

Penguin  Readers

*Breakfast
at
Tiffany's*



TRUMAN CAPOTE

Contents

People in the story	4
New words	5
Note about the story	6
Before-reading questions	6
Chapter One – Holly Golightly, <i>traveling</i>	7
Chapter Two – The weather report	13
Chapter Three – The party	18
Chapter Four – The mean reds	22
Chapter Five – A sunny morning	29
Chapter Six – The argument	33
Chapter Seven – A strange man	41
Chapter Eight – A different Holly	48
Chapter Nine – A birthday to remember	54
Chapter Ten – A new start	58
Chapter Eleven – Holly's final day	65
Chapter Twelve – A letter	68
During-reading questions	70
After-reading questions	71
Exercises	72
Project work	77
Glossary	78

CHAPTER ONE

Holly Golightly, *traveling*

In the early 1940s, I lived in my first New York apartment in a brownstone in Manhattan. The apartment had one room and a window next to the fire escape. The walls were brown, and it had one bed, two chairs, and an old table. It was small and dark, but it was my first home and the best place for me to write.

Holly Golightly lived in the apartment below mine, and Joe Bell's bar was across the street. Holly and I went to Joe Bell's bar six or seven times a week to use his telephone. Holly got many messages, which Joe always wrote down for her.

Of course, this was many years ago, but last week, on Tuesday afternoon, the telephone rang. It was Joe Bell. Joe and I did not talk that much, but sometimes I went to the bar to see him. Joe was difficult to talk to. The only things he liked talking about were dogs, soccer, and Holly Golightly. I guessed that he was calling about Holly when he rang me.

"Can you come to the bar? It's important," he said.

When I arrived, I saw Joe. He was a small man with a strange face. His hair was thick and white, and his face was always red. Now it looked even redder. The bar was quiet and looked the same as it did all those years ago. There were two old mirrors on the wall and soccer photographs behind

the bar. It did not have a television or any bright lights, and there was always a bowl of flowers that Joe chose himself.

"Something strange has happened," Joe said when he saw me.

"Have you heard from Holly?" I replied.

"Do you remember Mr. I. Y. Yunioshi?" he said.

"Yes, he had an apartment above me when I lived in the brownstone. He was a photographer," I said.

"I saw him last night for the first time in two years," he replied. "Do you know where he's been?"

"Africa?" I said.

Joe looked surprised. "How did you know?"

"I read it in a newspaper," I said.

He picked up three photographs and gave them to me. "Did you read *this* in a newspaper?"

The photographs all showed the same thing. There was a tall African man wearing a colorful skirt. He was smiling and holding a **carving** of a woman's head that was made from wood. The carving had large eyes and short hair. Her mouth was wide and smiled like a **clown's**. It looked just like Holly Golightly. I turned one of the photographs over and saw the words *African Carving, Tocolul, Africa 1956*.

"What do you think of that?" Joe said.

"Well, it looks like her," I replied.

"Listen!" he said, hitting his hand on the bar angrily. "It is her, and Mr. Yunioshi agrees with me!"

"Did Mr. Yunioshi see her in Africa?" I asked.

"No, but Holly visited the African man's village with two

men. The men became ill, so they stayed in the village for a few days,” Joe said. His face was even redder than before.

“And then?” I said.

“The two men and Holly left. Mr. Yunioshi looked for her, but he never found her,” Joe said.

I looked at the photographs.

“She has probably never been to Africa,” I said, but I could see her there, and it was somewhere she might go.

“Well, if you know so much, where is she?” Joe shouted.

“She’s dead, or in prison, or married,” I replied. “Yes, I think that she is married and living in Manhattan.”

Joe was silent for a moment. “No,” he said, shaking his head. “I’ve walked around Manhattan looking for her many times, and I’ve never seen her. Sometimes I see women who look like her. A thin girl who walks fast and straight, with a flat little bottom.”

He was silent for a moment.

“I didn’t know that you were in love with her,” I said.

Joe’s face was now pink. He picked up the photographs and stopped talking. Two men came into the bar, and it seemed the right time to leave, so I walked toward the door.

“Wait,” Joe said, touching my arm. “Do you really think it’s not her?”

“It doesn’t matter, Joe,” I replied. “She’s gone.”

“Yes,” he said, opening the door. “She’s gone.”

When I got outside, I walked across the street toward the brownstone. The street had many large trees that looked beautiful in the summer. But today it was cold, and the

leaves were yellow. The brownstone was next to a church with a blue clock that rang every hour. The brownstone looked different now, and the doors and windows were not the same. There was only one person I knew who still lived there. Her name was Madame Sapphia Spanella, and every afternoon she went skating in Central Park. I knew she was still there because I saw her name on the mailbox. It was one of these mailboxes that first introduced me to Holly Golightly.

One week after I moved into the brownstone, I noticed the words, "Miss Holiday Golightly, *traveling*" on a card on the mailbox of apartment two. The words interested me, and I could not stop thinking about them. A few days later, in the middle of the night, I woke up to hear Mr. Yunioshi shouting on the stairs. "Miss Golightly!" he said. "Stop ringing my doorbell, you must take a key!"

"Oh, I'm sorry. I always lose them!" a young and excited voice shouted back.

"I have to go to work in the morning, and I need to sleep!" Mr. Yunioshi replied, angrily.

"Oh, don't be angry, you sweet little man. I won't do it again, I promise!" the voice said.

I opened my door and looked down the stairs. I could see Holly, but she could not see me. She was wearing a black dress, black shoes, and an expensive pearl necklace round her neck. She had short blond-and-brown hair, and her mouth was wide like a clown's. She was followed by a short,

fat man in an expensive suit. He was touching her arm.

“Thank you for walking me home,” she said, closing the door in his face.



"I thought you liked me!" the man shouted, angrily knocking on her door.

Holly did not ring Mr. Yunioshi's doorbell again because the next day she started ringing mine. We never spoke, but every time I saw her late at night, she was wearing dark glasses and expensive clothes. Once, I saw her in a restaurant. She was sitting at a table with four men who were all smiling at her while she looked bored. Another time, it was in the middle of summer and too hot to stay inside. I went for a walk, and at the end of the street was a store with an old, large birdcage in the window. I wanted to buy the birdcage, but it cost \$350, which was too expensive for a poor writer. On my way home, I saw a group of soldiers singing and dancing with a girl. It was Holly Golightly. The soldiers looked happy. They sang while Holly danced in their arms.

During that summer, Holly kept ringing my doorbell after midnight. Still, we never spoke, but I learned a lot about her. I knew what little food she ate because I looked in her trash. I knew what newspapers she read because I saw them outside her door. I knew that she smoked special cigarettes called Picayunes and that she had a red cat. I also knew that she played the guitar because, on sunny mornings, she sometimes sat on the fire escape with it. She played very well, and sometimes she sang. Her voice was interesting and beautiful.

Then one day, as the summer changed to fall, we finally spoke.