**Trauma and the traumatised: Doppelgangers in Salinger’s “A Perfect Day for a Bananafish”**

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The article presents a new reading of Salinger’s short story “A Perfect Day for a Bananafish” in terms of the profound character analysis and the application of the doppelgangers theory to the main actors. The hypothesis of this work can be formulated as follows: each of the characters presented in the story can be paralleled with his or her opposite double. In so doing, the author hints at the similar nature of the protagonists, thereby creating another intricate layer of narration and contributing to the general complexity of the text, regardless of its relatively short format. The aim of the research is to compare and contrast the images of the main heroes in order to reveal the polarity and simile in their representations, which allow viewing the characters as doppelgangers. Hence, the unusual choice of theoretical framework for the literary analysis underscores the relevance of the research and presents an unconventional understanding of the plotline, uncovering deeper metaphorical and thematic connections within the narrative.

The body of the article is divided into three semantic units in accordance with three pairs of characters grouped on the basis of their resemblance and dissimilarities, namely, Muriel and her mother, Seymour and Sybil, and Muriel and Seymour.

The first paragraph presents the overview of the mother-daughter relationships. The distorted communication, selective ignorance, and mutual manipulations of the relatives highlight the obvious dissimilarities between them, but at the same time reflect their inextricable likeness. Both mother and daughter share the same interests and values. Nevertheless, Muriel is shown to be less emotional and more discreet than her mother. This dichotomy hints at the power dynamics within the family and yet indicates the polar opposite of the heroines.

The second pair of characters is the most common subject for literary analysis. Seymour and Sybil can be considered doppelgangers as they both are somehow associated with childhood and innocence (though traumatic childhood and distorted innocence) and are viewed as the two extremes of the same nature. Their age and gender difference only accentuates their inner resemblance. Thus, these two characters share very similar personalities but, at the same time, drastically different identities.

And the last pair under analysis is the Glass couple. Traditionally, the spouses are regarded in terms of their obvious differences. However, this article strives to defend the view that the only difference existing between the consorts lies in the defence mechanisms they develop during and after the war. For both Seymour and Muriel, the war was a tremendously traumatising event that provoked the two to react differently. However, the reason for them to behave differently has the same justification: love for each other. In this regard, the spouses can be considered doppelgangers; however, the determination of a negative double might be ambiguous.

In conclusion, the analysis conducted proves the sustainability of the hypothesis formulated above. All the characters of the story can be presented as doubles due to their similarly-dissimilar natures, and each pair of characters examined reveals critical insights into the human experience, emphasising the interconnectedness of their traits and the complex interplay of similarities and differences that define their relationships.

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