Zenia McLeod

*The Bell Jar*

My Cover

The image that I designed was Esther standing under a fig branch. The branch has leaves and multiple figs hanging from it, as well as bell jars. She is looking up with a concerned face. The message I wanted to convey was that Esther has so many things that she wants to do in her life that she can choose from, but she is concerned about the bell jars that are hanging above her. She is afraid that they will fall and trap her.

The image reflects Esther’s concern about the bell jar of her insanity trapping her again. Towards the end of the novel, Esther reflects on the events that took place in her life and appreciates her insanity being lifted from her. When she leaves from the asylum, she can’t help but wonder if the results from shock therapy would be permanent, and how far away from help she would be if it wasn’t. This is why Esther is looking up to the fig branch with concern. The color of the bell jars is red, which reflects the danger they symbolize. If they were to fall, it would be hard to know if she would be strong enough to avoid the attempts to take her life.

Esther is also concerned with choosing the right path for her life. Each fig from the branch is symbolic to a direction in her life that she can choose. This idea comes from chapter seven, where she imagines herself sitting at the foot of a fig tree. She states on page 77 “…starving to death, just because I couldn't make up my mind which of the figs I would choose. I wanted each and every one of them, but choosing one meant losing all the rest…” She envisions her life as a fig tree, and if she doesn’t choose which fig to eat, they will rot and fall to the ground. The figs rotting are all her opportunities fading away until they are no longer available for her to take advantage of.