

American Literature & Culture
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Mod 06 Lecture Number 36
Arthur Miller A View from the Bridge (Lecture 30)

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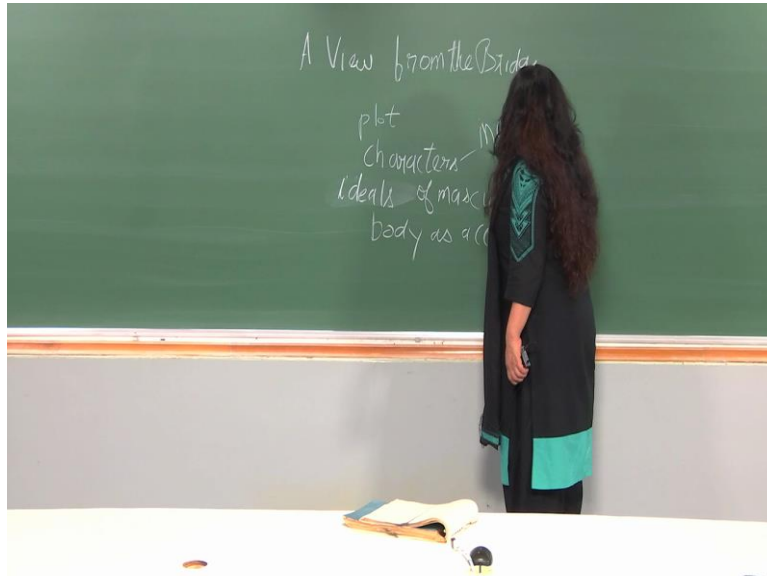


(Professor – student conversation starts)

Professor: So we will continue our reading of the text and while reading we will talk about plot, pay attention to the unities, we have been talking of the unities of time and place, and you remember the place, what the place is; a tenement in the house of Eddie Carbone, the longshoreman. We were also talking about the major characters and today we will be introduced to two new characters. The other day we were talking about Catherine and Beatrice and of course Eddie Carbone, Alfieri the lawyer, Ok.

So we have already talked about, then we will be discussing this play particularly against the backdrop of ideals of masculinity and bodies, particularly female bodies but also masculine bodies as contested sites. Ok, so the entire confrontation or conflict happens because who is going to own, you know, quote unquote Catherine. That is the idea. So the other day, we were talking about, that Eddie Carbone is one of those inarticulate characters of Arthur Miller's. See Arthur Miller's, it is a very well researched area, the inarticulate characters in Arthur Miller. Yeah, Ok.

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Professor: What do you understand by the term inarticulate or inarticulacy? Bhargavi, who is an inarticulate person? Who is?

Student: Formulate their thoughts,

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Student: someone who cannot formulate their thoughts.

Professor: ok, person who cannot give enough expression

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Professor: to their thoughts, so that is an inarticulate person. In Arthur Miller, we have such, several such characters. That's not the problem in Tennessee Williams. People are able to articulate thoughts. So therefore Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller, between the two, Williams is considered more intellectual playwright. Ok. Arthur Miller, because generally because his characters, basically they all belong, or most of them at least belong to the working class. Ok, so it is quite apt that they would not have the language to articulate the thoughts.

So a lot of it, we have to read between the lines; so coming to Eddie Carbone, so he is not even able to externalize feelings for Catherine because he denies, sort of lives in denial. At one point in the play the question comes up. Even the lines we were doing the other day, and there is a point where Beatrice says that it looks like you will never let her go. Ok when she was in school, you wanted her to complete her schooling and she did that and after that you wanted her to do something else and she did that as well. But now you are not letting her go and join the workforce and which is, it looks like you are not willing to let go off her. So this is something that Eddie denies to himself; so Eddie's character, living in denial.

Ok, he lives his life in denial. That is one thing and then inarticulacy in Eddie of course it is because this is how Miller constructs his characters. His characters are not the intellectuals in let's say, in Nabokov's way Ok, where Humbert Humbert, he is able to articulate, express and deeply understand what is happening. Yeah, his feelings for Lolita, who is old and good enough to be his daughter, the same, the same character here; it's the same theme here.

However for Eddie, he is not able to accept the fact himself. That is not the problem in Lolita, alright? So let's continue. Eddie

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Student: All right, go to work.

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Student: Hey, hey! Take it easy! What're you cryin' about'!

Student: I just – I'm gonna buy all new dishes with my first pay! I mean it. I'll fix up the whole house! I'll buy a rug!

Student: And then you'll move away.

Student: No, Eddie!

Student: Why not, that's life. And you'll come visit on Sundays, then once a month, then Christmas and New Year's, finally.

Student: No, please!

Student: I only ask you one thing – don't trust nobody. You got a good aunt but she's got too big a heart, you learned bad from her. Believe me.

Student: Beatrice

Professor: Lida

Student: Page 343, 343 down

Student: Be the way you are

Professor: Be the way you are, Katie, don't listen to him.

Student: Be the way you are, don't listen to him.

Student: You lived in a house all your life, what do you know about it? You never worked in your life.

Student: She likes people. What's wrong with that?

Student: Because most people ain't people. She's goin' to work; plumbers; they'll chew her to pieces if she don't watch out. Believe me, Katie, the less you trust, the less you be sorry

Student: First thing I'll buy is a rug, heh, B?

Student: I don't mind. I smelled coffee all day today. You unloading' coffee today?

Student: Yeah, a Brazil ship.

Student: I smelled it too. It smelled all over the neighborhood.

Student: That's one time, boy, to be a longshoreman is a pleasure. I could work coffee ships twenty hours a day. You go down in the hold, y'know? It's like flowers; that smell. We'll bust a bag tomorrow, I'll bring you some.

Student: Just be sure there are no spiders in it, will ya? I mean it. I still remember that spider coming out of that bag he brung home. I nearly died.

Student: You call that a spider? You oughta see what comes outa the bananas sometimes.

Student: Don't talk about it!

Student: I seen spiders could stop a Buick.

Student: All right, shut up!

Student: Well, who started with the spiders?

Student: All right, I'm sorry, I didn't mean it. Just don't bring none home again. What time is it?

Student: Quarter nine.

Student: He's bringin' them ten o'clock, Tony?

Student: Around, yeah.

Student: Eddie, suppose somebody asks if they're livin' here. I mean if they ask.

Student: Now look, Baby, I can see we're gettin' mixed up again here.

Student: No, I just mean . . . people'll see them goin' in and out.

Student: I don't care who sees them goin' in and goin' out as long as you don't see them goin' in and out. And this goes for you too, B. You don't see nothin' and you don't know nothin'.

Student: What do you mean? I understand.

Student: You don't understand; you still think you can talk about this to somebody just a little bit. Now lemme say it once and for all, because you're makin' me nervous again, both of you. I don't care if somebody comes in the house and sees them sleepin' on the floor, it never comes out of your mouth who they are or what they're doin' here.

Student: Yeah, but my mother'll know –

Student: Sure she'll know, but just don't you be the one who told her, that's all. This is the United States government you're playin' with now, this is the Immigration Bureau. If you said it you knew it, if you didn't say it you didn't know it.

Student: Yeah, but Eddie, suppose somebody –

Student: I don't care what question it is. You – don't – know nothin'. They got stool pigeons all over this neighborhood they're payin' them every week for information, and you don't know who they are. It could be your best friend. You hear? Like Vinny Bolzano, remember Vinny?

Student: Oh, yeah. God forbid.

Student: Tell her about Vinny. You think I'm blowin' steam here? Go ahead, tell her. You was a baby then. There was a family lived next door to her mother, he was about sixteen –

Student: No, he was no more than fourteen, 'cause I was to his confirmation in Saint Agnes. But the family had an uncle that they were hidin' in the house, and he snitched to the Immigration.

Student: The kid snitched?

Student: On his own uncle!

Student: What, was he crazy?

Student: He was crazy after, I tell you that, boy.

Student: Oh, it was terrible. He had five brothers and the old father. And they grabbed him in the kitchen and pulled him down the stairs – three flights his head was bouncin' like a

coconut. And they spit on him in the street, his own father and his brothers. The whole neighborhood was cryin'.

Student: Ts! So what happened to him?

Student: I think he went away. I never seen him again, did you?

Professor: Ok, so we have such strong

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Professor: Ok law, I mean, this is not the law of the land. This is not the law of the state now, Ok. What is this law? This is the Sicilian Law. It is Sicilian Code of Justice. Ok, you don't rat on your own brothers. This is what Miller is actually commenting on the HUAC committee. You remember the other day we were talking about it. So this is Miller's take on rats and snitches, particularly people like Elia Kazan. This is what happens. You, we spit on you and we will never see you again. Yeah, you may be our own brother. Yes

Student: Him? You'll never see him no more

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Student: a guy do a thing like that? How's he gonna show his face? Just remember, kid, you can quicker get back a million dollars that was stole than a word that you gave away.

Student: Okay, I won't say a word to nobody, I swear.

Student: Gonna rain tomorrow. We'll be slidin' all over the decks. Maybe you oughta put something on for them, they be here soon.

Student: I only got fish; I hate to spoil it if they ate already. I'll wait, it only takes a few minutes; I could broil it.

Student: What happens, Eddie, when that ship pulls out and they ain't on it, though? Don't the captain say nothin'?

Student: Captain's pieced off, what do you mean?

Student: Even the captain?

Student: What's the matter, the captain don't have to live? Captain gets a piece, maybe one of the mates, piece for the guy in Italy who fixed the papers for them, Tony here'll get a little bite . . .

Student: I just hope they get work here, that's all I hope.

Student: Oh, the syndicate'll fix jobs for them; till they pay 'em off they'll get them work every day. It's after the pay-off, then they'll have to scramble like the rest of us.

Student: Well, it be better than they got there.

Student: Oh sure, well, listen. So you gonna start Monday, heh, Madonna?

Student: I'm supposed to, yeah.

Professor: Eddie is standing facing the two seated women. First Beatrice smiles, then Catherine

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Professor: for a powerful emotion is on him, a childish one and a knowing fear, and the tears show in his eyes – and they are shy before the avowal.

Student: Well . . .

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Student: I hope you have good luck. I wish you the best. You know that, kid.

Student: You sound like I'm goin' a million miles!

Student: I know. I guess I just never figured on one thing.

Student: What?

Student: That you would ever grow up. I left a what

Student: cigar

Student: cigar in my other coat, I think.

Student: Stay there! I'll get it for you.

Professor: She hurries out. There is a slight pause

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Professor: and then Eddie turns to Beatrice, who has been avoiding his gaze.

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Student: What are you mad at me lately?

Student: Who's mad? I'm not mad.

Professor: She picks up the dishes

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Professor: and turns to him.

Student: You're the one that is mad.

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Professor: She turns and goes into the kitchen as Catherine

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Professor: enters from the bedroom with a cigar and a pack of matches.

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Student: Here! I'll light it for you!

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Professor: She strikes a match and holds it to his cigar. He puffs. Quietly.

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Student: Don't worry about me, Eddie, heh?

Student: Don't burn yourself. You better go in help her with the dishes.

Student: Oh! I'll do the dishes, B!

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Professor: Alone, Eddie stands looking toward the kitchen for a moment. Then he takes out his watch, glances at it, replaces it in his pocket, sits in the armchair, and stares at the smoke flowing out of his mouth. The lights go down, and then come up on Alfieri, who has moved onto the forestage. Ok, Shilpa, read for Alfieri

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Student: He was as good a man as he had to be in a life that was hard and even. He worked on the piers when there was work, he brought home his pay, and he lived. And toward ten o'clock of that night, after they had eaten, the cousins came.

Professor: The lights fade on Alfieri and rise on the street.

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Professor: Enter Tony, escorting Marco and Rodolpho, each with a valise. Tony halts, indicates the house. They stand for a moment looking at it.

Student: Thank you.

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Professor: You're on your own now.

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Professor: Just be careful, that's all, ground floor.

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Student: This will be the first house I ever walked into in America! Imagine! She said they were poor!

Student: Ssh! Come.

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Professor: Marco knocks. The lights rise in the room. Eddie goes and opens the door. Enter Marco and Rodolpho, removing their caps. Beatrice and Catherine enter from the kitchen. The lights fade in the street.

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Student: You Marco?

Student: Marco.

Student: Come on in! Here, take the bags!

Professor: Marco nods, looks to the women and fixes on Beatrice. Crosses to Beatrice

Student: Are you my cousin?

Professor: She nods. He kisses her hand.

Student: Beatrice. This is my husband, Eddie. Catherine, my sister Nancy's daughter

Student: My brother Rodolpho.

Student: I want to tell you now Eddie – when you say go, we will go.

Student: Oh, no . . .

Student: I see it's a small house, but soon, maybe, we can have our own house.

Student: You're welcome, Marco, we got plenty of room here. Katie, give them supper, heh?

Student: Come here, sit down. I'll get you some soup.

Student: We ate on the ship. Thank you. Thank you.

Student: Get some coffee. We'll all have coffee. Come sit down.

Student: How come he's so dark and you're so light, Rodolpho?

Student: I don't know. A thousand years ago, they say, the Danes invaded Sicily.

Student: He's practically blond!

Student: How's the coffee doin'?

Student: I'm gettin' it.

Student: Yiz have a nice trip?

Student: The ocean is always rough. But we are good sailors.

Student: No trouble gettin' here?

Student: No. The man brought us, very nice man.

Student: He says we start to work tomorrow. Is he honest?

Student: No. But as long as you owe them money, they'll get you plenty of work. Yiz ever work on the piers in Italy?

Student: Piers? Ts! – no.

Student: In our town there are no piers, only the beach, and little fishing boats.

Student: So what kinda work did yiz do?

Student: Whatever there is; anything.

Student: Sometimes they build a house, or if they fix the bridge – Marco is a mason and I bring him the cement. In harvest time we work in the fields...if there is work, anything

Student: Still bad there, heh?

Student: Bad, yes.

Student: It's terrible! We stand around all day in the piazza listening to the fountain like birds. Everybody waits only for the train.

Student: What's on the train?

Student: Nothing. But if there are many passengers and you're lucky you take a few

Student: make a few lire

Student: make a few lire to push the taxi up the hill.

Student: You gotta push a taxi?

Student: Oh, sure! It's a feature in our town. The horses in our town are skinnier than goats. So if there are too many passengers we help to push the carriages up to the hotel. In our town the horses are only for show.

Student: Why don't they have automobile taxis?

Student: There is one. We push that too. Everything in our town, you gotta push!

Student: How do you like that!

Student: So what're you wanna do, you gonna stay here in this country or you wanna go back?

Student: Go back?

Student: Well, you're married, ain't you?

Student: Yes. I have three children.

Student: Three! I thought only one.

Student: Oh, no. I have three now; four years, five years, six years.

Student: Ah... I bet they're cryin' for you already, heh?

Student: What can I do? The older one is sick in his chest. My wife – she feeds them from her own mouth. I tell you the truth; if I stay there they will never grow up. They eat the sunshine.

Student: My God. So how long you want to stay?

Student: With your permission, we will stay maybe a

Student: She don't mean in this house, she means in the country.

Student: Oh. Maybe four, five, six years, I think.

Student: He trusts his wife.

Student: Yeah, but maybe you'll get enough; you'll be able to go back quicker.

Student: I hope. I don't know. I understand it's not so good here either.

Student: Oh, you guys'll be all right – till you pay them off, anyway. After that, you'll have to scramble, that's all. But you'll make better here than you could there.

Student: How much? We hear all kinds of figures. How much can a man make? We work hard, we'll work all day, all night –

Student: On the average a whole year? Maybe – well, it's hard to say, see. Sometimes we layoff, there's no ships for weeks, three four weeks.

Student: Three, four weeks! – Ts!

Student: But I think you could probably – thirty, forty a week, over the whole twelve months of the year.

Student: Dollars?

Student: Sure dollars.

Student: If we can stay here a few months, Beatrice –

Student: Listen, you're welcome, Marco

Student: Because I could send them a little more if I stay here.

Student: As long as you want, we got plenty a room.

Student: My wife – My wife – I want to send right away maybe twenty dollars –

Student: You could send them something next week already.

Student: Eduardo

Student: Don't thank me. Listen, what the hell, it's no skin off me. What happened to the coffee?

Student: I got it on. You married too? No

Student: Oh, no

Student: I told you he –

Student: I know, I just thought maybe he got married recently.

Student: I have no money to get married. I have a nice face, but no money.

Student: He's a real blond!

Student: You want to stay here too, heh; for good?

Student: Me? Yes, forever! Me, I want to be an American. And then I want to go back to Italy when I am rich, and I will buy a motorcycle.

Student: A motorcycle!

Student: With a motorcycle in Italy you will never starve any more.

Student: I'll get you coffee.

Student: What you do with a motorcycle?

Student: He dreams, he dreams.

Student: Why? Messages! The rich people in the hotel always need someone who will carry a message. But quickly and with a great noise, with a blue motorcycle I would station myself in the courtyard of the hotel, and in a little while I would have messages.

Student: When you have no wife you have dreams.

Student: Why can't you just walk, or take a trolley or sump'm?

Student: Oh, no, the machine, the machine is necessary. A man comes into a great hotel and says I am a messenger. Who is this man? He disappears walking; there is no noise, nothing. Maybe he will never come back; maybe he will never deliver the message. But a man who rides up on a great machine, this man is responsible, this man exists. He will be given messages. I am also a singer, no.

Student: You mean a regular –?

Professor: Everything, this is some kind of a

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Professor: commentary on masculinity, men and their

Student: Motorcycles

Professor: Motorcycles, yes. A man who makes a, motorcycle, Ok, a muscular bike, we have these kinds of advertisements, bikes that make lot of noise. Ok, so it announces and it screams masculinity. A man, ok so you need a motorcycle to announce yourself or to convey some kind of an identity. So this is, yeah but carry on and there are parts to his masculinity, sides to his masculinity. Yes

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Student: Oh, yes. One night last year Andreola got sick. Baritone. And I took his place in the garden of the hotel. Three arias I sang without falling in a storm

Professor: Without a mistake!

Student: Without where is this?

Student: Without a mistake!

Student: Without a mistake! Sorry. Thousand-lira notes they threw from the tables, money was falling like a storm in the treasury. It was magnificent. We lived six months on that night, eh, Marco?

Student: Two months.

Student: Can't you get a job in that place?

Student: Andreola got better. He's a baritone, very strong.

Student: He sang too loud.

Student: Too loud. The guests in that hotel are all Englishmen. They don't like too loud.

Student: Nobody ever said I was too loud.

Student: I say. It was too loud. I knew it as soon as he started to sing. Too loud.

Student: Then why did they throw so much money?

Student: They paid for your courage. The English like courage. But once is enough.

Student: I never heard anybody say it was too loud.

Student: Did you ever hear of jazz?

Student: Oh, sure! I sing jazz.

Student: You could sing jazz?

Student: Oh, I sing Napolidan, jazz, bel canto – I sing ‘Paper Doll’, you like ‘Paper Doll’?

Student: Oh, sure, I’m crazy for ‘Paper Doll’. Go ahead, sing it.

Student: Sing it, sing it, sing it.

Student: ‘I’ll tell you boys it’s tough to be alone,

And it’s tough to love a doll that’s not our own, your own, our own

I’m through with all of them,

I’ll never fall again,

Hey, boy, what you gonna do?

I’m gonna buy a paper doll that I can call my own,

A doll that other fellows cannot steal.’

Professor: Eddie rises and moves upstage.

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Student: And then, and then those

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Student: flirty, flirty guys

With their flirty, flirty eyes

Will have to flirt with dollies that are real –

Student: Hey, kid – hey, wait a minute

Student: Leave him finish, it's beautiful! He's terrific! It's terrific, Rodolpho.

Student: Look, kid; you don't want to be picked up, do ya?

Student: No – no!

Student: Because we never had no singers here ...and all of a sudden there's a singer in the house, y'know what I mean?

Student: Yes, yes. Sorry, go ahead

Student: You'll be quiet, Rodolpho.

Student: They got guys all over the place, Marco. I mean.

Student: Yes. He'll be quiet. You'll be quiet.

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Professor: Rodolpho nods. Eddie has risen with iron control, even a smile. He moves to Catherine. Now why do we think Miller uses all these terms like Eddie, iron smile, control, he just, you can see the temper on the rise, why?

Student: Rodolpho is flirting.

Professor: Yeah?

Student: Rodolpho is flirting with

Student: I mean Catherine is sort of, besotted

Professor: Not just Rodolpho but it is very mutual.

Student: Yeah Catherine is sort of besotted with Rodolpho

Professor: Yeah, she gets besotted with him at the word go, fallen because of his looks and his youth and he naturally, she is pretty American, all American girl. Ok, so there is an instant attraction. And where does all this lead to now? Of course, he is any way he is very possessive about Catherine from the beginning and then suddenly in his own house, under his own roof and there is someone he is forced to offer hospitality to this guy but he knows what is going on, Ok. But let's talk about masculinity now. Rodolpho, what kind of a person does he appear to be? What kind of a man is he?

Student: Metrosexual

Professor: Very metrosexual, you see, metrosexual, before the word was ever invented, yeah so he is, he has those kinds of looks, very cosmopolitan, very international kind of looks. He is Italian but still very blonde. He is making a joke of it, may be, Danes invaded us, our country. Because Italians are normally dark, they have those dark looks but this one is very different in terms of looks and also attitude. He is not the typical, yeah the macho, the

swaggering macho kind of Italian. So, yeah he is very much metro sexual, very much in touch with the softer side of his personality. Carry on.

Student: What's the high heels for, Garbo?

Student: I figured for tonight –

Student: Do me a favor, will you? Go ahead.

Professor: Yeah. Embarrassed now, angered, Catherine goes out into the bed room. Beatrice watches her go and gets up; in passing, she gives Eddie a cold look, restrained only by the strangers, and goes to the table to pour coffee. Eddie striving to laugh, and to Marco, but directed as much to Beatrice

Student: All actresses they want to be around here

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Student: In Italy too! All the girls

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Professor: Catherine emerges from the bedroom in low-heel shoes, comes to the table. Rodolpho is lifting a cup.

Professor: Eddie (he is sizing up Rodolpho, he is sizing up Rodolpho, he is not sizing up Marco. Yeah, this is a potential threat. He is already building up to be a rival. And there is a concealed suspicion.

Student: Yeah, heh?

Student: Especially when they are so beautiful!

Student: You like sugar?

Student: Yes, I like sugar very much.

Professor: Eddie is downstage, watching as she pours a spoonful of sugar into his cup, his face puffed with trouble, and the room dies. Lights rise on Alfieri, Shilpa?

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Student: Who can ever know what will be discovered? Eddie Carbone had never expected to have a destiny. A man works, raises his family, goes bowling, eats, gets old, and then he dies. Now, as the weeks passed, there was a future, there was a trouble that would not go away.

Professor: The lights fade on Alfieri, then rise on Eddie

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Professor: standing at the doorway of the house. Beatrice enters on the street. She sees Eddie, smiles at him. He looks away. She starts to enter the house when Eddie speaks.

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Student: It's after eight.

Student: Well, it's a long show at the Paramount.

Professor: What is Paramount? Its film studio

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Professor: but it was also a film theater, yes

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Student: They must have seen every picture in Brooklyn by now. He's supposed to stay in the house when he ain't working. He ain't supposed to go advertising himself.

R Well, that's his trouble, what do you care? If they pick him up they pick him up, that's all. Come in the house.

Student: What happened to the stenography? I don't see her practice no more.

Student: She'll get back to it. She's excited, Eddie.

Student: She tell you anything?

Student: What's the matter with you? He's a nice kid, what do you want from him?

Student: That's a nice kid? He gives me the heeby-jeebies.

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Professor: Yeah, he gives me a creepy kind of a feeling.

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Student: Ah, go on, you're just jealous.

Student: Of him? Boy, you don't think much of me

Student: I don't understand you. What's so terrible about him?

Student: You mean it's all right with you? That's gonna be her husband?

Student: Why? He's a nice fella, hard workin', he's a goodlookin' fella.

Student: He sings on the ships, didja know that?

Student: What do you mean, he sings?

Student: Just what I said, he sings. Right on the deck, all of a sudden, a whole song comes out of his mouth – with what is it?

Professor: Motions

Student: With motions. You know what they're callin' him now? Paper Doll they're callin' him, Canary. He's like a weird. He

Professor: comes out on the

Student: comes out on the pier, one-two-three, it's a regular free show.

Student: Well, he's a kid; he don't know how to behave himself yet.

Student: And with that wacky hair; he's like a chorus girl or sump'm.

Student: So he's blond, so –

Student: I just hope that's his regular hair, that's all I hope.

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Professor: He is not bleaching it blonde, Ok. He has long hair. He sings. He sings and he has got the moves. He dances as well while singing. Yes

Student: You crazy or sump'm?

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Student: What's so crazy? I don't like his whole way.

Student: Listen, you never seen a blond guy in your life? What about Whitey Balsa?

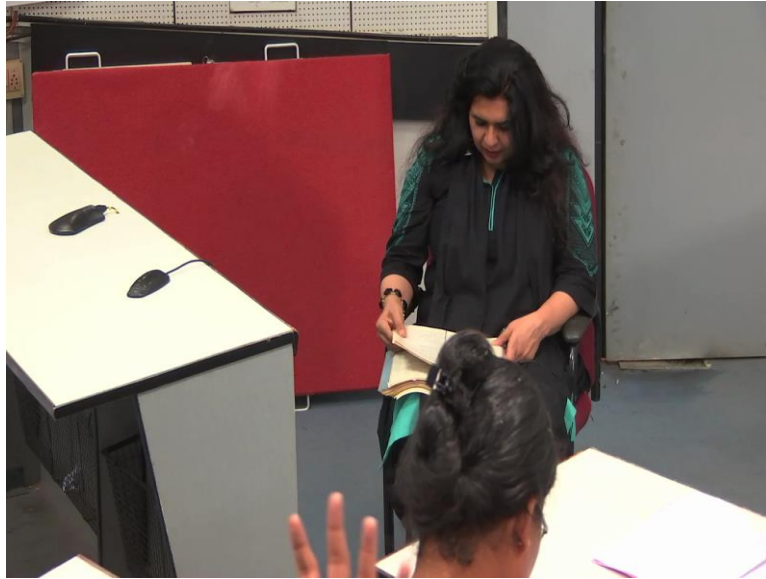
Student: Sure, but Whitey don't sing; he don't do like that on the ships.

Student: Well, maybe that's the way they do in Italy.

Student: Then why don't his brother sing? Marco goes around like a man; nobody kids Marco.

Professor: He moves from her, halts. She realizes

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Professor: there is a campaign solidified in him.

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Student: I tell you the truth I'm surprised I have to tell you all this. I mean I'm surprised, B.

Student: Listen, you ain't gonna start nothin' here.

Student: I ain't startin' nothin', but I ain't gonna stand around lookin' at that. For that character I didn't bring her up. I

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Professor: I swear, B

Student: I swear B, I'm surprised at you;

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Student: I sit there waitin' for you to wake up but everything is great with you.

Student: No, everything ain't great with me.

Student: No?

Student: No. But I got other worries.

Student: Yeah.

Student: Yeah, you want me to tell you?

Student: Why? What worries you got?

Student: When am I gonna be a wife again, Eddie?

Student: I ain't been feelin' good. They bother me since they came.

Student: It's almost three months you don't feel good; they're only here a couple of weeks. Its three months, Eddie.

Student: I don't know, B. I don't want to talk about it.

Student: What's the matter, Eddie; you don't like me, heh?

Student: What do you mean, I don't like you? I said I don't feel good, that's all.

Student: Well, tell me, am I doing something wrong? Talk to me.

Student: I can't. I can't talk about it.

Student: Well tell me what –

Professor: So again we are talking

(Refer Slide Time 28:59)



Professor: about the inarticulate character in Miller. Now he, he, you know the implication, what the implication is here. So they, his wife and Beatrice, they do not have relations anymore. And the reason we know. He says he is irritated because of Rodolpho's presence here. But we know the truth, because he is no longer, no more interested, in Beatrice anymore because of obvious attraction and feelings, strong feelings for Catherine, yeah

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Student: I got nothin' to say about it!

Student: I'll be all right, B; just layoff me, will ya? I'm worried about her.

Student: The girl is gonna be eighteen years old, it's time already.

Student: B, he's taking her for a ride!

Student: All right, that's her ride. What're you gonna stand over her till she's forty? Eddie, I want you to cut it out now, you hear me? I don't like it! Now come in the house.

Student: I want to take a walk; I'll be in right away.

Student: They ain't goin' to come any quicker if you stand in the street. It ain't nice, Eddie.

Student: I'll be in right away. Go ahead.

Professor: She goes into the house.

(Refer Slide Time 30:11)



Professor: Eddie glances up the street, sees Louis and Mike coming, and sits on an iron railing. Louis and Mike enter. , Ravi, read for Louis

Student: Wanna go bowlin' tonight?

Student: I'm too tired. Goin' to sleep.

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Student: How's your two submarines?

Student: They're okay.

Student: I see they're gettin' work all-time.

Student: Oh yeah, they're doin' all right.

Student: Who is Mike?

Professor: Is there anyone who would like to read for Mike? Shilpa can read for Mike. Carry on.

Student: That's what we oughta do. We oughta leave the country and come in under the water. Then we get work.

Student: You ain't kiddin'.

Student: Well, what the hell. Y'know?

Student: Sure

Student: Believe me, Eddie; you got a lotta credit comin' to you.

Student: Aah, they don't bother me, don't cost me nutt'n.

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Student: That older one, boy, he's a regular bull. I seen him the other day liftin' coffee bags over the Matson Line. They leave him alone he woulda load the whole ship by himself.

(Refer Slide Time 31:30)



Professor: Ok, a bull is another; it is a compliment for masculinity, right? So it is Marcos, right. So one is compared to a bull, a regular bull, Ok? Hard, tough, hardworking and physically strong, all those are the attributes of a bull. The other is a paper doll, Ok light weight, feather light and also wafer thin, Ok, I mean this is a traditional, this is a stereotyping masculinity, right? Because anyone who looks tough is a man; who looks, a boy who looks frail; perhaps there is something wrong with it. And then you will find lots of; aspersions will be cast on Rodolpho's masculinity, yeah.

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Student: He is a strong guy, that guy. Their father was a regular giant, supposed to be.

Student: Yeah, you could see. He's a regular slave.

Student: That blond one, though –He's got a sense of humor.

Student: Yeah. He's funny –

Student: Well he ain't exactly funny, but he's always like makin' remarks like, y'know? He comes around, everybody's laughin'.

Student: Yeah, well ... he's got a sense of humor.

Student: Yeah, I mean, he's always makin' like remarks, like, y'know?

Student: Yeah, I know. But he's a kid yet, y'know? He – he's just a kid, that's all.

Student: I know. You take one look at him – everybody's happy. I worked one day with him last week over the Moore-MacCormack Line; I'm tellin' you they was all hysterical.

Professor: You remember

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Professor: you have done Billy Bird the sailor?

Student: Yeah

Professor: It is almost the same. Ok. You have someone who looks like, almost he has, he possesses feminine beauty, mere feminine beauty and people and especially sailors, Ok who really don't get much exposure to women and then, all of a sudden you get a man like him, amidst the people, it tickles their fancy. Yes

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Student: Why? What did he do?

Student: I don't know . . . he was just humorous. You never can remember what he says, y'know? But it's the way he says it. I mean he gives you a look sometimes and you start laughin'

Student: Yeah, he's got a sense of humor.

Student: Yeah

Student: Well, we see ya, Eddie.

Student: Take it easy.

Student: Yeah. See ya.

Student: If you wanna come bowlin' later we're goin' Flatbush Avenue.

Professor: Laughing, they move to exit

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Professor: meeting Rodolpho and Catherine entering on the street. Their laughter rises as they see Rodolpho, who does not understand but joins in. Eddie moves to enter the house as Louis and Mike exit. Catherine stops him at the door.

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Student: Hey, Eddie – what a picture we saw! Did we laugh!

Student: Where'd you go?

Student: Paramount. It was with those two guys, y'know? That –

Student: Brooklyn Paramount?-

Student: Sure, the Brooklyn Paramount. I told you we wasn't goin' to New York.

Student: All right, I only asked you. I just don't want her hangin' around Times Square, see? It's full of tramps over there.

Professor: Are you aware of Times Square?

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Student: Yes

Professor: Yeah, Times Square is a very, today it is a very posh place. Ok but once upon a time and till the 70s, it was full of very shady characters and shady joints. So it was not a place of very good repute. Today it is a very different place. Yes.

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Student: I would like to go to Broadway once, Eddie. I would like to walk with her once where the theaters are and the opera. Since I was a boy I see the pictures of these lights.

Student: I want to talk to her a minute, Rodolpho. Go inside, will you?

Student: Eddie, we only walk together in the streets. She teaches me.

Student: You know what he can't get over? That there's no fountains in Brooklyn!

Student: Fountains?

Student: In Italy he says, every town's got fountains, and they meet there. And you know what? They got oranges on the trees where he comes from, and lemons. Imagine – on the trees? I mean it's interesting. But he's crazy for New York.

Student: Eddie, why can't we go once to Broadway –?

Student: Look, I gotta tell her something –

Student: Maybe you can come too. I want to see all those lights.

Professor: He sees no response in Eddie's face.

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Professor: He glances at Catherine.

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Student: I'll walk by the river before I go to sleep.

Student: Why don't you talk to him, Eddie? He blesses you, and you don't talk to him hardly.

Student: I bless you and you don't talk to me.

Student: I don't talk to you? What do you mean?

Student: I don't see you no more. I come home you're runnin' around someplace –

Student: Well, he wants to see everything, that's all, so we go ... You mad at me?

Student: No. It's just I used to come home, you was always there. Now, I turn around, you're a big girl. I don't know how to talk to you.

Student: Why?

Student: I don't know, you're runnin', you're runnin', Katie. I don't think you listening any more to me.

Student: Ah, Eddie, sure I am. What's the matter? You don't like him?

Student: You like him, Katie?

Student: Yeah. I like him.

Student: You like him.

Student: Yeah

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Professor: Now she looks at him for the consequences, smiling but tense. He looks at her like a lost boy.

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Student: What're you got against him? I don't understand. He only blesses you.

Student: He don't bless me, Katie.

Student: He does! You're like a father to him!

Student: Katie.

Student: What, Eddie?

Student: You gonna marry him?

Student: I don't know. We just been... goin' around, that's all. What're you got against him, Eddie? Please, tell me. What?

Student: He don't respect you.

Student: Why?

Student: Katie ... if you wasn't an orphan, wouldn't he ask your father's permission before he run around with you like this?

Student: Oh, well, he didn't think you'd mind.

Student: He knows I mind, but it don't bother him if I mind, don't you see that?

Student: No, Eddie, he's got all kinds of respect for me. And you too! We walk across the street he takes my arm – he almost bows to me! You got him all wrong, Eddie; I mean it, you –

Student: Katie, he's only bowin' to his passport.

Student: His passport!

Student: That's right. He marries you he's got the right to be an American citizen. That's what's goin' on here. You understand what I'm tellin' you? The guy is lookin' for his break, that's all he's lookin' for.

Student: Oh, no, Eddie, I don't think so.

Student: You don't think so! Katie, you're gonna make me cry here. Is that a workin' man? What does he do with his first, first?

Professor: money

Student: Money? A snappy new jacket he buys, records, a pointy

Student: pair new shoes

Student: pair new shoes and his brother's kids are starvin' over there with tuberculosis? That's a hit-and-run guy, baby; he's got bright lights in his head, Broadway. Them guys don't think of nobody but their self! You marry him and the next time you see him it'll be for divorce!

Student: Eddie, he never said a word about his papers or –

Student: You mean he's supposed to tell you that?

Student: I don't think he's even thinking about it.

Student: What's better for him to think about! He could be picked up any day here and he's back pushin' taxis up the hill!

Student: No, I don't believe it.

Student: Katie, don't break my heart, listen to me.

Student: I don't want to hear it.

Student: Katie, listen

Student: He loves me!

Student: Don't say that, for God's sake! That is the oldest racket in the country –

Student: I don't believe it!

Student: They been pullin' this since the Immigration Law was put in! They grab a green kid that don't know nothin' and they –

Student: I don't believe it and I wish to hell you'd stop it!

Student: Katie!

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Professor: They enter the apartment. The lights in the living room have risen and Beatrice is there. She looks past the sobbing Catherine at Eddie, who in the presence of his wife makes an awkward gesture of eroded command, indicating Catherine. What's a green kid?

Student: Someone who is innocent

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Professor: Green, yeah, green horn

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Professor: something like who is very naive yeah and also here there could be double entendre Green Card, Ok; yeah she almost represents the Green Card for him. You marry a girl and you get your green card automatically. It is a racket. We all know that these rackets have been...there is a movie, Green Card. You haven't seen that? Andie MacDowell movie so, yeah so she, the people marry for Green Card. It is very well-established, well-recognized racket in that country so that's what, now because he can't say anything else these two men. Now it's this, yes.

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Student: Why don't you straighten her out?

Student: When are you going to leave her alone?

Student: B, the guy is no good!

Student: You going to leave her alone? Or you gonna drive me crazy?

Student: He turns, striving to retain his dignity, but nevertheless in guilt walks out of the house, into the street and away. Catherine starts into a bedroom.

Student: Listen, Catherine. What are you going to do with yourself?

Student: I don't know.

Student: Don't tell me you don't know; you're not a baby any more, what are you going to do with yourself?

Student: He won't listen to me.

Student: I don't understand this. He's not your father, Catherine. I don't understand what's going on here.

Student: What am I going to do, just kick him in the face with it?

Student: Look, honey, you wanna get married, or don't you wanna get

Student: married

Student: married

Professor: What are you worried about, Katie?

Student: What are you worried about, Katie?

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Student: I don't know, B.

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Student: It just seems wrong if he's against it so much.

Student: Sit down, honey, I want to tell you something. Here, sit down. Was there ever any fella he liked for you? There wasn't, was there?

Student: But he says Rodolpho's just after his papers.

Student: Look, he'll say anything. What does he care what he says? If it was a prince came here for you it would be no different. You know that, don't you?

Student: Yeah, I guess.

Student: So what does that mean?

Student: What?

Student: It means you gotta be your own self more. You still think you're a little girl, honey. But nobody else can make up your mind for you any more, you understand? You gotta give him to understand that he can't give you orders no more.

Student: Yeah, but how am I going to do that? He thinks I'm a baby.

Student: Because you think you're a baby. I told you 50 times already, you can't act the way you act. You still walk around in front of him in your slip –

Student: Well I forgot.

Student: Well you can't do it. Or like you sit on the edge of the bathtub talkin' to him when he's shavin' in his underwear.

Student: When'd I do that?

Student: I seen you in there this morning.

Student: Oh. .. Well, I wanted to tell him something and I –

Student: I know, honey. But if you act like a baby and he be treatin' you like a baby. Like when he comes home sometimes you throw yourself at him like when you was twelve years old.

Student: Well I like to see him and I'm happy so I –

Student: Look, I'm not tellin' you what to do honey, but –

Student: No, you could tell me, B! Gee, I'm all mixed up. See, I – He looks so sad now and it hurts me.

Student: Well look Katie, if it's goin' to hurt you so much you're gonna end up an old maid here.

Student: No!

Student: I'm tellin' you, I'm not makin' a joke. I tried to tell you a couple of times in the last year or so. That's why I was so happy you were going to go out and get work, you wouldn't be here so much, you'd be a little more independent. I mean it. It's wonderful for a whole family to love each other, but you're a grown woman and you're in the same house with a grown man. So you'll act different now, heh?

Student: Yeah, I will. I'll remember.

Student: Because it ain't only up to him, Katie, you understand? I told him the same thing already.

Student: What?

Student: That he should let you go. But, you see, if only I tell him, he thinks I'm just bawlin' him out, or maybe I'm jealous or somethin', you know?

Student: He said you was jealous?

Student: No, I'm just sayin' maybe that's what he thinks. You think I'm jealous of you, honey?

Student: No! It's the first I thought of it.

Student: Well you should have thought of it before ... but I'm not. We'll be all right. Just give him to understand; you don't have to fight, you're just – You're a woman, that's all, and you got a nice boy and now the time came when you said good-bye. All right?

Student: All right... If I can.

Student: Honey ... you gotta.

Professor: Catherine, sensing now

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Professor: an imperious demand, turns with some fear, with a discovery, to Beatrice. She is at the edge of tears, as though a familiar world had shattered. Now suddenly, she is forced to go out. Familiar world are; things are not going to be the way they used to be, yeah. Lights out on them and up on Alfieri, seated behind his desk.

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Student: It was at this time that he first came to me. I had represented his father in an accident case some years before, and I was acquainted with the family in a casual way. I remember him now as he walked through my doorway –His eyes were like tunnels; my first thought was that he had committed a crime but soon I saw it was only a passion that had moved into his body, like a stranger.

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Professor: Alfieri pauses, looks down at his desk, then to Eddie as though he were continuing a conversation with him.

Student: I don't quite understand

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Student: what I can do for you. Is there a question of law somewhere?

Student: That's what I want to ask you.

Student: Because there's nothing illegal about a girl falling in love with an immigrant.

Student: Yeah, but what about it if the only reason for it is to get his papers?

Student: First of all you don't know that.

Student: I see it in his eyes; he's laughin' at her and he's laughin' at me.

Student: Eddie, I'm a lawyer. I can only deal in what's provable. You understand that, don't you? Can you prove that?

Student: I know what's in his mind, Mr. Alfieri!

Student: Eddie, even if you could prove that –

Student: Listen ... will you listen to me a minute? My father always said you was a smart man. I want you to listen to me.

Student: I'm only a lawyer, Eddie.

Student: Will you listen a minute? I'm talkin' about the law. Lemme just bring out what I mean. A man, which he comes into the country illegal, don't it stand to reason he's gonna take every penny and put it in the sock? Because they don't know from one day to another, right?

Student: Al right.

Student: He is spending. Records he buys now. Shoes. Jackets. Y' understand me? This guy ain't worried. This guy is here. So it must be that he's got it all laid out in his mind already – he's stayin'. Right?

Student: Well? What about it?

Student: All right. I'm talking to you confidential, ain't I?

Student: Certainly.

Student: I mean it don't go no place but here because I don't like to say this about anybody. Even my wife I didn't exactly say this.

Student: What is it?

Student: The guy ain't right, Mr. Alfieri.

Student: What do you mean?

Student: I mean he ain't right.

Student: I don't get you.

Student: Dja ever get a look at him?

Student: Not that I know of, no.

Student: He's a blond guy. Like ...platinum. You know what. I mean?

Student: No.

Student: I mean if you close the paper fast – you could blow him over.

Student: Well that doesn't mean –

Student: Wait a minute, I'm tellin' you sump'm. He sings, see. Which is – I mean it's all right, but sometimes he hits a note, see. I turn around. I mean – high. You know what I mean?

Student: Well, that's a tenor.

Student: I know a tenor, Mr. Alfieri. This ain't no tenor. I mean if you came in the house and you didn't know who was singin', you wouldn't be lookin' for him you be lookin' for her.

Student: Yes, but that's not –

Student: I'm tellin' you sump'm, wait a minute. Please, Mr. Alfieri. I'm tryin' to bring out my thoughts here. Couple of nights ago my niece brings out a dress which it's too small for her, because she shot up like a light this last year. He takes the dress, lays it on the table, he cuts it up; one-two-three, he makes a new dress. I mean he looked so sweet there, like an angel – you could kiss him he was so sweet.

Student: Now look, Eddie –

Student: Mr. Alfieri, they're laughin' at him on the piers. I'm ashamed. Paper Doll they call him. Blondie now. His brother thinks it's because he's got a sense of humor, see – which he's got – but that ain't what they're laughin'. Which they're not goin' to come out with it because they know he's my relative, which they have to see me if they make a crack, y'know? But I know what they're laughin' at, and when I think of that guy layin' his hands on her I could –

I mean it's eatin' me out, Mr. Alfieri, because I struggled for that girl. And now he comes in my house and –

Student: Eddie, look – I have my own children. I understand you. But the law is very specific. The law does not...

Student: You mean to tell me that there's no law that a guy which he ain't right can go to work and marry a girl and –?

Student: You have no recourse in the law, Eddie.

Student: Yeah, but if he ain't right, Mr. Alfieri, you mean to tell me –

Student: There is nothing you can do, Eddie, believe me.

Student: Nothin'.

Student: Nothing at all. There's only one legal question here.

(Refer Slide Time 47:20)



Professor: So what is he hinting at? Yes?

Student: That he is homosexual

Professor: That he is not alright, that he is not right. The boy, there is something wrong about him and see we are still in those times when the play was written, they could not utter the word, bisexual, homosexual. We have been through this, right? When we were discussing Lillian Hellman and *The Children's Hour*, there were certain words that were unprintable and unpublishable and unspeakable in the movies and on stage. So you couldn't utter but you had to say in a roundabout circumlatory way.

So this is how, yeah, so he is not right. Now when the guy is not right, we know what was done to people who were not quote unquote right during that period. We have been that also seen, they would be ostracized and at some places they were also beaten up, yeah. So this is something I don't want but legally you can't do anything, you can just perhaps socially make him an outcast, but more than that you cannot do anything. If a girl wants to see a guy like that, you can't, there is no law that can prevent that. That is Alfieri's stand. Therefore a lawyer character is important here. Now he is the one who indirectly plants this idea in his head. What is it? There is only one legal question here. Eddie.

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Student: What?

Student: The manner in which they entered the country. But I don't think you want to do anything about that, do you?

Student: You mean?

Student: Well, they entered illegally.

Student: Oh, Jesus, no, I wouldn't do nothin' about that, I mean –

Student: All right, then, let me talk now, eh?

Student: Mr. Alfieri, I can't believe what you tell me. I mean there must be some kinda law which –

Student: Eddie, I want you to listen to me. You know, sometimes God mixes up the people. We all love somebody, the wife, the kids – every man's got somebody that he loves, heh? But sometimes ... there's too much, you know? There's too much, and it goes where it mustn't. A man works hard, he brings up a child, sometimes it's a niece, sometimes even a daughter, and

he never realizes it, but through the years – there is too much love for the daughter, there is too much love for the niece. Do you understand what I'm saying to you?

Student: What do you mean; I shouldn't look out for her good?

Student: Yes, but these things have to end, Eddie, that's all. The child has to grow up and go away, and the man has to learn to forget. Because after all, Eddie – what other way can it end? Let her go. That's my advice. You did your job, now it's her life; wish her luck, and let her go. Will you do that? Because there's no law, Eddie; make up your mind to it; the law is not interested in this.

Student: You mean to tell me, even if he's a punk? If he's –

Student: There's nothing you can do.

(Refer Slide Time 50:15)



Professor: Yeah, punk is the most, is the word come closest to what he has in mind. Ok, you, when a guy is not so correct, not so right, you can him a punk. Punk in today's sub-culture means something else, yeah but in those days, punk or to call someone. Today we have a word like queer, but queer those days didn't really exactly correspond to what it's meant today, a punk yes, so how meanings change over years. Yes.

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Student: Right

Student: Well, all right, thanks. Thanks very much.

Student: What are you going to do?

Student: What can I do? I'm a patsy, what can a patsy do? I worked like a dog twenty years so a punk could have her, so that's what I done. I mean, in the worst times, in the worst, when there wasn't a ship comin' in the harbor, I didn't stand around lookin' for relief – I hustled. When there was empty piers in Brooklyn I went to Hoboken, Staten Island, the West Side, Jersey, all over – because I made a promise. I took out of my own mouth to give to her. I took out of my wife's mouth. I walked hungry plenty days in this city! And now I gotta sit in my own house and look at a son-of-a-bitch punk like that – which he came out of nowhere! I give him my house to sleep! I take the blankets off my bed for him, and he takes and puts his dirty filthy hands on her like a goddamn thief!

Student: But, Eddie, she's a woman now.

Student: He's stealing from me!

Student: She wants to get married, Eddie. She can't marry you, can she?

Student: What're you talkin' about, marry me! I don't know what the hell you're talkin' about!

Student: I gave you my advice, Eddie. That's it.

Student: Well, thanks. Thanks very much. It just – it's breakin' my heart, y'know. I –

Student: I understand. Put it out of your mind. Can you do that?

Eddie: I'm –

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Professor: He feels the threat of sobs, and with a helpless wave.

Student: I'll see you around.

Professor: He goes out up the right ramp, Alfieri.

(Refer Slide Time 52:13)



Student: There are times when you want to spread an alarm, but nothing has happened. I knew, I knew then and there – I could have finished the whole story that afternoon. It wasn't as though there was a mystery to unravel. I could see every step coming, step after step, like a dark figure walking down a hall toward a certain door. I knew where he was heading for; I knew where he was going to end. And I sat here many afternoons asking myself why, being an intelligent man, I was so powerless to stop it. I even went to a certain old lady in the

neighborhood, a very wise old woman, and I told her, and she only nodded, and said, 'Pray for him . . . ' And so I –waited here.

(Refer Slide Time 52:54)



Professor: As lights go out on Alfieri, they rise in the apartment where all are finishing dinner. Beatrice and Catherine are clearing the table. So when we were talking about this play being Miller's take on Greek plays, do you understand, I mean it is not just the structure, it is not just the fact that it fits so neatly within the exposition and rising and action and climax and the falling action, there is something else happening. Something that is so, such an integral part of Greek drama.

Student: Incestuous

Professor: Incest, yes of course but something else?

Student: Fate, there is no control

Professor: Yeah, there is no control over, yeah. Man cannot, so there is no such thing as Free Will. That's a philosopher's way of thinking, there is a free will but here a mere mortal cannot control Fate. That's the way, that's the idea, that's the philosophy in Oedipus, and all those Greek plays, Greek tragedies. Ok, man cannot control his fate. It is, if something is destined to happen, and it will happen. , you remember Alfieri previously says that I never thought that he is going to have any destiny. A man is born, you know a man at the piers, he, he is born, he lives, he eats, he drinks, he gets married, he gets old and he dies.

That's his, , that's the trajectory of a common mortal. I didn't know that he is going to have a destiny, Ok. He is not going to have any story. There is no story in people like him. But here,

suddenly, and this is the story that takes him, you know we were talking about how Alfieri refers to that ancient romantic tales. My practice here in America is so prosaic. There is nothing in it. It is so dull. But now, now and then comes a longer case that takes me back thousands of years ago and this is the kind of case. Alright we will continue next in our next class.

(Professor – student conversation ends)