

Twentieth Century American Drama
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Lecture - 19
Arthur Miller's All My Sons Part 5

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Mother: Don't be so smart.

Chris: You can have a helluva time in Burma.

Ann: [rises and swings around in back of Chris] So I've heard.

Chris: Mother, I'll bet you money that you're the only woman in the country who after three years is still ...

Mother: You're sure?

Chris: Yes, I am.

Mother: Well, if you're sure then you're sure. [She turns her head away for an instant] They don't say it on the radio but I'm sure that in the dark of night they're still waiting for their sons.

Chris: Mother, you're absolutely ...

Mother: [laughing him off] Don't be so damned smart! Now stop it! [slight pause] There are a few things you don't know. All of you. And I'll tell you one of them, Annie. **Deep, deep in your heart you've always been waiting for this.**

Ann: [resolutely] No, Kate.

Mother: [with increasing demand] But deep in your heart, Annie!

Chris: She ought to know, shouldn't she?

Mother: Don't let them tell you what to think. Listen to your heart. Only your heart.

Ann: Why does your heart tell you he's alive?

Mother: Because he has to be.


Ann: But why, Kate?

Mother: [going to her] Because certain things have to be, and certain things can never be. Like the sun has to rise, it has to be. That's why there's God. Otherwise anything could happen. **But there's God, so certain things can never happen.** I would know, Annie ... just like the day he [indicates Chris] went into that terrible battle. Did he write me? Was it in the papers? No, but that morning I couldn't raise my head off the pillow. Ask Joe. Suddenly, I knew. I knew! And he was nearly killed that day. Ann, you

Ann stands there in silence, then turns trembling, going upstage.

Ann: No, Kate.

Mother: I have to have some tea.



This NPTEL course is entitled *Twentieth Century American Drama on All My Sons* by Arthur Miller. We will looking at this play and this is again one of those plays by Miller where he is exploring at length the conflict between father and son. The father-son conflict is a theme that he recurrently explores in most of his works.

We find that this relation between the father and son and the various dynamics within families they get accentuated in a very different way very nuanced way, when it is also mapped into the many concerns of the society into the concerns of the many concerns of the nation itself. Here in some sense we can find the American Dream, the notion of the American Dream, the idea of the American Dream looming very high in the background.

We find that the individual concerns the value systems the way in which they navigate through their life itself it takes a very different form all together. We are almost at the end of Act 1 and even before the curtain falls at the end of Act 1 we realize that there are lot of major changes which begin to happen. We are been through this the mode of slow revelation like, it has been mentioned before also. In this mode of slow revelation we

find that the play introduces to a lot of critical events which become extremely seminal in defining the course of action forward.

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Mother: That's because you keep on staying policeman with the kids. All their parents' hair out of you! (off, off, off)

Keller: Actually what happened was that when I got home from the penitentiary the kids get very interested in me. You know kids. I was (laughs) like the expert on the jail situation. And so time passed they got it confused and ... ended up a detective. (laughs)

Mother: Except that they didn't get it confused. (to Ann) He hands out police badges from the Post Teesties boxes. (they laugh)

Ann rises and comes to Keller, putting her arm around his shoulder.

Ann: (wonderfully at them, happy) Gosh, it's wonderful to hear you laughing about it.

Chris: Why, what'd you expect?

Ann: The last thing I remember on this block was one word ... "Murderers!" Remember that, Kate? Mrs. Hammond standing in front of our house yelling that word? She's still around, I suppose?

Mother: They're all still around.

Keller: Don't listen to her. Every Saturday night the whole gang is playin' poker in this arbor. All the ones who yelled murderer takin' my money now.


Mother: Don't, Joe. She's a sensitive girl, don't fool her. (to Ann) They still remember about Dad. It's different with him. (Indicates Joe) He was concerned, your father's still there. That's why I wasn't so enthusiastic about your coming. Honestly, I know how sensitive you are and I told Chris, I said...

Keller: Listen, you do like I did and you'll be all right. The day I come home, I got out of my car ... but not in front of the house ... on the corner. You should've been here, Annie, and you too Chris. You'd'a seen something. Everybody know I was getting out that day. The porches were loaded. Picture it now. None of them believed I was innocent. The story was, I pulled a fast one getting myself exonerated. So I get out of my car, and I walk down the street. But very slow. And with a smile. The beast! I was the best ... the guy who sold cracked cylinder heads to the Army Air Force ... the guy who made twenty one P-40s crash in Australia. Kid, walkin' down the street that day I was guilty as hell. Except I wasn't, and there as a court apper in my pocket to prove I wasn't, and I walked ... past ... the porches. Result? Fourteen months later I had one of the best sheeps in the state again, a respected man again, bigger than ever.

Chris: (with admiration) Joe McGuts.

Keller: (now with great force) That's the only way you lick 'em is guts! (To Ann) The worst thing you did was to move away from here. You made it tough for your father when he gets out. That's why I tell you, I like to see him move back right on this block.

Mother: (pained) How could they move back?



There is an uncertain kind of unspeakability about death right from the outset of this play. It is this tussle even within the family between mother and the rest of the family Joe Keller and their son Chris whether Larry, their first born whether their son is all has he is already he is whether he is actually dead or not. So, we find that the unspeakability associated with Larry's death there is much more than the emotional concern that the mother is showing about that. It is much more than the difficulty in her mind to believe that he is actually dead or not dead.

So, we are now been getting introduced into a number of things which are outside of their family territory, a lot of things which had major significance. Perhaps, in the things which are national significance itself. And we find that this aspect is there at the heart of this play making them act in different ways, making the rest of the characters act in decide in the in different ways.


So, in the previous session when we stopped we saw how Annie and mother were having an intimate conversation and mother was trying to find out whether Annie is still believed that deep in her heart she believe that Larry is going to come back. There seems to be this compulsive way in which mother is pursuing this after Annie almost forcing her to admit that she is still waiting for Larry. But Annie seems to hold her ground and

she continues to say that, she is willing to move on and this is something which becomes extremely unpalatable to the mother.

And we have very soon know that there is much more what than that we get to know very superficially in these discourses. She also makes it a mother, she gives it an emotional dimension, she almost gives it a psychic dimension when she talks about the horoscope and she sees different signs and symbols in the tree falling.

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Frank appears, carrying a ladder.	Ann: Tell me. Because I don't want to meet anybody on the block if they're going to ...
Ann: [taking his hand] Why, Frank, you're losing your hair.	Chris: I don't want you to worry about it.
Keller: He's got responsibility.	Ann: [to Keller] Do they still remember the case, Joe? Do they talk about you?
Frank: Gee whiz!	Keller: The only one still talks about it is my wife.
Keller: Without Frank the stars wouldn't know when to come out.	
Frank: [laughs. To Ann] You look more womanly. You've matured. You ...	
Keller: Take it easy, Frank, you're a married man.	
Ann: [as they laugh] You still haberdashering?	
Frank: Why not? Maybe I too can get to be president. How's your brother? Get his degree, I hear.	
Ann: Oh, George has his own office now!	
Frank: Don't say! [flustered] And your dad? Is he ...?	
Ann: [abruptly] Fine. I'll be in to see Lydia.	
Frank: [sympathetically] How about it, does Dad expect a parole soon?	
Ann: [with growing ill-ease] I really don't know, I ...	
Frank: [staunchly defending her father for her sake] I mean because I feel, y'know, that if an intelligent man like your father is put in prison, there ought to be a law that says either you execute him or let him go after a year.	
Chris: [interrupting] Wait a hand with that ladder, Frank?	
Frank: [taking cue] That's all right, I'll ... [picks up ladder] I'll finish the horoscope tonight, Kate. [embarrassed] See you later, Ann, you look wonderful. [he exits. They look at Ann]	
Ann: [to Chris, as she sits slowly on stool] Haven't they stopped talking about that?	
Chris: [comes down and sits on arm of chair] Nobody talks about him any more.	
Keller: Gone and forgotten, kid.	



But, there is something more grave here, when they are, they when they beginning to get into some of the details. So, when later on when Frank and Annie have this discussion, so, where Frank also mentions about Annie's dad who is whom he wonders whether he is expecting a parole soon. It is how about it, does dad expect a parole soon? And growing ill-ease I really do not know.

So, there is a brief discomfort over here when everyone begins to ask Annie about her dad whom we understand over here is in prison. So, Frank also spells out a few things over here by saying, "I mean because I feel that if an intelligent man like your father is put in prison, there ought to be a law that says either you execute him or let him go after a year".

Frank in some sense is trying to defend Annie's father, but clearly it is not a very comfortable conversation that they are having over here. So, Ann immediately begins to

confront Chris about it and also ask whether they have stopped talking about dad. We have realized from the beginning of this play there are a number of details. There is a lot of baggage over here. There are lot of things which had happened before the details of which we are not entirely privy into.

Ann ask Chris, "Have not they stopped talking about dad? Nobody talks about him anymore. Gone and forgotten, kid". And Keller is also reiterating that underscoring the fact that no one even discusses it. "Tell me because I do not want to meet anybody on the block if they are going to. I do not want you to worry about it.

Do they still remember the case, Joe? Do they talk about you? The only one still talks about it is my wife. Kate interferes and says that is because you keep on playing policeman with the kids. All their parents hear out of you is jail, jail and jail."

We realize where this discomfort with the word jail, prison and the police game that the kids playing, how why and how mother finds it extremely uncomfortable when the kids are playing that. Because, it is not really a playful thing that is certainly a lot of grave situation that the family entire family had gone through. We realize Ann's father is now in jail and we do not even know whether he is going to be out any time soon.

The background of the jail situation, the details of which will also be stay at the heart of this play it will very soon will be revealed to us. Ann also recalls this instance from the time may be three years before they left from that neighborhood. "The last thing I remember on this block was one word murderers. Remember that, Kate? Mrs. Hammond standing in front of our house yelling that word. She is still around, I suppose?"

Mother: They are all still around.

Keller: Do not listen to her. Every Saturday night the whole gang is playing poker in this arbor. All the ones who yelled murderer taking my money now.

"Do not Joe. She is a sensitive girl, do not fool her. They still remember about dad. It is different with him. He was exonerated, your father is still there. That is why I was not so enthusiastic about your coming. Honestly, I know how sensitive you are and I told Chris".

Mother is also trying to discourage her from continuing to stay there and of course, there is a background to this. There are a number of things which had happened due to which her father is in jail too. There is this story that Keller is recalling. He is reminiscing this and from that we get to know some snippets of what must have happened during that time after which Annie's father also had in jail.

As this play progresses we get to know that Annie's father and Joe Keller were partners and then something went really wrong; their factory was caught making certain things which were sub-standard. We will find this in the next passage, where Keller is also reminiscing this.

“The guy who sold cracked cylinder heads to the army air force. The guy who made twenty one P-40s crash in Australia. Kid, walking down the street that day I was guilty as hell. Except I was not and there as a court and there as a court paper in my pocket to prove I was not. I walked past the porches. The result? Fourteen months later I had one of the best shops in the state again, a respected man again, bigger than ever.”

We have the background and we also realize that there is some dichotomy between these two families. They are placed in very different ways now. One family has a father who has been jailed, the other one who had come out of the trauma and reestablished him and got his respectability back again. The crisis over here is also much more than Larry's death.

The crisis over here is also about how these two families have been perceived and about the baggage that they carry. We will again know that Annie's father always held Joe Keller was responsible for what went to wrong with them. He is seen as someone who pulled a first one and got out of this mess entirely and literally when he is got free as well.

This makes the relationship between them all the more problematic as well. We find that the unspeakability about Larry's death is in fact, the unspeakability about a lot of baggage that they are all carry. Here is also the point when we waken to realize that these are families who are also torn between their responsibilities towards their immediate families and responsibility towards the society.

The societal responsibility and a familiar responsibility they take a very different form all together over here and at various levels they are also they are overlapping. We find that they are pulling the families and pulling individuals apart in terms of the kind of loyalties, in terms of sometimes even misplaced royalties.

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Keller: Because...

Mother: (quickly to Keller) That's all, that's enough. (places her hand on her head) Come inside now, and have some tea with me. (She turns and goes up steps)

Keller: (to Ann) The one thing you ...

Mother: (sharply) **he's not dead, so there's no argument!** Now come!

Keller: (angry) In a minute! (Mother turns and goes into house) Now look, Annie...

Chris: All right, Dad, forget it.

Keller: No, she doesn't feel that way. Annie...

Chris: I'm sick of the whole subject, now cut it out.

Keller: You want her to go on like this? (to Ann) Those cylinder heads went into P-40s only. What's the matter with you? You know Larry never flew a P-40.

Chris: **So who flew those P-40s pigs?**

Keller: The man was a fool, but don't make a murderer out of him. You got no sense? Look what is does to her! (to Ann) Listen, you gotta appreciate what was doin' in that shop in the war. The both of you! It was a madhouse. Every half hour the Major callin' for cylinder heads, they were whippin' us with the telephone. The trucks were hauling them away hot, damn near. I mean just try to see it human, see it human. All of a sudden a batch comes out with a crack. That happens, that's the business. A fine, hairline crack. All right, so...so he's a little man, your father, always scared of loud voices. What'll the Major say? Half a day's production shot... What'll I say? You know what I mean? Human. (he pauses) So he take out his tools and he ...covers over the cracks. Alright, that's bad, it's wrong, but that's what a little man does. If I could have gone in that day I'd a told him...Junk 'em Steve, we can afford it. But alone he was afraid. But I know he meant no harm. He believed they'd hold up a hundred percent. That's a mistake, but it ain't murder. You musn't feel that way about him. You understand me? It ain't right.

Ann: (she regards him a moment) Joe, Let's forget it.

Keller: Annie, the day the news came out about Larry he was in the next cell to mine...Dad. And he cried, Annie...he cried half the night.

Ann: (touched) He shoulda cried all night. (slight pause)

Keller: (almost angered) Annie, I do not understand why you ...!

Chris: (breaking in, with nervous urgency) Are you going to stop it?

Ann: Don't yell at him. He just wants everybody happy.



We get to know that Annie has not been able to forgive her father for what had happened. There is this brief conversation where mother is again coming back to this with this argument that Larry is not dead and that and that Annie's father or Chris's father nobody was responsible for that. It is very briefly where Keller is saying, "Those cylinder heads went in went into P-40s only. What is the matter with you? Larry never flew a P-40. So, who flew those P-40s pigs?"

We find that here there is a fundamental difference between the way the father approaches this issue and the way Chris approaches this issue. For Keller it is just enough for him in his mind to believe that his son Larry he never flew a P-40 and the floor cylinders had gone into those P-40s which Larry never flew. For Chris, that does not make it easier in any way and which is why he is asking this oft quoted line from this play. "Who flew those P-40s pigs?"


Here the discussion is about Annie's father and Keller is trying to explain, "The man was a fool, but do not make a murderer out of him. You got no sense? Look what is does to

her. Listen you got to appreciate what he was doing in that shop in the war. The both of you, it was a madhouse and every half an hour the major calling for cylinder heads”.

It is about there is some pressure of the industry, the pressure of the market condition that they had that is what they are blaming now after this the cracked cylinder heads which went into the P-40s had claimed the lives of about 20 young men. They are also recalling the night when this news came to them and how Chris’s father Keller and Annie’s father had spent the night when in two adjacent cells and he is also recalling how he cried all night.

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<p>Keller: (claps her around the waist, smiling) That's my sentiments. Can you stand steak?</p> <p>Chris: And champagne?</p> <p>Keller: Now you're operatin' I'll call Swanson's for a table! Big time tonight, Annie!</p> <p>Ann: Can't scare me.</p> <p>Keller: (to Chris, pointing at Ann) I like that girl. Wrap her up. (they laugh. Goes up porch) You got nice legs, Annie! ... I want to see everybody drunk tonight. (pointing at Chris) Look at him, he's bluzhin' (He exits, laughing, into the house).</p> <p>Chris: (calling after him) Drink your tea, Casanova. (he turns to Ann) Isn't he a great guy?</p> <p>Ann: You're the only one I know who loves his parents!</p> <p>Chris: I know. It went out of style, didn't it?</p> <p>Ann: (with a sudden touch of sadness) It's all right. It's a good thing. (She looks about) You know? It's lovely here. The air is sweet.</p> <p>Chris: (hopefully) You're not sorry you came?</p> <p>Ann: Not sorry, no. But I'm ... not going to stay.</p> <p>Chris: Why?</p> <p>Ann: In the first place, your mother as much as told me to go.</p> <p>Chris: Well...</p> <p>Ann: You saw that... and then you... You've been kind of...</p> <p>Chris: What?</p> <p>Ann: Well... kind of embarrassed ever since I got here.</p> <p>Chris: The trouble is I planned on kind of sneaking up on you over a period of a week or so. But they take it for granted that we're all set.</p> <p>Ann: I know they would. Your mother anyway.</p>	<p>Chris: How did you know?</p> <p>Ann: From her point of view, why else would I come?</p> <p>Chris: Well... would you want to? (Ann still studies him) I guess you know this is why I asked you to come.</p>
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We find that Annie is less sympathetic towards her father at this point and she even thinks that Chris is among the very few left who still love the parents. “You are the only one I know who loves his parents. It went out of style, is not it? It is alright, it is a good thing”. And she is then with this background it becomes easier to understand this play and the characters from a slightly different point of view all together.


We find that it is not just emotional crisis, it is not just the difficulty of relationships that these characters are facing, but more importantly they are dealing with a major national crisis in which their families were also a part of. In that sense they are trying to find the balance between these two two different pulls, the familiar responsibility and the societal responsibility. We find that the market conditions are not in the least conducive to solve this dichotomy.

Towards the end of the play also we realize that whatever they had to do they ended up doing though inadvertently was because of the pressure of the market and there was also this illusion that this is something that they were doing for the family. Joe Keller always had this in his mind that he was doing all of this for his family, while his family his son, his wife, they all fail to understand how the notion of the family like stops with just the immediate family.

How the notion of humanitarian concerns stop with just the boundaries of the family, which is why the title of the play *All My Sons* are all 40-20 young man who flew those P-40s and died. The play ends with this notion that they all are somebody's children and that since by extension they are all the children of this land. They all become by extension Joe Keller's sons though his own son did not really fly a P-40.

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<p>Chris: Yes. I suppose I have been. But it's going from me.</p> <p>Anne: You've got to tell me...</p> <p>Chris: I don't know how to start. (He takes her hand)</p> <p>Anne: It wouldn't work this way. (Slight pause)</p> <p>Chris: (speaks quietly, factually at first) It's all mixed up with so many other things... You remember, overseas; I was in command of a company.</p> <p>Anne: Yeah, sure.</p> <p>Chris: Well, I lost them.</p> <p>Anne: How many?</p> <p>Chris: Just about all.</p> <p>Anne: Oh, gee!</p> <p>Chris: It take a little time to toss that off. Because they weren't just men. For instance, one time it'd been raining several days and this kid came to me, and gave me his last pair of dry socks. Put them in my pocket. That's only a little thing... but... That's the kind of guys I had. They didn't die... They killed themselves for each other. I mean that exactly, a little more selfish and they'd've been here today. And I got an idea... watching them go down. Everything was being destroyed, see, but it seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of... responsibility. Man for man. You understand me? To show that, to bring that onto the earth again like some kind of a monument and everyone would feel it standing there, behind him, and it would make a difference to him. (pause) And then I came home and it was incredible. ... there was no meaning in it here. The whole thing to them was a kind of a... bus accident. I went to work with Dad, and that rat rised again. I felt... what you said... ashamed somehow. Because nobody was chaged at all. It seemed to make suckers out of a lot of guys. I felt wrong to be alive, to open the bank-book, to drive the new car, to see the new refrigerator. I mean you can take those things out of a war, but when you drive that car you've got to know that it came out of the love a man can have for a man, you've got to be a little better because of that. Otherwise what you have is really loot, and there's blood on it. I didn't want to take any of it. And I guess that included you.</p> <p>Anne: And you still feel that way?</p>	<p>Chris: I want you know, Annie.</p> <p>Anne: Because you mustn't feel that way any more. Because you have a right to whatever you have. Everything, Chris, understand that? To me, too... And the money, there's nothing wrong in your money. Your father put hundreds of planes in the air, you should be proud. A man should be paid for that.</p> <p>Chris: Oh Annie, Annie... I'm going to make a fortune for you!</p>
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In this play, we find that Annie's role is largely instrumental. She Annie's role is more like a trigger. It operates in such ways that it exposes the kind of people they all are, it also forces them to come to terms with the realities, the various realities and sometimes the various illusions that they have chosen to live with. Annie is also very quick to identify that there is a sort of an embarrassment that is there in Chris whenever she is approaching Annie.

She it at that point Chris confesses that he is indeed embarrassed about the money that he is his father has been making, the money in which he is also partaking. Because as he

says as she says, "I went to work with dad and that rat-race again. I felt what you said ashamed somehow". Somewhere we have begun to get the sense that he is in many ways uncomfortable with the consumer conditions, with the market conditions, with the industrial conditions through which his family has been making money.

Though at this point of time at this stage in the play, though he believes that his father did not really do anything wrong, he feels that there is something wrong in him being a part of that entire establishment which is why and it is not that his father's shop and his father's industry and those establishments. He finds that there is fundamentally something wrong with most of these establishments where the focus is on making money.

We will also find while interacting with him Sue points out her husband, the doctor Jim he also finds that there is something wrong in the current pursuit and he wants to spend more of his time on medical research and move away from the money making medical practice that he is into.

This ideal quality, the quality of idealism which is there in Chris makes it difficult not just for himself, but also for the people around him. We will very soon find that there is a certain validity in Chris feeling that way, because the way turns out toward the way things turn out towards the end of the play we find that sort of an idealism it is not misplaced at all. It is entirely rightly place and it has a right sort of responses and effects in the play as well.


Ann Annie seems to be more sympathetic at this stage towards Joe Keller and says, "Because you must not feel that way anymore. Because you have a right to whatever you have. Everything Chris, understand that? To me, to me too and the money, there is nothing wrong in your money. Your father put hundreds of planes in the air, you should be proud. A man should be paid for that".

Through these different little snippets that we get from different these different segments of the play we understand that this is almost like a rags to richer story, with the major crisis in the middle. Joe Keller here comes across as a man who has work very hard to reach where he has now and he is also earned a lot of respectability.

He is a man who has put hundreds of planes in the air and in between in his firm something went wrong, whereas handful of cracked cylinders also were part of this production. This had presumably cause the death of about 20 young men. Though at this stage in the play, we do not find that Chris is, we do not find that Joe Keller is implicate than any of these. We do find the kind of baggage, the guilt that he is carrying with him.

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<p>Keller: (offstage) Hello ... Yes. Sure.</p> <p>Ann: (laughing softly) What'll I do with a fortune? (they kiss. Keller enters from house)</p> <p>Keller: (thumping toward house) Hey, Ann, your brother... (They step apart shyly. Keller comes down, and wryly) What's this, Labor Day?</p> <p>Chris: (waving him away, knowing the kidding will be endless) All right, all right.</p> <p>Ann: You shouldn't burst out like that.</p> <p>Keller: Well, nobody told me it was Labor Day. (looks around) Where's the hot dogs?</p> <p>Chris: (loving it) All right. You said it once.</p> <p>Keller: Well, as long as I know it's Labor Day from now on, I'll wear a bell around my neck.</p> <p>Ann: (affectionately) He's so subtle!</p> <p>Chris: George Bernard Shaw as an elephant.</p> <p>Keller: George! ...Hey, you kissed it out of my head ...your brother's on the phone.</p> <p>Ann: (surprised) My brother?</p> <p>Keller: Yeah, George. Long distance.</p> <p>Ann: What's the matter, is anything wrong?</p> <p>Keller: I don't know, Kate's talking to him. Hurry up, she'll cost him five dollars.</p> <p>Ann: (takes a steep upstage, then comes down toward Chris) I wonder if we ought to tell your mother yet? I mean I'm not very good in an argument.</p> <p>Chris: We'll wait till tonight. After dinner. Now don't get tense, just leave it to me.</p> <p>Keller: What're you telling her?</p> <p>Chris: Go ahead, Ann. (With misgivings, Ann goes up and into house.) We're getting married. Dad. (Keller nods indecisively) Well, don't you say anything?</p> <p>Keller: (distracted) I'm glad, Chris, I'm just... George is calling from Columbus.</p>	<p>Chris: Columbus!</p> <p>Keller: Did Annie tell you he was going to see his father today?</p> <p>Chris: No, I don't think she knew anything about it.</p> <p>Keller: (asking uncomfortably) Chris! You... you think you know her pretty good?</p>
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And by extension that is a reason why Chris is also feeling extremely bad about being part of this industry, being partaking in the fortune in the money that he is been making.

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<p>Chris: (hurt and apprehensive) What kind of question?</p> <p>Keller: I'm just wondering. All these years George don't go to see his father. Suddenly he goes... and she comes here.</p> <p>Chris: Well, what about it?</p> <p>Keller: It's crazy, but it comes to my mind. She don't hold nothin' against me, does she?</p> <p>Chris: (angry) I don't know what you're talking about.</p> <p>Keller: (a little more combatively) I'm just talkin' 'to his last day in court the man blamed it all on me... and his is his daughter. I mean if she was sent here to find out something?</p> <p>Chris: (angered) Why? What's there to find out?</p> <p>Ann: (on phone, offstage) Why are you so excited, George? What happened there?</p> <p>Keller: I mean if they want to open up the case again, for the nuisance value, to hurt us?</p> <p>Chris: Dad... how could you think that of her?</p> <p>Ann: (still on the phone) But what did he say to you, for God's sake?</p> <p>Keller: It couldn't be, heh. You know.</p> <p>Chris: Dad, you amaze me...</p> <p>Keller: (breaking in) All right, forget it. (with great force, moving about) I want a clean start for you, Chris. I want a new sign over the plant... Christopher Keller, Incorporated.</p> <p>Chris: (a little uneasily) I. O. Keller is good enough.</p> <p>Keller: We'll talk about it. I'm going to build you a house, stone, with a driveway from the road. I want you to spread out, Chris, I want you to use what I made for you. (he is close to him now) I mean, with my, Chris, without shame... with you.</p> <p>Chris: (touched) I will, Dad.</p> <p>Keller: (with deep emotion) Say it to me.</p> <p>Chris: Why?</p>	<p>Chris: Why?</p> <p>Keller: Because sometimes I think you're... ashamed of the money.</p> <p>Chris: No, don't feel that.</p> <p>Keller: Because it's good money, there's nothing wrong with that money.</p>
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They continue to have this conversation a bit later Keller and Chris here father and son they also have this conversation about Chris being ashamed of this money, “Because sometimes I think you are ashamed of the money. No, do not feel that. Because it is good money, there is nothing wrong with that money”.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:59)

Chris: (a little frightened) Dad, you don't have to tell me this.

Keller: (with overriding affection and self-confidence now. He grips Chris by the back of the neck, and with laughter between his determined jaws) Look, Chris, I'll go to work on Mother for you. We'll get her so drunk tonight we'll all get married. (steps away, with a wide gesture of his arm) There's gonna be a wedding, kid, like there never was seen! Champagne, tuxedos...

He breaks off as Ann's voice comes out loud from the house where she is still talking on the phone.

Ann: Simply because when you get excited you don't control yourself... (Mother comes out of house) Well, what did he tell you for God's sake? (Pause) All right, come then. (Pause) Yes, they'll all be here. Nobody's running away from you. And try to get hold of yourself, will you? (Pause.) All right, all right. Goodbye.

There is a brief pause as Ann hangs up receiver, then comes out of kitchen.

Chris: Something happens?

Keller: He's coming here?

Ann: On the seven o'clock. He's in Columbus. (To Mother) I told him it would be all right.

Keller: Sure, fine! Your father took sick?

Ann: (mystified) No, George didn't say he was sick. L. (Shaking it off) I don't know, I suppose it's something stupid, you know my brother... (She comes to Chris) Let's go for a drive, or something...

Chris: Sure. Give me the keys, Dad.

Mother: Drive through the park. It's beautiful now.

Chris: Come on, Ann, (to them) Be back right away.

Ann: (as she and Chris exit up driveway) See you.

Mother comes down toward Keller, her eyes fixed on him.


Keller: Take your time, (to Mother) What does George want?

Mother: He's been in Columbus since this morning with Steve. He's gotta see Annie right away, he says.

Keller: What for?

Mother: I don't know. (She speaks with warning) He's a lawyer now, Joe. George is a lawyer. All these years he never even sent a postcard to Steve. Since he got back from the war, not a postcard.

Keller: So what?



These conversations till the end of the play has a very different implication all together. We realize from where Chris is coming from and we also know the kind of validation, the legitimacy that Joe Keller is seeking in order to prove in order to prove at least to himself and his family that his money is good money that it is not the kind of money that one needs to be ashamed of.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:26)

Mother: (her tension breaking out) Suddenly he takes an airplane from New York to see him. An airplane!

Keller: Well? So?

Mother: (trembling) Why?

Keller: I don't read minds. Do you?

Mother: Why, Joe? What has Steve suddenly got to tell him that he takes an airplane to see him?

Keller: What do I care what Steve's got to tell him?

Mother: You're sure, Joe?

Keller: (frightened, but angry) Yes, I'm sure.

Mother: (sits stiffly in a chair) Be smart now, Joe. The boy is coming. Be smart.

Keller: (desperately) Once and for all, did you hear what I said? I said I'm sure!

Mother: (nods weakly) All right, Joe. (he straightens up) Just... be smart.

Keller, in hopeless fury, looks at her, turns around, goes up to porch and into house, slamming screen door violently behind him. Mother sits in chair downstage, stiffly, staring, seeing.

CURTAIN.

As twilight falls, that evening.

On the rise, Chris is **discovered sawing the broken-off tree, leaving stump standing alone**. He is dressed in good pants, white shoes, but without a shirt. He disappears with tree up the alley when Mother appears on porch. She comes down and stands watching him. She has on a dressing gown, carries a tray of grape juice drink in a pitcher, and glasses with sprigs of mint in them.

Mother: (Calling up alley) Did you have to put on good pants to do that? (she comes downstage and puts tray on table in the arbor. Then looks around uneasily, then feels pitcher for coolness. Chris enters from alley brushing off his hands) You notice there more light with that thing gone?

Chris: My aren't you dressing?

Mother: It's suffocating upstairs. I made a grape drink for George. He always liked grape. Come and have some.

Chris: (impatently) Well, come on, get dressed. And what's Dad sleeping so much for? (he goes to table and pours a glass of juice)



Thus, when the first act end we have a knowledge of the audience, of the many eventful things which had happened both in Joe Keller's family and as well as in Annie's family. We also know the implications and the complicated ways in which their lives are intertwined with each other.

Here are two young people Chris and Annie who are about who would like to get married very soon, but their families are also torn apart in very different ways in very significant ways to such an extent that one has a respectable position in the society while the other is in. When the Act 1 is drawing to an end, we also realize that George, who is Annie's brother and a lawyer is now visiting their father in jail.

This knowledge is seen as a turning point in the play and this knowledge is received with a lot of trepidation by mother and by the Keller family all together. Chris even at a later point tries to take a more rational stands over here, but Keller and Kate they are both extremely terrified of the fact that all of a sudden after these many years George has chosen to visit Annie's father in jail their father in jail.

When the curtain falls it is in a very in a very dark mood that the curtain falls at the end of this Act 1. And Act 2 begins at twilight, the same evening and we find that Chris is discovered sawing the broken off tree leaving stump standing alone. This is very symbolic because at the beginning of Act 2 it we get to know that we are going the audience will be given more information.

The audience will now know more about Larry's death. Chris is also just about to discover what exactly went wrong with Larry and how is that connected in very intricate ways with the unspeakability associated with his death in that in their family.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:50)

Mother: To his last day in court Steve never gave up the idea that Dad made him do it. If they're going to **open the case again**, I won't live through it.

Chris: George is just a damn fool, Mother. How can you take him seriously?

Mother: **That family hates us. Maybe even Annie.**

Chris: Oh, now, Mother...

Mother: You think just because you like everybody, they like you!

Chris: All right, stop working yourself up. Just leave everything to me.

Mother: When George goes home tell her to go with him.

Chris: (noncommittally) Don't worry about Annie.

Mother: Steve is her father, too.

Chris: Are you going to cut it out? Now, come.

Mother: (going onstage with him) You don't realize how people can hate, Chris, they can hate so much they'll tear the world to pieces.

Ann, dressed up, appears on the porch.

Chris: Look! She's dressed already. (As he and Mother mount porch) I've just got to put on a shirt.

Ann: (in a preoccupied way) Are you feeling well, Kate?

Mother: What's the difference, dear. There are certain people, y'know, the sicker they get, the longer they live. (She goes into the house)

Chris: You look nice.

Ann: We're going to tell her tonight.

Chris: Absolutely, don't worry about it.

Ann: I wish we could tell her now. I can't stand scheming. My stomach gets hard.

Chris: It's not scheming, we'll just get her in a better mood.

Mother: (offstage, in the house) Joe, are you going to sleep all day!

Ann: (laughing) The only one who's relaxed is your father. He's fast asleep.

Chris: I'm relaxed.

Ann: Are you?



During that morning they are all waiting with a lot of trepidation for George to arrive and Annie and Chris are yet to formally tell mother that they would like to get married and in the middle of all this we find that Joe Keller is peacefully sleeping as well. Mother begins to have these skeptical thoughts about Annie and his her family that why did she show up all of a sudden from New York after these many years after all these three long years. It is coincidentally around the same time that George visiting their father in prison.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:31)

Chris: Look. (He holds out his hand and makes it shake.) Let me know when George gets here.

He goes into the house. Ann moves aimlessly, and then is drawn toward tree stump. She goes to it, hastily touches broken top in the hush of her thoughts. Offstage Lydia calls, "Johnny! Come get your supper!" Sue enters, and halts, seeing Ann.

Sue: Is my husband...?

Ann: (turns, startled) Oh!

Sue: I'm terribly sorry.

Ann: It's all right, I... I'm jst a little silly about the dark.

Sue: (looks about) It's getting dark.

Ann: Are you looking for your husband?

Sue: As usual. (laughs tiredly) He spends so much time here, they'll be charging him rent.

Ann: Nobody was dressed so he drove over to the depot to pick up my brother.

Sue: Oh, your brother's in?

Ann: Yeah, they ought to be here any minute now. Will you have a cold drink?

Sue: I will, thanks. (Ann goes to table and pours) My husband. Too hot to drive me to the beach. Men are like little boys... for the neighbors they'll always cut the grass.

Ann: **People like to do things for the kellers. Seen that way since I can remember.**

Sue: It's amazing. I guess your brother's coming to give you away, huh?

Ann: (giving her drink) I don't know. I suppose.

Sue: You must be all nerved up.

Ann: It's always a problem getting yourself married, isn't it?

Sue: That depends on your shape, of course. I don't see why you should have had a problem.

Ann: I've had chances...



They begin to think of all kinds of things that could potentially go wrong and we do find that there is a growing discomfort in this entire setting. Sue and Ann between have a brief discussion where they talk about Chris which is again not a very pleasant conversation.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:52)

Ann: It wouldn't matter to me.

Sue: You'd be surprised. It makes all the difference. I married an intern. On my salary. And that was bad, because as soon as a woman supports a man he owes her something. **You can't expect owe somebody without respecting them.** (Ann laughs) That's true, you know.

Ann: Underneath, I think the doctor is very devoted.

Sue: Oh, certainly. But it's bad when a man always sees the bars in front of him. Jim thinks he's in jail all the time.

Ann: Oh...

Sue: That's why I've been intending to ask you a small favor, Ann. It's something very important to me.

Ann: Certainly, if I can do it.

Sue: You can. When you take up housekeeping, try to find a place away from here.

Ann: Are you feeling?

Sue: I'm very serious. **My husband is unhappy with Chris around.**

Ann: How is that?

Sue: Jim's a successful doctor. But he's got an idea he'd like to do medical research. Discover things. You see?

Ann: Well, isn't that good?

Sue: Research pays twenty five dollars a week minus laundering the hair shirt. You've got to give up your life to go into it.

Ann: How does Chris...

Sue: (with growing feeling) **Chris makes people want to be better than it's possible to be.** He does that to people.

Ann: Is that bad?

Sue: My husband has a family, dear. Everytime he has a session with Chris he feels as though he's compromising by not giving up everything for research. As though Chris or anybody else isn't compromising. It happens with Jim every couple of years. He meets a man and makes a statue out of him.

Ann: Maybe he's right. I don't mean that Chris is a statue, but...

Sue: Now darling, you know he's not right.



Sue has this concern that Chris is making her husband unhappy. "My husband is unhappy with Chris around". There is something very ironic about this because they seem to be getting along very well to Chris and Jim.


But Sue says, “My husband is unhappy with Chris around”. And while giving the reason for this we also understand the kind of person Chris is, the kind of value system in which he is rooted and the many emotional turmoil that come from that. Sue says, “Chris makes people want to be better than it is possible to be”.

We see that Chris is also the kind of person who would ideally project certain qualities onto people even when they do not have it, which is why he fails to see what was wrong with his own family. He fails to see what his father had done and he also fails to see the complicated ways in which things had happened with the cracked cylinder and after the way in which only one of the partners were imprisoned and how his father continue to regain his respectability and continue to live with his life.

He fails to see anything more to the fact that the mother did not want to accept the fact that Larry was dead, which is why the mother also wonders like why Chris never really knew what had happened. Because they all thought that they all had this inkling of a feeling that perhaps he knew exactly what had happened and he also chose to ignore things and he also chose to overlook things just all the others had.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:30)

Ann: I don't agree with you, Chris...	Chris: I thought George came.
Sue: Let's face it, dear. Chris is working with his father, isn't he? He's taking money out of that business every week in the year.	Sue: No, it was just us.
Ann: What of it?	Chris: (coming down to them) Susie, do me a favor, heh? Go up to Mother and see if you can calm her. She's all worked up.
Sue: You ask me what of it?	
Ann: I certainly do. (She seems about to burst out) You oughtn't cast aspersions like that, I'm surprised at you.	
Sue: You're surprised at me!	
Ann: He'd never take five cents out of that plant if there was anything wrong with it.	
Sue: You know that.	
Ann: I know it. I resent everything you've said.	
Sue: (moving toward her) You know what I resent, dear?	
Ann: Please, I don't want to argue.	
Sue: I resent living next to the Holy Family. It makes me look like a bum, you understand?	
Ann: I can't do anything about that.	
Sue: Who is he to ruin a man's life? Everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail.	
Ann: That's not true!	
Sue: Then why don't you go out and talk to people? Go on, talk to them. There's not a person on the block who doesn't know the truth.	
Ann: That's a lie. People come here all the time for cards and...	
Sue: So what? They give him credit for being smart. I do, too, I've got nothing against Joe. But if Chris wants people to put on the hair shirt let him take off the broadcloth. He's driving my husband crazy with that Chris's (Chris's) of his and I'm at the end of my rope on it! (Chris enters on porch, wearing shirt and tie now. She turns quickly, hearing. With a smile) Hello, darling. How's Mother?	



Chris comes across and here when Sue's referring to Chris look at the way she refers to the family. “I resent living next to the Holy Family. Who is he to ruin a man's life? Everybody knows”. Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail and later he refers to Chris's


idealism as a phony idealism. “He is driving my husband crazy with that phony idealism of his and I am at the end of my rope on it”.

We get to know how the neighborhood refers to them. Right at the beginning even when Annie landed over there she started asking whether neighborhood is still talking about them. So, that time Chris chose to ignore it and maybe he willingly chose to overlook the way in which these families were continuing to be talked about.

When Sue says that everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail, it’s very evident that everybody is still talking about them that the respectability is very superficial. It is only because now they have money things have become slightly easier for Keller’s because people do not talk about them on their face. But clearly that is not the case. We get to know almost everyone continues to be talking about them and Chris in some sense chooses to overlook that entirely.

(Refer Slide Time: 25:45)

<p>Sue: She still doesn't know about you two?</p> <p>Chris: (laughs a little) Well, she senses it, I guess. You know my mother.</p> <p>Sue: (going up to porch) Oh, yeah, she's psychic.</p> <p>Chris: Maybe there's something in the medicine chest.</p> <p>Sue: I'll give her one of everything. (on porch) Don't worry about Kate... couple of drinks, dance her around a little... She'll love Ann. (To Ann) Because you're the female version of him. (Chris laughs) Don't be alarmed, I said version. (She goes into house)</p> <p>Chris: Interesting woman, isn't she?</p> <p>Ann: Yeah, she's very interesting.</p> <p>Chris: She's a great nurse, you know, she...</p> <p>Ann: (in tension, but trying to control it) Are you still doing that?</p> <p>Chris: (sensing something wrong, but still smiling) Doing what?</p> <p>Ann: As soon as you get to know somebody you find a distinction for them. How do you know she's a great nurse?</p> <p>Chris: What's the matter, Ann?</p> <p>Ann: The woman hates you. She despises you!</p> <p>Chris: Hey... What's hit you?</p> <p>Ann: Gee, Chris...</p> <p>Chris: What happened here?</p> <p>Ann: You never... Why didn't you tell me?</p> <p>Chris: Tell you what?</p> <p>Ann: She says they think Joe is guilty.</p> <p>Chris: What difference does it make what they think?</p>	<p>Ann: I don't care what they think, I just don't understand why you took the trouble to deny it. You said it was all forgotten.</p> <p>Chris: I didn't want you to feel there was anything wrong in you coming here, that's all. I know a lot of people think my father was guilty, and I assumed there might be some question in your mind.</p>
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This is a very faintly pointed out by Annie too when Chris say something nice about Sue. Annie immediately says, “As soon as you get to know somebody you find a distinction for them. How do she is a great nurse?” This need to find something ideal in people that seems to be quite he seems to be hardwired to think that way to find something ideal in people, to project a sense of idealism in everywhere that he is meeting.

That seems to be the only way in which he can negotiate around with negotiate with the world around him. Because in his mind he is ashamed of, he is embarrassed of the kind of money that he is inheriting that he is partaking, because he is part of his father's business. And in order to perhaps salvage him of that he is also seeing things in people, seeing qualities in people that they do not have.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:44)

Ann: But I never once suspected him.	Chris: The great row!
Chris: Nobody says it.	Keller: What is that, rose?
Ann: Chris, I know how much you love him, but it could never...	Chris: It's French.
Chris: Do you think I could forgive him if he'd done that thing?	Keller: Don't talk dirty. (they laugh)
Ann: I'm not here out of blue sky, Chris. I turned my back on my father, if there's anything wrong here now...	
Chris: I know that, Ann.	
Ann: George is coming from Dad, and I don't think it's with a blessing.	
Chris: He's welcome here. You've got nothing to fear from George.	
Ann: Tell me that... just tell me that.	
Chris: The man is innocent, Ann. Remember he was falsely accused once and it put him through hell. How would you behave if you were faced with the same thing again? Annie, believe me, there's nothing wrong for you here, believe me, kid.	
Ann: All right, Chris, all right. (They embrace as Keller appears quietly on the porch. Ann simply studies him)	
Keller: Every time I come out here it looks like Playland! (they break and laugh in embarrassment)	
Chris: I thought you were going to shave?	
Keller: (sitting on bench) In a minute. I just woke up, I can't see nothing!	
Ann: You look shaved.	
Keller: Oh, no. (massages his jaw) Gotta be extra special tonight. Big night, Annie. So how's it feel to be a married woman?	
Ann: (laughs) I don't know, yet.	
Keller: (to Chris) What's the matter, you slippin'? (He takes a little box of apples from under the bench as they talk)	



Before we wrap up this discussion for today Chris very clearly tells Annie that, “Do you think I could forgive him if he had done that thing”. In his mind, his father is completely innocent. In his mind in Chris's mind, Joe Keller has not been part of the entire exercise at all. He was he has absolutely in no role in causing the death of the 20 young men who were flying the P-40s which also had cracked cylinders.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:19)

Chris: (to Ann) You ever meet a bigger ignoramus?

Keller: Well, somebody's got to make a living.

Ann: (as they laugh) That's telling him.

Keller: I don't know, everybody's gettin' so Goddam educated in this country there'll be nobody to take away the garbage. (they laugh) It's gettin' so the only dumb ones left are the bosses.

Ann: You're not so dumb, Joe.

Keller: I know, but you go into our plant, for instance. I got so many lieutenants, majors and colonels that I'm ashamed to ask somebody to sweep the floor. I gotta be careful I'll insult somebody. No kiddin'. It's a tragedy: you stand on the street today and spit, you're gonna hit a college man.

Chris: Well, don't spit.

Keller: (breaks the apple in half, passing it to Ann and Chris) I mean to say, it's comin' to a pass. (he takes a breath) I been thinkin', Annie... your brother, George. I been thinkin' about your brother George. When he comes I like you to brooch something to him.

Chris: Brooch.

Keller: What's the matter with brooch?

Chris: (smiling) It's not English.

Keller: (when I when to night school) it was brooch.

Ann: (laughing) Well, in day school it's brooch.

Keller: Don't surround me, will you? Seriously, Ann... You say he's not well. George, I been thinkin', why should be know himself out in New York with that cut-throat competition, when I got so many friends here... I'm very friendly with some big lawyers in town. I could set George up here.

Ann: That's awfully nice of you, Joe.

Keller: No, kid, it ain't nice of me. I want you to understand me. I'm thinking of Chris. (slight pause) See... this is what I mean. You get older, you want to feel that you... accomplished something. My only accomplishment is my son. I ain't brany. That's all I accomplished. Now, a year, eighteen months, your father'll be a free man. Who is he going to come to, Annie? His baby. You. He'll come, old, mad, into your house.

Ann: That can't matter any more, Joe.

Keller: I don't what that to come between us. (gestures between Chris and himself)

Ann: I can only tell you that that could never happen.



It is very clear, it is a very black and white image in his mind, a much uncomplicated image in his mind unlike Keller and his wife Kate. We also get to know in between their conversations that Keller went to night school and he is someone who really tried, worked hard to reach where he has. And which is why perhaps he tries harder to preserve what he had very painstakingly achieved. He also time and again mention this about his son that his only accomplishment is his son.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:53)

Keller: You're in love now, Annie, but believe me, I'm older than you and I know... a daughter is a daughter, and a father is a father. And it could happen. (he pauses) I like you and George to go to him in prison and tell him... "Dad, Joe wants to bring you into the business when you get out."

Ann: (surprised, even shocked) You'd have him as a partner?

Keller: No, no partner. A good job. (pause. He sees she is shocked, a little mystified. He gets up, speaks more nervously) I want him to know that when he gets out he's got a place waitin' for him. It'll take his bitterness away. To know you got a place...

Ann: Joe, you owe him nothing.

Keller: I owe him a good kick in the teeth, but he's your father.

Chris: Then kick him in the teeth! I don't want him in the plant, so that's that! You understand? And besides, don't talk about him like that. People misunderstand you!

Keller: And (Ann's) understand why she has to stretch the man.

Chris: Well, it's her father if she feels...

Keller: No, no.

Chris: (almost angrily) What's it to you? Why...?

Keller: (a commanding outburst in high nervousness) A father is a father! (as though the outburst had revealed him, he looks about, wanting to retract it. His hand goes to his cheek.) I better... I better shave. (He turns and a smile is on his face, to Ann) I didn't mean to yell at you, Annie.

Ann: Let's forget the whole thing, Joe.

Keller: Right, (to Chris) She's likeable.

Chris: (a little peevish at the man's stupidity) Shave, will you?

Keller: Right again.

As he turns to porch Lydia comes hurrying from her house.

Lydia: I forget all about it. (Seeing Chris and Ann) Hija. (To Joe) I promised to fix Kate's hair for tonight. Did she comb it yet?

Keller: Always a smile, hey, Lydia?

Lydia: Sure, why not?

Keller: (going up on porch) Come on up and comb my Katie's hair. (Lydia goes up on porch) She's got a big night, make her beautiful.




And later on also him in when he keeps on defending fatherhood, later we realize that it is actually his own fatherhood that he is defending. He is trying to convince Ann to forgive her father saying, "I want him to know that when he is he gets out he is got a

place waiting for him”. And also when he says, “I do not understand why she has to crucify the man a father is a father”. And this is in some form trying to justify himself. Keller here is actually justifying himself this is something we get to know however, only towards the end of the play.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:29)


<p>George: Because his father destroyed your family.</p> <p>Chris: Now look, George...</p> <p>George: Cut it short, Chris. Tell her to come home with me. Let's not argue, you know what I've got to say.</p> <p>Chris: George, you don't want to be the voice of God, do you?</p> <p>George: I'm...</p> <p>Chris: That's been your trouble all your life, George, you dive into things. What kind of statement is that to make? You're a big boy now.</p> <p>George: I'm a big boy now.</p> <p>Chris: Don't come bulling in here. If you've got something to say, be civilized about it.</p> <p>George: Don't civilize me!</p> <p>Ann: Shhh!</p> <p>Chris: (ready to hit him) Are you going to talk like a grown man or aren't you?</p> <p>Ann: (quickly, to forestall an outburst) Sit down, dear. Don't be angry, what's the matter? (He allows her to seat him, looking at her) Now what happened? You kissed me when I left, now you...</p> <p>George: (breathlessly) My life turned upside down since then. I couldn't go back to work when you left. I wanted to go to Dad and tell him you were going to be married. It seemed impossible not to tell him. He loved you so much. (He pauses) Annie... we did a terrible thing. We can never be forgiven. Not even to send him a card at Christmas. I didn't see him once since I got home from the war! Annie, you don't know what was done to that man. You don't know what happened.</p> <p>Ann: (afraid) Of course I know.</p> <p>George: You can't know, you wouldn't be here. Dad came to work that day. The night foreman came to him and showed him the cylinder heads... they were coming out of the process with defects. There was something wrong with the process. So Dad went directly to the phone and called here and told Joe to come down right away. But the morning passed. No sign of Joe. So Dad called again. By this time he had over a hundred defectives. The Army was screaming for stuff and Dad didn't have anything to ship.</p>	<p>So Joe told him... on the phone he told him to weld, cover up the cracks in any way he could, and ship them out.</p> <p>Chris: Are you through now?</p> <p>George: (surging back at him) I'm not through now! (Back to Ann) Dad was afraid. He wanted Joe there. He was going to do it. But Joe can't come down... He's sick. And he suddenly gets the flu. Suddenly! But</p>
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And as we move forward we find that halfway through the second act George is visiting, he is meeting the family.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:39)

<p>George: Yeah, toward the end of the day. What're you, big executive now?</p> <p>Chris: Just kind of medium. How's the law?</p> <p>George: I don't know. When I was studying in the hospital it seemed sensible, but outside there doesn't seem to be much of a law. The trees got thick, didn't they? (points to stump) What's that?</p> <p>Chris: Blew down last night. We had it there for Larry. You know.</p> <p>George: Why, afraid you'll forget him?</p> <p>Chris: (starts for George) What kind of remark is that?</p> <p>Ann: (breaking in, putting a restraining hand of Chris) When did you start wearing a hat?</p> <p>George: (discovers hat in his hand) Today. From now on I decided to look like a lawyer, anyway. (He hold it up to her) Don't you recognize it?</p> <p>Ann: Why? Where...?</p> <p>George: Your father's... He asked me to wear it.</p> <p>Ann: How is he?</p> <p>George: He got smaller.</p> <p>Ann: Smaller?</p> <p>George: Yeah, little. (holds out his hand to measure) He's a little man. That's what happens to suckers, you know. It's good I want to him in time... another year there'd be nothing left but his smell.</p> <p>Chris: What's the matter, George, what's the trouble?</p> <p>George: The trouble? The trouble is when you make suckers out of people once, you shouldn't try to do it twice.</p> <p>Chris: What does that mean?</p> <p>George: (to Ann) You're not married yet, are you?</p> <p>Ann: George, will you sit down and stop...?</p>	<p>George: Are you married yet?</p> <p>Ann: No, I'm not married yet.</p> <p>George: You're not going to marry him.</p> <p>Ann: Why am I not going to marry him?</p>
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There it is almost like a court trial situation when we get to know about the different facts and the different details from different characters over here and the truth is out there for us to see towards the end of the play. Towards the end of the play, we also find that there is a kind of idealism which gets foregrounded over there. A very ideal solution, a very ideal resolution towards which the play is moving as well.

We stop at this point a midway through second act where George's arrival begins to accentuate the tension, accentuate the drama, but and also the slow unfolding of the events they begin to pick up pace as well.

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