

“Out Of My Mind” — by Patricia Stamm

Character Descriptions

Bee Bernhardt

Bee is a fifty five year old, pretty, hippy-ish woman living in Fairfax, California. Unresolved grief about the death of her husband, Seymour, causes her to be stuck in her life, highly enmeshed with her teenage daughter, Bo, and disinterested in an uninspired relationship with her boyfriend, Fred. An undiagnosed brain tumor causes her to have sudden bouts of mania, which come with the inexplicable ability to quickly compose entire songs, disrupting the status quo of everything and everyone in her life. Finally diagnosed, she must undertake a healing journey to make peace with death and better live her life, by allowing Bo to individuate, separating from Fred, and finally saying goodbye to Seymour.

Bo Bernhardt

Bo is Bee's boyish, attractive, seventeen year old daughter. She is an aspiring artist, interested especially in science fiction filmmaking. She is out as a lesbian but still carries an immense amount of insecurity about the possibility of being attractive to another girl, as well as her general value in the world. She wants to follow her dreams of going to college at Tisch School for the Arts in New York City but is afraid of leaving her mother, both for her own sake, as well as out of concern for her mother.

Seymour Bernhardt

Seymour is Bee's compassionate, smart, creative husband who died many years ago of cancer. Before he died, he and Bee were musical theater actors together. They had a brilliant time in their nascent careers, which might have gone further had his illness not stopped him in his tracks, and required Bee to take care of him. When Bee receives her diagnoses of cancer, Seymour returns as either a hallucination or angel to guide her through the various stages of acceptance in her healing process, and ultimately to help her truly say goodbye to him and resume her life.

Fred Loesser

Bee's boyfriend, Fred, is a fifty eight year old bedraggled man. He is a lawyer who is burnt out in his profession. He carries the secret of being attracted to young girls, though in all of his many years he has yet to act on this desire. Faced with the alarming news of Bee's cancer, he finally gives himself permission to transgress and has sex with Bo's new girlfriend, Sophia. Ultimately he is stricken with guilt over what he has done and turns himself in to the police.

Sophia

Sophia is Bo's seventeen year old, gorgeous, blonde, love interest. Sophia falls in love with Bo but is held back from her own happiness by the unresolved trauma of past molestations by older men, and the ongoing sexual abuse of her father. Unable to resist continuing to enact these traumas, she gets together with Fred.

Jude and Ruth Bernhardt

Jude and Ruth are Seymour's ex-wife's children. One obese and one anorexic, they are both shallow and entitled. Upon Seymour's death they managed to obtain nearly all of his inheritance, leaving Bee and Bo in difficult financial shape, and have not been in touch since. Upon hearing of Bee's cancer diagnosis, they show up under the guise of being concerned, to try to get even more.