

DEATH OF A SALESMAN

The Dramatized Journal

① Willy's rant with Howard (pp. 58-59)

- Willy (desperately) attempts → a glimpse of Willy's motivation that drives the (terribly) important being a salesman is TO HIM.
In the end, he just wants to get what he (truly) deserves. In the midst of his vulnerability, he knows how much sweat, blood, and tears he had to go through to get his job. → (pp. 58-59)
→ Willy's rant (in HIS EYES): "Willy's" speech as a much-needed "redemption"?

- When it all started: → boys that are, that age: eighteen/nineteen years old
"When I was a boy - eighteen, nineteen..." (p. 58)

- Howard: [barely interested] [Inner Voice] "THIS has nothing to do w/ the company/ What a self-centered geezer."

- "We've got quite a little streak of self-reliance in our family." (Willy, p. 58)
- self-reliance - capacity to manage own's affairs, make one's own judgment, provide for oneself; independent, self-sufficient. (dictionary.com)

⇒ clearly inherited by Willy himself; by Ben too

► is this trait a flaw or an advantage for Willy's current condition/dilemma?

- The death of a salesman should be:
- > hundred of people in the funeral > sadness evident in the air [everywhere]
- > dying in a "smoker" party; (2) a car where passengers can smoke

⇒ references later in the play:
 - no one attended Willy's funeral, save Charley, Bernard and his family ↓
 "sadness only touched the lives and air that were close to him and those who breathed his air"; to the eyes of those who never knew him, his (Willy's) death meant nothing significant.

- Dave "Singleman"
- 84 years old → was Singleman single?
- made a living w/o leaving the house → did he live alone?

→ was he independent, self-reliant, qualities Willy himself came to admire?

⇒ forewarning, perhaps?

- "I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want. 'Cause what's more satisfying than to (...) be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people?" (Willy, p. 58)
- is that why he admires his older brother Ben so much?

⇒ domino effect / cause-effect
 ⇒ Willy's admiration so violent for-great? — men like Dave Singleman

they don't know me anymore." (p. 59)
 page 6:

Linda: I just thought you'd like a change — Willy: I don't want a change!

- Howard: I can't take blood from a stone. (p. 59)
- ... he died the death of a salesman. (p. 59)

⇒ clear reference to the title of the play.

• Symbolism: Howard Wagner \Rightarrow Howard Wagner!

a powerful symbol in the play; even for a short time; he represents the modern, capitalist businessman: he is brutally honest, puts the company's needs first than anything else.

Willy: There were promises made across this desk! speech is patterned (... I put thirty-four years into this firm, and how I can't pay my insurance! (p. 59)

\Rightarrow most of Willy's

and weaved w/ hope and what has happened in the past.

* past = happiness

* present = disappointment?

[falling?]

* future = ?

Willy: You can't eat orange and throw the peel away - \Rightarrow Willy's growing unjust

a man is not a piece of fruit! (p. 59)

\Rightarrow Willy likened to the

peel of the orange:

- something unimportant in the eyes of many

- taken away from the "orange", symbol for dreams, successes, aspirations, etc.

② Biff's realization and plea (p. 102)

Biff, finally breaking and \Rightarrow father-son relationships disgusted of the person and how it keeps me that he has become, dreams alive and the stops pretending the lies families together. Willy has built around \Rightarrow theme(s): lies, illusions, secrets? pretending? all along) \Rightarrow who he truly is, and what has growing up? realization?

his father had become.

Willy: I am Willy Loman, and you are Biff Loman! (p. 102)

\Rightarrow Willy's importance to building a deception of that image (he created) around himself and his family.

• Biff: I am not a leader (of men)

Willy, and neither are you. You were never anything but a hard-working drummer who landed

- Again, Willy has deceived himself

- why can't he admit that he had failed like the rest?

Miller illustrates that his (Willy's) self-deception is RUINING him and his family.

\Rightarrow leader of men - what Willy (terribly) wants him to be.

home

Biff: I'm not bringing anything. \Rightarrow Biff has house enough prizes, and you're going to \Rightarrow Willy's hopes and stop waiting for me to bring them home! (p. 102)

\Rightarrow for the first time in

the play, Biff's speeches' words sounds so certain and sure, unlike before.

"I don't know what the future is. I don't know what I'm supposed to want." - Biff, p. 10

\Rightarrow Willy kept repeating the words or the concept of these words (about Biff)

Biff: I'm nothing. Pop. Can't you understand that? There's no spite anymore. [I'm just] what I am... (p. 102)

• Willy, confused at Biff's sudden vulnerability and breakdown, doesn't understand this desperate - vulnerable "Why is he crying?" (102) before.

"Will you take that phony dream and burn it before something happens?" "phony = fake, unrealistic?

PLAY

③ Linda, Biff, and Happy (p. 37-38)

Linda, not wanting to keep the secrets deep inside of her any more, tells them the truth about their father, the family starting to fall to pieces, and the sons who caused them all the pain. \Rightarrow the interactions are a riddled, full of lies and ideas of "everything's going to be okay" \Rightarrow why did Miller leave Willy from each other and making them fall apart.

Atmosphere: tense, deeply riddled, full of lies and ideas of "everything's going to be okay" \Rightarrow the interactions are a crucial point in this part of the play. \Rightarrow Linda questions the feeling among all the characters. \Rightarrow Biff and Willy's relationship to open up w/ you. (p. 37) as father-and-son is put in to a stark light.

Linda questions the feeling of hatefulness between Biff and Willy. Again, very insightful. You begin to wonder what has happened in the past that made their relationships strained. But Willy, even w/ the hate, seems to think highly of Biff - there HAD to be some happiness in

Biff: I mean to change

⇒ as opposed to Willy,

who doesn't want to change.

Linda: I just thought you'd like a change -

Willy: I don't want a change! (p. 6)

"I just can't take hold..."

I went to look around
(find myself?) ... - Biff (p. 37)

⇒ puts to light on how different Biff is from his father.

⇒ Biff's growing uncertainty of his identity.

stop dying = because (my hair), that's all, what's the point?

Biff: Dye it again. (...) I Linda doesn't want to don't want you to look old, pretend anymore?

she stopped caring about her image!

→ Loman Family seems to hold a big importance on

image / self-image.

→ symbolism of Biff's resentment to "growing up"

⇒ he didn't want to interrupt because (even if Biff was talking to Linda) this was between his father and him?

Happy says very little during this conversation.

if Biff was talking to Linda) this was between his father and him?

I'm surprised Happy isn't

angry at Willy or Biff because he's left alone - as the

Linda's devotion to Willy is put into light:

"I won't have anyone making him feel unwanted and low and blue." (p. 38)

⇒ Linda's "unquestioning faith" for Willy is the very center of her character in the play.

You sometimes wonder where her faith comes from...

Willy has now become vulnerable

Biff: Stop making excuses for him! He's always, always wiped the floor w/ you.

Never had an ounce of respect for you. (to Linda, p. 38)

surlily =

... and yet Linda loves him.

⇒ Linda's and Willy's relationship is the most undermined out of all the

undetermined relationships of the characters in the play

→ we question how much

Willy loves Linda, despite the growing feeling that he is abandoned and lonely.

⇒ this goes to show that Linda is perhaps the only character who saw Willy

stripped of all the lies and is left w/ his being. Linda

has a knack of reading people like a book (in their family), and she knows their motivation,

... and yet she is as if trapped and doesn't act out what she thinks is right.

④ Willy and Ben (p. 31-38)

• After Charley left, Willy is once again caught up in his past: his encounter w/ Ben, a mysterious figure of Willy's life, who he admires, even if he had always felt like he was a brother who ^{he} couldn't

- he associated him as a father figure, because he never really got to know his father.
- "I've been waiting for so long" (p. 31) just show how "frightful" really picture, and could never catch up w/ or grasp as reality. Ben's character is.

Linda: Where have you been all these years? Willy's always wondered why you -

DISAPPEARED.

↳ another indicator of Ben - who, unlike Willy,

• Willy: Where is Dad? (p. 31) he says this impatiently, as if he had been looking for him for so long, and

Willy feels as if something has always been missing in his life.

• Willy: I remember you walking away down some open road,

of his father (figures)

wounded Willy to the core

That now we see his

waning days!

⇒ Willy reveres Ben.

- Ben discovers diamond mines in his search for Alaska in Africa.

Willy: This is your Uncle Ben, a great man! (p. 32) ⇒ he thinks so highly of Ben.

⇒ he wants his sons to meet him because he had been like a father figure to him;

he thinks he deserves this recognition from his sons.

⇒ father-and-son relationship is examined

• the symbolism of the

single?

- wilderness

- the "unknown"

• Ben: When I was seventeen I walked into the jungle and when I was twenty-one I walked out.

• Willy starts to talk about the past again: trying to remember his father and

mother and the sound of mother and the sound of

"some kind of high music."

• Willy putting importance to "history".

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• We see why whenever the past is revisited, the flute is played a representation.

⇒ sounding nostalgic, almost

nostalgic

⇒ Ben had always walked away / disappeared from him.

• symbolism of diamonds?

• valuable

• worth so much

• We see why whenever the past is revisited, the flute is played a representation.

Willy and Ben's father:

- wild-hearted
- great inventor
- a salesman
- a wanderer

→ how we see why Willy

has always identified w/ Ben: he's a spitting image of their father.

⑤ The Requiem (pp. 106-108)

The epilogue of the play:

→ brings us back to

Willy's funeral = a salesman when Willy had recounted the tale of a salesman named Dave Singleman, and had died the "death

of salesman"

Happy: (deeply angered) He had no right to do that to himself). (...) he would just want to be free helped him,

and escape and be done w/ it, even if one might say it was cowardly.

Linda: Why didn't anybody come? Where are all the people he knew?

anonymous. The fact that nobody attended this

funeral evokes the dwindling of his existence, except for his family,

who had to move on in amidst of the confusion

Linda: I can't understand.

(...) we were just about to be free and clear. I can't understand it.

→ I think the most essential flaw of who Linda is that she DOES understand something, but she doesn't know what to do w/ what she knows, it pains her.

Biff recounts the past, very much like Willy, to remember.

↓

In the end, there is a rift between Biff and Happy in the end; they held different ideals for Willy's dream:

Biff thought that he had the wrong dreams -

Happy thought that it was this dream that kept him alive. (p. 107)

he is blinded by the dream and what his father had become because of it. He was doomed from the beginning.

→ Perhaps it is Linda who is the most wounded of them all in the end.

And in the end, Linda is left standing in his grave, pleading for forgiveness because she could not

cry and could not

understand why he had left her all alone. She searched for a much-needed answer, but she never found it (and perhaps, never will). (p. 107-108)

...because out of all of them, she still doesn't know the secrets of their family, and she still believes in the illusion that Willy will still return to her, and she convinces herself that they are free, but really they are far from it.