A Separate Peace Essay, Research Paper

For my ?A Separate Peace? essay I will be summarizing the book. In chapter 1 the narrator, Gene, returned to the Devon School in New Hampshire, where he was a student with his friend, Finny, 15 years prior, just as World War II began.

The narrative went back 15 years, to Gene’s days with Finny. On their first attempt to jump off a huge tree into the river, Finny, being the daredevil, went first and Gene was the only one who followed. Gene was normally a cautious type of person, but around Finny, he broke the rules more often.

In chapter 2, Finny was an exception at Devon; he was a good student and athlete, but also a charming, likeable rule-breaker. The substitute headmaster, Mr. Patch-Withers noticed that Finny had used the school tie as his belt, which was a heavy offense. Finny made some excuse, at which Mr. Patch-Withers was taken by surprise, and did not punish Finny.

Finny and Gene came up with the idea for a “Super Suicide Society of the Summer Session,” a group for exciting and dangerous things. To be in the club you had to jump off the tree limb into the river. Gene went onto the tree limb with Finny, and lost his balance; Finny stoped Gene from falling, and Gene soon realized that his friend saved his life.

In chapter 3, some of Finny and Gene’s friends had begun to join their new club. Finny made up a game called “blitzball,” sort of a variation on rugby and football; the game was a hit that summer.

Finny easily broke a school swimming record; Finny refused to do it again and to have it count. Finny proposed that they go to the beach, which meant big trouble if they were caught; Gene decided to go along. That night, Finny admited that he considered Gene his best friend, which touched Gene deeply; but somehow Gene couldn?t say the same thing.

In chapter 4, Finny mocked Gene’s scholarly ambition, and Gene begun to believe that Finny was trying to come out ahead. Finny was the best athlete in the school; Gene knew that he could be the best in academics, if Finny wouldn’t take up so much of his time. Gene found it hard to compete with Finny, but continued to improve.

When Finny asked Gene to come see a friend jump from their tree the night before exams, Gene objected because he thought this was Finny’s way of trying to sabotage his grades. Finny said he thought that Gene never needed to study. Gene, somewhat appeased, went to the jumping tree with Finny. Gene and Finny decided to jump off the tree together. Once they were on the tree, Gene shakes the limb, and Finny lost his balance and fell.

In Chapter 5, Gene learned that one of Finny’s legs had been shattered in the fall. Gene felt very guilty about what he did. At last, Gene was allowed to visit Finny in the infirmary. Gene learned that Finny would no longer be able to play sports. Gene wanted to tell Finny the truth but, he didn?t get the chance, and Finny was sent home.

Summer School ended, and Gene returned home. After summer was over he went back to Devon. On his way, he went to Finny’s house to see how he was doing. Finny felt weak. Gene told Finny that he caused the accident, and Finny denied this confession.

Chapter 6, Gene arrived at school, but without Finny. Gene got the same room he had during the summer, but no new roommate. Gene went to crew practice, which was run by Quackenbush, the captin that everyone disliked. Quackenbush immediately challenged Gene; they had a fight, and both tumbled into the water. Gene then quitted crew.

Finny called Gene long-distance because he was worried that Gene would replace him with a new roommate, though Gene wouldn?t. Finny was relieved. When Gene told Finny that he wasn?t participating in sports, Finny got upset. He told Gene that Gene has to participate for him, and Gene decided to grant Finny this request.

In chapter 7, Brinker Hadley started accusing Gene of arranging Finny’s accident in order to get a room to himself. Brinker’s accusations troubled Gene a great deal. Fall passed, and the war remained distant. The first snow fell, and soon Gene and the boys spent a miserable day at the railroad yard, shoveling snow. Soon, enlistment fever stroked a few of the boys, especially Brinker and Gene. Gene felts that enlisting would give him a sense of purpose. But, then he went back to his room, and found Finny there; suddenly, he had a purpose to stay at Devon again.

In chapter 8 Gene was surprised at Finny’s sudden return. Gene was happy that Finny was back; however, he still felt guilt. Finny was not pleased with the idea that Gene might enlist. Finny was upset because Gene wan?t doing sports like he promised. Finny went off on a rant about how the war was designed to keep people in their place. Gene didn?t believe him, and asked Finny how he knews all this stuff that nobody else did. Finny then said, “because I’ve suffered.”

Finny said he wanted to coach Gene for the 1944 Olympics. Gene knews there wouldn?t be any Olympics due to the war. Gene and Finny kept training, doing long runs in the morning. Gene thought he couldn?t do them, until one morning he just amazed himself and it came naturally to him, just as it did with Finny before.

Chapter 9, Leper was convinced by a video of American ski troops that he must enlist. Leper left school a week later, the first of Gene’s class to enlist. Leper became a symbol of the war for the boys. Finny pulled away from his friends because of their fascination with the war. Finny tried to draw Gene away with him, into Finny’s little world where war and enlistment did not exist.

Finny decided to organize the first winter carnival at Devon, so that there was something fun to do outside. Gene was talked into helping. The carnival came and Brinker had obtained some hard cider. Snow sculptures had been made and prizes were all set up. Finny was definitely cheered up by the whole little festival, and the other guys were happy for the break. Then, a telegram came for them from Leper; he said he had “escaped” from the army. Finny and Gene were shocked and were determined to find Leper.

In chapter 10, Gene went to see Leper at his home in Vermont and he was very different. Leper accused Gene of causing Finny’s accident. He revealed that he left the service because he was about to be discharged for being crazy. Gene got angry and attacks Leper for his comments, but then he apologized and was too embarrassed to leave immediately. After lunch, Leper and Gene went for a walk, and Gene sees that Leper really had cracked up. Leper talked nonsense and somehow it affected Gene, who ran away from Leper.

In chapter 11, Gene was finally back at school and got caught in a snowball fight. Brinker finally got the truth about Leper out of Gene. Finny revealed that he was finished with his fake-war pretense because of what happened to Leper. The war and patriotism again swept up Devon.

Brinker confronted Gene again about Finny’s accident and said they should get everything into the open. But Gene disagreed with him. Later that night, Brinker draged Gene and Finny to the First Building. Brinker was holding some kind of meeting about the accident. Brinker brought Leper to talk because he was at the scene of the accident. When Leper said that Gene did indeed pushed Finny, Finny freaked out and ran from the room. He fell on the marble steps outside and re-broke his leg.

In chapter 12, the others rushed out to help Finny. Someone went to get Dr. Stanpole. Dr. Stanpole drove Finny to the infirmary. Gene decided to go to the infirmary and to see how Finny was. Finny was angry at Gene and fell out of his bed while trying to get up and come after him. Gene said he was sorry and leaves.

Rather than going home, Gene walked around the stadium and the gym. He was in a strange sort of reverie, where he felt like a spirit, and everything around him was vibrant and full of meaning. The next day Gene went to the infirmary to take some of Finny’s things. Finny asked Gene if he had made him fall out of the tree because Gene hated him. Gene reassured him that it was some blind unexplainable thing that made him do it and it had nothing to do with hate or anything else against Finny.

When Gene returned to the infirmary to see Finny after his operation, he met Dr. Stanpole. Dr. Stanpole sat him down and told him that Finny had died during the operation. Gene was to shocked to cry because he felt like he had died, along with his friend.

In chapter 13, it was June and Devon gave use of the Far Common to the war effort. Brinker and Gene watched the troops, jeeps, and equipment being brought in for a Parachute Rigger’s School. Brinker brought up Leper which Gene told him not to talk about. Gene said that no one blamed him for what had happened to Finny, although he did blame himself.

Gene was introduced to Brinker’s dad and Gene said that he joined the Navy and Brinker said he joined the Coast Guard. Brinker’s dad gave the boys a speech about having a good military record and how people would respect them based on what they did for the war. Brinker obviously didn?t agree.

Gene then talked about Finny and his experience in the war. He felt Finny was the only person he knew whose character was safe from being corrupted by the war and how his friendship with Finny prepared him for his own experience. Gene adopted Finny’s way of looking at things and some of Finny’s personality and rebelliousness. Finny meant a lot to him and still influenced him. Gene was finally able to appreciate his friend for all that he was and made peace with Finny.

Outline

Essay well be on book summary

Chapter 1 ? Gene returns to School

Looks 15 years back

How they jump of tree

Chapter 2 ? Finny breaks school rules and get away with it

Club starts ? ?Super Suicide Society?

Finny saves Gene life.

Chapter 3 ? Friends join club

Finny makes a new game called blitzball

Finny breaks school record.

Finny and Gene go to beach

Chapter 4 ? Gene knows he is the best in academics.

Gene thinks Finny is trying sabotage Gene?s grades.

Gene shakes the tree while they both jump off it.

Finny breaks his leg

Chapter 5 – Gene becomes guilty

Summer school ends.

School starts again

On way to school he stops and Finny?s house and tell him the truth.

Chapter 6 ? Gene gets same room by him self

Gets into fight with Quackenbush.

Finny calls Gene

Chapter 7 ? Brinker accuses Gene of causing Finny?s fall.

Finny returns to school.

Chapter 8 ? Finny doesn?t want Gene to enlist

Finny?s mad cause Gene isn?t doing any sports

Finny coaches Gene for 1944 Olympics.

Chapter 9 ? Leper enlist

Finny says war doesn?t exist

Finny organize a carnival

They receive a telegram from Leper

Chapter 10 ? Gene goes to see Leper

Leper is crazy

Chapter 11 ? Gene returns to school

Brinker holds a meeting about Finny?s accident.

Finny finds out that Gene caused him to fall out of tree

Finny re-breaks his leg

Chapter 12 ? Finny is driven to the infirmary

Gene feels like a spirit

Finny ask Gene way he caused him to fall out of tree

Finny dies.

Chapter 13 ? June comes and Brinker and Gene watch troops bring things in

Gene blames himself for Finny?s death

Gene meets Brinker?s dad.

The have a conversation

Gene started to see things the way Finny would see them.