

Summary

In "All Summer in a Day," a group of schoolchildren live on the planet Venus with their families. They are nine years old, and they are eagerly awaiting a momentous occasion. After 5 years of continuous rain, the scientists on Venus have predicted that the sun will come out today for a brief period of time. The children have only seen the sun once in their lives, but they were two years old and they don't remember how it looks or feels. To prepare for the day, they have constantly read about the sun and completed classroom activities, such as writing a poem, about the sun.

This is true for all but one of the children. [Margot](#), a thin, pale girl that the rest of the children resent for various reasons, lived in Ohio until she was five. She still has many memories of the sun, and the sun continues to fascinate her. Margot refuses to participate in any classroom activity that doesn't include the sun. In fact, she has been in a depressed state for most of her time on Venus. Rumors have it that her parents are strongly considering taking her away from the underground colony on Venus and back to her home on Earth. Margot looks out of the window, waiting silently for the rain to stop and the sun to come out. The other children become upset with her and begin to push and taunt her. One of the boys jokes with her, "It was all a joke, wasn't it? Nothing's happening today" (3.) Suddenly, the children seize Margot and conceive of the idea to hide Margot in a closet while their teacher is gone. Margot resists but they overpower her and lock her in a faraway closet.

The teacher returns and they all go to the tunnel's exit, as she thinks everyone is present and accounted for from her class. Then, moments later, the rain stops and the sun appears. All of the children exit the tunnels and begin to run around and enjoy the sun. It is unlike anything they could imagine. They exult, "It's better than the sun lamps, isn't it?" as they run around the jungles of Venus.

After lying out, playing, and enjoying the weather, one of the girls cries out because she is cradling a big, fat raindrop in her hand. Everyone stopped. They stood for a moment, thinking about how wonderful the sun felt on their skins. While they do this, the rain clouds move in. The sun retreats; the rain falls harder. All of the children stop for a moment before re-entering the tunnels, reflecting on how wonderful the past hour was.

As they re-entered the hallway, they asked their teacher questions. "Will it really be seven more years?" (5.) Once again, another student gave a muffled cry. She remembered that Margot was still in the closet. She had been there for the entire time that they were outside enjoying the sun-soaked weather. They slowly walked towards the closet where they had left Margot, and they were all nervous to approach it. They slowly walked to the closet door, and no noises were emitted from behind the closet door. They unlocked the door and Margot slowly emerged.

Analysis

Bradbury uses a variety of metaphors to depict an image of life on Venus, an idea that is foreign to us yet familiar through Bradbury's language. Not only does his language bring us a clear image of Venus, but it also creates the tangible feeling of discovering the pleasures of the sun. Venus "was the color of rubber and ash, this jungle, from the many years without sun. It was the color of stones and white cheeses and ink, and it was the color of the moon" (4.) The reader is instantly able to picture Bradbury's Venus landscape with his illustrative language.

The power of the sun over the children living on Venus is notable. They are pale and colorless, not just physically but also emotionally. The lack of the sun has not only washed away the color on their skin but also their compassion and empathy for other people. They do not

gain this until they've spent time under the sun's rays. The sun is life giving for the landscape as well as the inhabitants of Venus.

Margot's initial exclusion from the group may speak to the difficulties of integrating immigrants into a community. Margot struggles to fit in everyday of her time on Venus, and she does not get along with the other children. They resent her for her past experiences on Earth with the sun, and they are also angry and jealous that she has the opportunity to travel back to Earth regardless of the financial costs. Though abstract, Margot represents one version of an immigrant story.

At the conclusion of the story, the children who were once hypercritical of Margot begin to arrive at an understanding of what she has been feeling since arriving in Venus. They did not understand her depression or refusal to participate in certain activities, primarily because they did not understand how Margot was so enraptured by the sun. It is not until they spend time outside, basking in the sunlight, that they begin to comprehend how much Margot sacrificed when she moved from Ohio to Venus.

This development in the story highlights a broader theme of ignorance and its presence and absence throughout the story. When the children only knew "sun lamps" and could not remember the last time the sun had shone, the daily monotony of rain was not a major concern in their lives. They were ignorant to the possible benefits of the sun. Now that they have experienced the sun and their ignorance has lifted, it will be a difficult shift back to the constant rain. As the rain begins to fall once again, they are disheartened when they ask their teacher, "Will it be seven more years?" (6.) They finally comprehend the gravity of their teacher's answer.