. Carl is 21, very cool, very hyper-sophisticated. He wears a dark grey flannel suit. A waiter is taking their order.)

CARL: Dry martini. And make it very dry. With no olive.

HOLDEN: Bourbon and soda.

(The waiter gives Holden a look, then goes away. Carl lights a cigarette, crosses his legs and leans back.)

HOLDEN: (Pointing) Hey. Look over there!

CARL: Where?

HOLDEN: Over THERE? That old guy sitting over there. Didn't you see when he took his hat off? Inside the hat it was PINK!

CARL: (Holden bores him quite alot.) Very funny. Same old Caulfield. When are you going to grow up?

HOLDEN: How's your sex life?

CARL: Relax. Just sit back and relax, for Chrissake.

HOLDEN: I'm relaxed. How's Columbia? Ya like it?

CARL: Certainly I like it. If I didn't like it, I wouldn't've gone there.

HOLDEN: What are ya majoring in? Perverts?

CARL: What're you trying to be - funny?

HOLDEN: No. I'm only kidding. Listen, hey, Luce. You're one of these intellectual guys. I need your advice. I'm in a terrific...

CARL: (GROANS and says:) LISTen, Caulfield, if you want to sit here and have a quiet, peaceful drink and a QUIET, peaceful conver....

HOLDEN: All right, all right. Relax. That's the trouble with you intellectual guys. You never want to discuss anything serious unless YOU feel like it.

(The waiter brings their drinks and goes away.)

HOLDEN: No kidding. How's your sex life? You still going around with that same babe you used to at Whooton? The one with the terrific....

CARL: Good God, no!

HOLDEN: How come? What happened to her?

CARL I haven't the FAINTEST idea. For all I know, since you ASK, she's probably the Whore of New Hampshire by this time.

HOLDEN: That isn't nice. If she was decent enough to let you get sexy with her all the time, at least you shouldn't talk about her that way.

CARL: Oh, God! Is this going to be a typical Caulfield conversation?
I want to know right now.

HOLDEN: No, but it isn't nice, anyway. If she was decent and nice enough to let you...

CARL: MUST we pursue this horrible trend of conversation?

(There is a pause.)

HOLDEN: Who're you going around with now? You feel like telling me?

CARL: Nobody you know.

HOLDEN: Yeah, but who? I might know her?

CARL: Girl lives in the Village. Sculptress. If you must know.

HOLDEN: Yeah? No kidding? How old is she?

CARL: I've never ASKED her, for God's sake!

HOLDEN: Well, around how old?

CARL: I should imagine she's in her late thirties.

HOLDEN: In her late THIRTIES?! Yeah? You like that?

CARL: I like a mature person, if that's what you mean. Certainly.

HOLD EN: You do? Why? No kidding, they better for sex and all?

CARL: Listen. Let's get one thing straight. I refuse to answer any typical Caulfield questions this afternoon. When in HELL are you going to grow up?

(There is a pause.)

HOLDEN: Listen, how long you been going around with her, this sculpture babe? Did you know her when you were at Whooton?

CARL: Hardly. She just arrived in this country a few months ago.

HOLDEN: She did? Where's she from?

CARL: She happens to be from Shanghai.

HOLDEN: No kidding! She CHInese, for Chrissake?

CARL: Obviously.

HOLDEN: No kidding! You like that? Her being Chinese?

CARL: Obviously.

HOLDEN: Why? I'd be interested to know - I really would.

CARL: I simply happen to find Eastern philosophy more satisfactory than Western. Since you ASK.

HOLDEN: You do? Wuddaya mean "philosophy"? Ya mean sex and all? You mean it's better in China? That what you mean?

CARL: Not necessarily in CHIna, for God's sake. The EAST I said. MUST we go on with this inane conversation?

HOLDEN: Listen. I'm serious. No kidding. Why's it better in the East?

CARL: It's too involved to go into. They simply happen to regard sex as both a physical and a spiritual experience. If you think I'm going to...

HOLDEN: (Very excited.) So do I! Exactly! So do I regard it as a wuddayacallit - a physical and a spiritual experience. I really do. I mean a person just can't.....

CARL: Not so LOUD, for God's sake, Caulfield. If you can't manage to keep your voice down, let's drop the whole.....

HOLDEN: All right. but listen. This is what I mean, though. I know it's supposed to be a physical and spiritual thing and artistic and all. But what I mean is, you can't.....

CARL: Let's drop, it. Do you mind?

HOLDEN: All right, but listen. Take you and this Chinese babe. What's so good about you two?

CARL: DROP it.

(Holden is depressed; he shuts up.)

HOLDEN: Maybe I'll go to China. My sex life is lousy.

CARL: Naturally. Your mind is immature.

HOLDEN: It is. It really is. I know it. My sex life stinks.

CARL: Naturally it does, for God's sake. I told you the last time I saw you what you need.

HOLDEN: You mean go to a psychoanalyst and all? Like your father?

CARL: It's up to you. It's none of my goddam business what you do with your life.

(Holden doesn't say anything for a moment; he is thinking.)

HOLDEN: Look. Supposing I went to your father and had him psychoanalyze me and all. What would he do to me? I mean, what would he do to me?

CARL: He wouldn't do a goddam thing to you. He'd simply talk to you, and you'd talk to him. For one thing, he'd help you to recognize the patterns of your mind.

HOLDEN: What?

CARL: The patterns of your mind. Your mind runs in - Listen. I'm not giving an elementary course in psychoanalysis. If you're interested, call him up and make an appointment. If you're not, don't. I couldn't care less. Frankly.

HOLDEN: (Puts his hand on Carl's shoulder): You're a real friendly bastard. You know that?

CARL: (Looks at his watch, takes out his wallet and puts a dollar bill on the table.) I have to tear. It's been nice seeing you.

HOLDEN: Have just one more drink. My date's late. And I'm lonesome as hell. No kidding.

CARL: Can't do it, Caulfield. I'm late now.

(Carl stands up.)

HOLDEN: Hey, Carl. Did your father ever psychoanalyze you?

CARL: Me? Why do you ask?

HOLDEN: No reason. Did he, though? Has he?

CARL: Not exactly. He's helped me to adjust to a certain extent, but an extensive analysis hasn't been necessary. Why do you ask?

HOLDEN: No reason. I was just wondering.

CARL: Well. Take it easy.

HOLDEN: I'll be seeing you.

CARL: Goodbye.

(Carl leaves. A tall blonde girl, about twenty-six, wearing a fur coat and a large hat and long gloves, walks by Holden. She is with a Navy Commander. She recognizes Holden and stops. Her name is Lillian Simmons.)

LILLIAN: Holden Caulfield!

HOLDEN: (Standing up.) Hi,, Lillian.

LILLIAN: (She is strictly a phoney.) How marvelous to see you!
How's you big brother?

HOLDEN: He's fine. He's in Hollywood.

LILLIAN: In HOLLYwood! How MARvelous! What's he DOing?

HOLDEN: I don't know. Writing.

LILLIAN: How excITing! (Turns to her excost.) Oh, I'm sorry!
Holden, this is Commander Blop!

(Holden shakes hands with him. The Commander is one of these guys who think they're being a pansy if they don't break about forty of your fingers when they shake hands with you. Holden remains standing. Lillian is one of these girls who will keep people standing for hours#.)

LILLIAN: (To the Commander) Isn't he handsome? Holden, you're getting handsomer by the minute. Do you have a date, baby? Are you all alone? Why don't you come join us? Bring your drink.

HOLDEN: I'd like to, Lillian. I really would. But the thing is, I've got a date. She's late.

LILLIAN: Well, you little so-and-so. All right for you. Tell your big brother I hate him, when you see him.

COMMANDER: Glad to have met you.

HOLDEN: Glad to have met YOU, sir.

LILLIAN: Bye, Holden.

(They go off. Holden sits down. Then SALLY HAYES hurries on. She looks terrific. She has on a black coat and a sort of a black beret. She has a loud, embarrassing voice, but she gets away with it because she's so good-looking.)

SALLY: HOLDEN! It's MARVELOUS to see you. It's been AGES!

HOLDEN: Swell to see YOU. (He helps her off with her coat, and they sit down.) How are ya, anyway?

SALLY: Absolutely marvelous! Am I late?

HOLDEN: Oh, no. (Suddenly he leans across the table, takes her hands in his, looks into her eyes, and very seriously and intensely says:) Sally, you're beautiful.

SALLY: Holden, you're so funny.

HOLDEN: (As before:) Sally, I love you.

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FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES
UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO
RECANTO DE RIO PIEDRAS

SALLY: Oh, darling, I love you too. Promise me you'll let your hair grow. Crew cuts are getting corny. And your hair's so lovely.

(The waiter comes up.)

HOLDEN: How about a drink?

SALLY: That's the most marvelous idea I've heard all day.

HOLDEN: What'll you have?

SALLY: (Opening her bag, taking out cigarette.) Oh, a coke will be fine.

HOLDEN: (To waiter) A coke and a bourbon and soda.

(Exit Waiter)

HOLDEN: Thanks for the letter.

SALLY: Are you coming over to trim the tree?

HOLDEN: (Hesitates, then says) Sure. Sure I am. Certainly.

SALLY: (Looking around the room.) I mean, I have to know. (She sees someone on the other side of the room.) Holden, do you know that boy over there? In the vest? Standing up?

HOLDEN: No, I don't.

SALLY: (Still looking away) I'm sure I KNOW that boy from somewhere.

HOLDEN: Hey, Sally.

SALLY: What?

HOLDEN: Did you ever get fed up? I mean did you ever get scared that everything was going to go lousy unless you did something? I mean, do you like school, and all that stuff?

SALLY: It's a terrific BORE.

HOLDEN: I mean do you hate it? I know it's a terrific bore, but do you HATE it, is what I mean?

SALLY: Well, I don't exactly HATE it. You always have to...

(Waiter brings their drinks and leaves.)

HOLDEN: Well, I hate it. Boy, do I hate it. But it isn't just that. I hate living in New York and all. Taxicabs and Madison Avenue busses, with the drivers and all always yelling at you to get out the rear door, and being introduced to phony guys at parties, and going up and down in elevators when you just want to go outside. And guys fitting your pants all the time at Brooks. And people always....

SALLY: Don't SHOUT. Please.

HOLDEN: (In this very quiet voice.) Take cars. Take most people, they'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. A horse you can at least...

SALLY: I don't even know what you're talking about. You jump from one....

HOLDEN: You know something? You're probably the only reason I'm in New York right now, or anywhere. If you weren't around, I'd probably be someplace way the hell off. In the woods or someplace. I mean, you're the only reason I'm around practically..

SALLY: (She wants to change the subject.) You're sweet, Holden. Holden, I was just wondering if....

HOLDEN: You ought to go to a boy's school sometime. Try it sometime. It's full of phonies, and all you do is study so that you can learn enough to be smart enough to be able to buy a goddam Cadillac someday, and you have to keep making believe you give a damn if the football team loses, and all you do is talk about girls and liquor and sex all day, and everybody sticks together in these dirty little goddam cliques. The guys that are on the baseball team stick together, the intellectuals stick together, the guys that play bridge stick together. Even the guys that belong to the BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB stick together! If you try to have a little intelligent...

SALLY: Now, LISTEN. Lots of boys get more out of school than THAT.

HOLDEN: I agree! I agree they do, some of them! But that's all I get out of it. See? That's my point. That's exactly my goddam point. I don't hardly get anything out of anything. I'm in bad shape. I'm in LOUSY shape.

SALLY: You certainly are.

HOLDEN: Look. Here's my idea. How the hell would you like to get the hell out of here?

SALLY: What? What are you...

HOLDEN: Here's my idea. I know this guy down in Greenwich Village that we can borrow his car for a couple of weeks.

SALLY: What are you TALKING about?

HOLDEN: We used to go to the same school, and he still owes me ten bucks. What we could do is, tomorrow morning we could drive up to Massachusetts and Vermont, all around there, see. It's beautiful as hell up there. It really is.

(Holden, very excited, takes Sally's hands in his. Sally is sitting there, her mouth open.)

HOLDEN: No kidding. I have about a hundred and eighty bucks in the bank. I could take it out when it opens in the morning, and then I could go down and get this guy's car. No kidding. We'll stay in these cabin camps and stuff til the dough runs out. Then when the dough runs out, I could get a job someplace and we could live someplace with a brook and all and, later on, we could get married or something. I could chop all our own wood in the winter-time and all. Honest to God, we could have a terrific time. C'mon. Wuddaya say? Will you do it with me? Please?

SALLY: (Rather annoyed.) You can't just DO something like that!

HOLDEN: Why not? Why the hell not?

SALLY: Stop screaming at me, PLEASE!

HOLDEN: Why can'tcha? Why not?

SALLY: Because you can't, that's all. (Holden lets go of her hands .) In the first place, Holden, we're both practically CHILDREN. And did you ever stop to think what we'd do if you DIDN'T get a job when your money ran out? We'd STARVE to death! The whole thing is so fantASTic, it isn't even.....

HOLDEN: It isn't fantastic. I'd get a job. Don't worry about that. You don't have to worry about that. What's the matter? Don't you WANT to go away with me? SAY so, if you don't.

SALLY: It isn't THAT. It isn't that at ALL. We'll have oodles of time to do those things - all those things. I mean after you go to college and everything, and if we should get married and everything. There'll be oodles of marvelous places to go to. You're JUST.....

HOLDEN: No, there wouldn't be. There wouldn't be OODLES of places to go at all. It'd be entirely different.

SALLY: What? I can't hear you. One minute you scream at me, and the next you....

HOLDEN: I said NO there wouldn't be marvelous places to go to after I went to college and all. Open your ears. It'd be entirely different. We'd have to go downstairs in elevators with suitcases and stuff. We'd have to phone up everybody and tell them goodbye and send them postcards from hotels and all. And I'd be working in some office, making a lot of dough, and riding to work in cabs and Madison Avenue buses, and reading newspapers, and playing bridge all the time, and going to the movies and seeing alot of stupid shorts and coming attractions and newsreels with dumb horse races and some chimpanzee riding a bicycle with pants on and some dame breaking a bottle over a ship. It wouldn't be the same at all. You don't see what I mean at all!

(They are both angry now.)

SALLY: Maybe I don't! Maybe YOU don't either!

(Holden looks at her for a moment.)

HOLDEN: People are always spoiling things for me. C'mon. Let's get out of here. You give me a royal pain in the behind, if you want to know the truth.

SALLY: (Opens her mouth very wide, shocked.) OH! OH! (She puts her hand over her mouth) OH!

HOLDEN: (Immediately sorry.) I didn't mean it. I'm sorry, Sally. I didn't mean it. No kidding.

SALLY: (Looking through her purse for a handkerchief. She is very shocked, about to cry.) Oh! Oh!

HOLDEN: No kidding. I'm sorry.

SALLY: (Dabbing at her eyes. Very upset.) You're sorry. You're sorry. That's very funny. All I do, I come over here, just to be nice, and have a coke with you, and for no reason at all you....

HOLDEN: Really. I'm sorry, Sally. I didn't mean it. I'm a moron.

SALLY: You're terrible. You're just the most awful person I know. That's all you are.

HOLDEN: C'mon. I'll take you home. No kidding.

SALLY: (Putting on her coat, pushing Holden away when he tries to help her put it on.) I can go home by myself, thank you. If you think I'd let YOU take me home, you're MAD. No boy ever talked to me like that in my entire life.

HOLDEN: Please, Sally, I didn't mean to....

SALLY: (Standing up) GoodBYE!

HOLDEN: Sally, PLEASE let me....

(But she has walked away, very fast. Holden sinks back down. He looks, and is, miserable. The lights fade out on the scene. Darkness.)

VOICE: I felt lousy. I wanted to run away someplace, but there wasn't anyplace for me to run. At least, that's the way it looked. I had to meet Phoebe in the park, and I walked all the way from the Biltmore. The funny thing was, when I crossed the street, I felt like I was sort of disappearing. It was that kind of a crazy afternoon, terrifically cold, and no sun out or anything, and you felt like you were disappearing every time you crossed a street.

SCENE THREE.

(It is twilight, nearly dark. Central Park. There is a bench near a lamp post. There are hedges around, and the skyline of the city can be seen dimly and grey in the background. Holden walks slowly along the path to the bench and sits down. He looks at his watch. Phoebe, wearing a blue coat and the red hunting hat and carrying a small suitcase, comes running up.)

PHOEBE: Hi. I'm out of breath.

HOLDEN: I thought maybe you weren't coming. What the hell's in that bag? I don't need anything. I'm just going the way I am. I'm not even taking the bags I've got down at the station. What the hellyya GOT in there?

PHOEBE: (Puts the suitcase down.) My clothes. I'm going with you. Can I? Okay?

HOLDEN: WHAT?

PHOEBE: I took them down the back elevator. It isn't heavy. All I have in it is two dresses and my underwear and socks and some other things. Feel it. It isn't heavy. Feel it once.. ..Can't I go with you, Holden? Can't I? Please?

HOLDEN: NO! Shut up!

PHOEBE: Why can't I? PLEASE, Holden! I won't do anything.. I'll just go with you, that's all! I won't even take my clothes if you don't want me to.. I'll just take my...

HOLDEN: You can't take anything. Because you're not going. I'm going alone. Somshut up.

PHOEBE: PLEASE, Holden! PLEASE let me go! I'll be very, very very..you won't even...

HOLDEN: You're not GOing! Now shut up! Gimme that bag.

(Phoebe sits down on the edge of the bench, her back to Holden and cries softly.)

HOLDEN: (Gently) I thought you were supposed to be in a play at school and all. I thought you were supposed to be Benedict Arnold in that play. (No response. Holden changes his tactics and says, very angry:) Wuddaya want to do? Not be in the play, for God's sakes? (She ignores him.) C'mon. I'm gonna put you in a cab. (Still she ignore him and does not move, will not even lookat him.) C'mon now! C'mon! They'll be worried about you at home.

(Holden tries to hold her hand, but she pulls away from him. She will not look at him.) Have you had your supper? I'll bet you haven't even had your supper yet. Hey, Phoebe?

(She turns around and throws the red hat in his face.)
C'mon, Phoebe, PLEASE. Ya know what I did on my way over here? Remember when I asked you about those ducks on the lake? (No response.) I walked by over there. The lake was all frozen over and I looked all around for the ducks, but they weren't there. I don't know where they are. I damn near fell in the lake. Hey, Phoebe? Hey, c'mon!

PHOEBE: I'm not GOing home!

HOLDEN: You HAVE to go home. You want to be in that play, don't you? You want to be Benedict Arnold, don't you?

PHOEBE: NO.

HOLDEN: Sure you do. Certainly you do. C'mon now, let's go. In the first place, I probably...

PHOEBE: I SAID I'm not GOing home. You can do what YOU want to. But I'm not going home. So shut up.

(This remark stings Holden.)

HOLDEN: (Puts his hands on her shoulders.) Phoebe, will you cut out this crazy stuff?

PHOEBE: (Shakes Holden's hands from her shoulders) Keep your hands to yourself, if you don't mind.

(Holden sits down, not knowing WHAT to do now.)

PHOEBE: (Crying) You don't care about anything. And you don't care about anyBODY either. You don't care about Mother and you don't care about Daddy and you don't care about ME!

HOLDEN: Phoebe, don't think that! Please don't think that. Sure I care about you, all of you. Why do you think I'm going away?

PHOEBE: I don't know. Why ARE you going away? Why?

HOLDEN: Because I....because I have to.

(Carousel music is heard, faintly.)

HOLDEN: You know what, Phoebe? Remember how we were talking last night about what I'd like to be?

PHOEBE: Yes.

HOLDEN: You know what?? You know what I'd like to be? I mean if I had my goddam CHOICE?

PHOEBE: Stop SWEARING. What?

HOLDEN: You know that song "If a body catch a body coming through the rye"? I'd like to...

PHOEBE: It's "If a body MEET a body coming through the rye." It's a poem. By Robert BURNS.

HOLDEN: I KNOW it's a poem by Robert Burns. But I thought it was "if a body CATCH a body...". 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...I mean..What I 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 know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be.

I'd just be the catcher in the rye.

(Phoebe looks off toward the carousel.)

PHOEBE: I thought the carousel was CLOSED in the wintertime.

HOLDEN: Maybe because it's around Christmas. Do you remember when you were real little, and D.B. and Allie and I used to bring you over here? You were mad about that carousel. We couldn't get you off the thing. You want to go for a ride on it?

PHOEBE: I'm too big.

HOLDEN: No, **you're** not. Go on. I'll wait for you. And then when you're through riding, I'm gonna get a cab with you and PERSONALLY drop you off at home.

PHOEBE: You can't. The doorman's supposed to look for you.

HOLDEN: WHAT? I thought you weren't going to tell them anything?

PHOEBE: I didn't say anything. This man from Pencey called up after lunch and said that you'd come to New York last night.

HOLDEN: Why didn't you TELL me? What else happened?

PHOEBE: I didn't say a word about last night. Daddy started calling up hotels and Mother was crying, and then Daddy called up Mr. Antolini and Mr. Antolini said that he'd seen you this afternoon.

HOLDEN: Oh, my God! What else?

PHOEBE: Nothing else. Mother was crying and Daddy was calling up all over the place to see if you were signed in any hotels. And then I sneaked out the back way.

HOLDEN: Are they mad?

PHOEBE: No. They're just very, very worried about you. Mother said that you might have had an accident or something. And she kept crying.

HOLDEN: What else?

PHOEBE: Oh. Right before I left, this girl, Sally Hayes, called up and said to tell you that she was sorry and would you please come over and trim her tree anyway. That's all.

HOLDEN: (Sinks down on bench.) Oh, Phoebe.

PHOEBE: PLEASE come home, Holden. (She puts her arms about his neck.) Please, don't go away, Holden.

HOLDEN: (Quietly) I'm not. I'm not going away.

(Phoebe hugs him and gives him a **kiss** on the cheek.)

HOLDEN: Listen, before we go home, do you want to ride on the carousel? You're not too big. I'll watch you from here. Go on. Here. (He reaches in his pocket.) Wait a second. Take the rest of your dough.

PHOEBE: You keep it. Keep it for me. Please. (Holden puts the money back in his pocket.) Aren't you gonna ride too?

HOLDEN: Maybe I will next time. I'll watch ya - go ahead. I'll be on this bench right here.

PHOEBE: Holden, I'm not mad at you any more.

HOLDEN: I know. Hurry up - the thing's gonna start again.

(She gives him another kiss on the cheek, takes the red cap from his hand and puts it on his head.)

HOLDEN: Don't YOU want it?

PHOEBE: You can wear it for a while.

HOLDEN: Okay. Hurry up, though, now. You're gonna miss your ride.

PHOEBE: Did you mean it what you said? You really aren't going away anywhere? Are you really going home afterwards?

HOLDEN: Yeah. Hurry UP, now. The thing's about to start.

(Phoebe throws her arms about his neck once more and hugs him. Then she runs off, calling: Watch me, Holden! Watch me! Holden sits on the bench and watches her on the carousel.)

VOICE: Old Phoebe walked all the way around the carousel. Then she sat down on this big, brown, beat-up looking old horse. (Carousel music starts again.) Then the carousel started and I watched her go around and around. There were only five or six other kids on the ride, and they were all trying to grab for the gold ring, and so was old Phoebe.

I was sort of afraid she'd fall off the goddam horse, but I didn't say anything or do anything. The thing with kids is, if they want to grab for the gold ring, you have to let them do it, and not say anything. If they fall off, they fall off, but it's bad if you say anything to them.

(He waves at Phoebe.)

I felt so damn happy all of a sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going around and around. I was damn near bawling, 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 around and around, in her blue coat and all.

(Holden waves at Phoebe again, and the lights fade out. The carousel music changes to the theme again, and a spotlight comes up on Holden, who is standing in front of the curtain, just as he was at the beginning of the play.)

(The theme music plays behind him.)

HOLDEN:

Well, that's all I'm going to tell about. I could probably tell you what I did after I went home and what school I'm supposed to go to next fall and all, but I don't feel like it. I really don't. That stuff doesn't interest me too much right now.

A lot of people keep asking me if I'm going to apply myself when I go back to school next September. It's such a stupid question, in my opinion. I mean how do you know what you're going to do till you DO it? The answer is, you don't. I THINK I am, but how do I know? I swear it's a stupid question.

D.B. asked me what I thought about all this stuff I just finished telling you about. I didn't know what the hell to say. If you want to know the truth, I don't KNOW what I think about it. I'm sorry I told so many people about it.

About all I know is, 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.

(He looks at the audience.)

Well.....so long.

(He smiles at the audience and the spotlight fades out. All is dark.)

The play is over.)