

“Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong”

1. Characterize Rat Kiley.
2. Characterize Mark Fossie and Mary Anne Bell.
3. Describe the changes in Mary Anne Bell from the time she arrived in Vietnam to be with her boyfriend until the end of the chapter. Be specific and record moments from the text (page numbers and descriptions) that demonstrate how she changed.
4. Why do you think she changed? What did the change symbolize? How long did this metamorphosis take?
5. Look up the definition of the word metamorphosis. In what ways (note that this a plural noun) does this word apply to the transformation of Mary Anne?
6. Does it matter that Mary Anne is a woman? How so? What does the story tell us about the nature of the Vietnam War?

7. Does it matter what happened, in the end, to Mary Anne? Would this be a better story if we knew, precisely, what happened to her after she left camp? Or does this vague ending add to the story? Why?
  
8. “You’re in a place where you don’t belong.” Any parallels to today? How does our lack of understanding of a people and their place destroy us (as it does Fossie)? How does it make monsters of us?
  
9. What additional metaphors or similes or euphemisms does O’Brien use in this chapter?
  
10. How does O’Brien’s “consumption” metaphor come into play in this chapter?

