

## The Two Men

Life can be so many different things. It can be boring, exciting, thrilling, adventurous, but most of all it has to have meaning. Billy Pilgrim (“Slaughter House Five”), Estragon and Vladimir (“Waiting for Godot”), and Holden Caulfield (“Catcher in the Rye”), did not have meaningful lives. Billy Pilgrim became overwhelmed with apathy in his life, Estragon and Vladimir spent their days waiting for a man named Godot to come, who everyday says that he is going to come the next day, and Holden Caulfield, who spends most of his time mocking society and being pessimistic. However, despite how these characters live their lives, to have and live a meaningful life is still possible.

When I was younger I constantly went up to Chicago in Illinois. During the days I would shop with my mother, enjoy fine dining, and lounge around in the hotel rooms. So, it didn't seem like a big deal when my mother told me that we would be taking a train up there for another short vacation. When I arrived at the train station people were pouring onto the train, and I followed them and took my seat. After sitting in my seat for 20 minutes I was already complaining to my mother that I was hungry and wanted food. Reluctantly she agreed to give me money so that I could go to the food car and feed myself. After eating three cheeseburgers, I decided to try and go to sleep, but couldn't. I began to pace around near our seat, and went back and forth between cars to try and make myself tired. All I wanted was to drop dead, seeing as how this train ride was never ending, and I was the one suffering for it. However, as I was pacing I noticed two men talking about literature and their experiences that they had had in their lifetime. Thinking nothing of this, I continued to pace around hoping to get the sleep I wanted, and to wake up in the windy city. Luckily, I did fall asleep, and I did wake up to see bright light and Lake Michigan. Finally, as my family and I exited the train, I noticed something that seemed odd and peculiar to me at the time; the two men were saying good bye and ended their conversation with “it was nice to

meet you.” Now, we all know that growing up our mothers would tell us not to talk to strangers (and my mother would go even farther and say not to take any wooden nickels, and I still do not know what that means!), which is probably why I was so shocked that two people who had never met just started talking to each other. But then I realized something that I will never forget; I realized that this is what life is all about. In order to live life to the fullest we must learn from everyone in the world. This is how we are able to understand the world we live in today; we learn from the people around us.

I was never able to get the names of the two men, nor was I able to actually talk to them. I doubt that they will ever know that they impacted my life so much, but because of them I strive to learn everything from everyone around me. It is the knowledge I gain from the people I meet and the experiences they share with me that makes my life meaningful.