

Twentieth Century American Drama
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Lecture - 23
You Can't Take it with You Part 2

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CURTAIN

ACT I

SCENE 2: Late the same night. The house is in darkness save for a light in the hall. An accordion is heard off stage n., then suddenly a good loud BANG! from the cellar. Somewhere in the outer regions, one of the Sychamores is still at work. As the accordion player finishes the song the sound of a key in the outer door. The voices of ALICE and TONY drift through.

ALICE. *(Off stage.)* I could see them dance every night of the week. I think they're marvelous.

TONY. They are, aren't they? But of course just walking inside any theatre gives me a thrill.

ALICE. *(As they come into sight in hallway.)* Well, it's been so lonely, Tony, I hate to have it over.

TONY. Oh, is it over? Do I have to go right away?

ALICE. Not if you don't want to.

TONY. I don't.

ALICE. Would you like a cold drink?

TONY. Wonderful. *(ALICE pauses to switch on lights.)*

ALICE. I'll see what's in the icebox. Want to come along?

TONY. I'd follow you to the ends of the earth.

ALICE. *(At door.)* Oh just the kitchen is enough.

(They exit through kitchen door. A pause, and the lights go on.)



TONY. Why, I like it. You're done it very simply, haven't you?

ALICE. Yes, we didn't know whether to do it Empire or Neo-Grecian.

TONY. So you settled for Frigidaire.

ALICE. Yes, it's so easy to live with. *(They return. ALICE crosses to table. She is carrying two glasses, TONY, a bottle of ginger ale and a bottle opener.)* Lucky you're not hungry, Mr. K. An icebox full of corn flakes. That gives you a rough idea of the Sychamores. *(TONY follows down to table.)*

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Today's session is on *You Cannot Take it With You* and we are looking at scene 2. This is also the scene, where we find we are a bit away from the insanity of this Vanderhof family, from the eccentricities of the Vanderhof family, though we are always there in the background.

This is the scene which introduces us to the kind of relationship that Tony and Alice share and also the scene tries to tell us how different they are and how very acutely aware Alice is of this difference. Late the same night, the house is in darkness save for a light in the hall. An accordion is heard off stage, then suddenly a good loud bang from the cellar. Somewhere in the regions, one of the Sychamores is still at work.

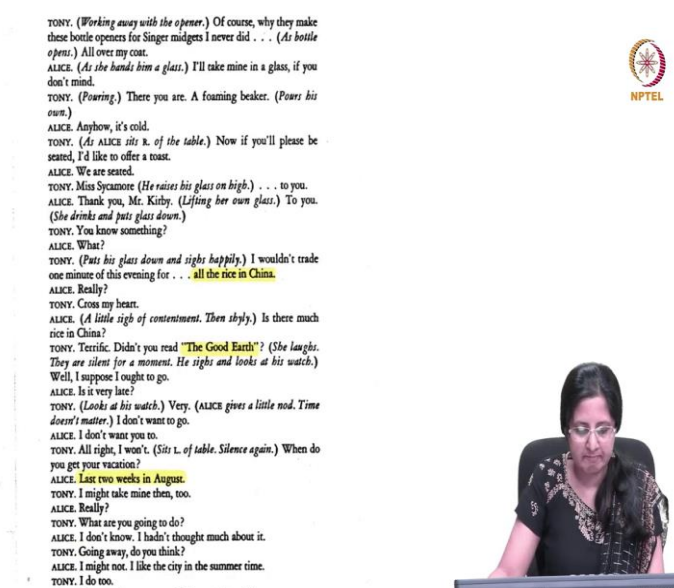
As the accordion player finishes the song the sound of a key in the outer door. The voices of Alice and Tony drift through. We find that this is a house which literally never sleeps, somebody or the other is always at work; either manufacturing firecrackers or playing the xylophone or in a practicing ballet.

We also find that there is absolutely no order, no routine, no sense of time; they just keep floating in and out of these different activities and except for the meal times, nothing seems to be set. Alice and Tony they did spend the evening together and we get an insight into the kind of relationship that we they share. They do have, we find that Tony comes across as like more of a romantic, the kind of things that he professes, like for instance right at the beginning.

We sort of see how different they are in the way they articulate their emotions and Alice having been a part of the sycamore family, there is a certain practical element also to it. In spite of the eccentricities, we find that there is a certain kind of practicality, which takes dominance over the romantic approach that Tony has. “Alice, I will see what is in the icebox want to come along, I follow you to the ends of the earth. Alice just the kitchen is enough.”

This in some form sums up the kind of worlds from which they come; in spite of the snakes in the family and the ballet dancing and the xylophones and the firecrackers in the cellar, we find that there is a rootedness that we notice about Alice. Because when she is in touch with the real world, she is also able to situate her family in that spectrum, in that social economic spectrum.

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The image shows a video lecture interface. On the right side, there is a small video window showing a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a black patterned top, looking down. On the left side, there is a script of a play scene. The script is as follows:

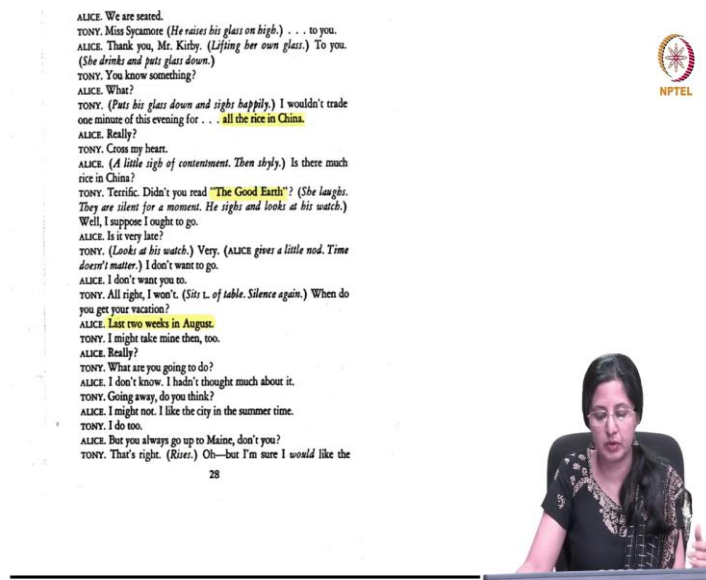
TONY. (*Working away with the opener.*) Of course, why they make these bottle openers for Singer midgets I never did . . . (*As bottle opens.*) All over my coat.
ALICE. (*As she hands him a glass.*) I'll take mine in a glass, if you don't mind.
TONY. (*Pouring.*) There you are. A foaming beaker. (*Pours his own.*)
ALICE. Anyhow, it's cold.
TONY. (*As ALICE sits x. of the table.*) Now if you'll please be seated, I'd like to offer a toast.
ALICE. We are seated.
TONY. Miss Sycamore (*He raises his glass on high.*) . . . to you.
ALICE. Thank you, Mr. Kirby. (*Lifting her own glass.*) To you. (*She drinks and puts glass down.*)
TONY. You know something?
ALICE. What?
TONY. (*Puts his glass down and sighs happily.*) I wouldn't trade one minute of this evening for . . . all the rice in China.
ALICE. Really?
TONY. Cross my heart.
ALICE. (*A little sigh of contentment. Then shyly.*) Is there much rice in China?
TONY. Terrific. Didn't you read "The Good Earth"? (*She laughs. They are silent for a moment. He sighs and looks at his watch.*) Well, I suppose I ought to go.
ALICE. Is it very late?
TONY. (*Looks at his watch.*) Very. (*ALICE gives a little nod. Time doesn't matter.*) I don't want to go.
ALICE. I don't want you to.
TONY. All right, I won't. (*Sits L. of table. Silence again.*) When do you get your vacation?
ALICE. Last two weeks in August.
TONY. I might take mine then, too.
ALICE. Really?
TONY. What are you going to do?
ALICE. I don't know. I hadn't thought much about it.
TONY. Going away, do you think?
ALICE. I might not. I like the city in the summer time.
TONY. I do too.

“They do seem to have, they seem to share a very good wavelength and Tony again makes a very romantic statement, I would not trade one minute of this evening for all the

rice in China. Really; cross my heart. Is there much rice in China and she asked very practical questions; terrific, did not you read *The Good Earth* she laughs.”

There is a slight difference that one can note notice from scene 1 and scene 2 with respect to the plays which are being referred to. The first one it is about Trotsky and Russian revolution and here it is about the historical fiction Pearl S Buck’s, *The Good Earth*.

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ALICE. We are seated.
TONY. Miss Sycamore (He raises his glass on high.) . . . to you.
ALICE. Thank you, Mr. Kirby. (Lifting her own glass.) To you.
(She drinks and puts glass down.)
TONY. You know something?
ALICE. What?
TONY. (Puts his glass down and sighs happily.) I wouldn't trade one minute of this evening for . . . all the rice in China.
ALICE. Really?
TONY. Cross my heart.
ALICE. (A little sigh of contentment. Then shyly.) Is there much rice in China?
TONY. Terrific. Didn't you read "*The Good Earth*"? (She laughs. They are silent for a moment. He sighs and looks at his watch.) Well, I suppose I ought to go.
ALICE. Is it very late?
TONY. (Looks at his watch.) Very. (ALICE gives a little nod. Time doesn't matter.) I don't want to go.
ALICE. I don't want you to.
TONY. All right, I won't. (Sits L. of table. Silence again.) When do you get your vacation?
ALICE. Last two weeks in August.
TONY. I might take mine then, too.
ALICE. Really?
TONY. What are you going to do?
ALICE. I don't know. I hadn't thought much about it.
TONY. Going away, do you think?
ALICE. I might not. I like the city in the summer time.
TONY. I do too.
ALICE. But you always go up to Maine, don't you?
TONY. That's right. (Rises.) Oh—but I'm sure I would like the

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They are also making some plans for the vacation, where time and again Tony is making it clear that, he would want to spend not just a vacation; but all seasons, he would want to share all seasons throughout the year with Alice.

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city in the summer time, if — Oh, you know what I mean, Alice, I'd love it if you were here.
ALICE. Well—it'd be nice if you were here, Tony. *(Rises and crosses to R.)*
TONY. You know what you're saying, don't you?
ALICE. What?
TONY. That you'd rather spend the summer with me than anybody else.
ALICE. *(Back to TONY.)* Was I?
TONY. *(Crossing few steps R.)* Well, if it's true about the summer, how would you feel about—the winter?
ALICE. *(Seeming to weigh the matter. Turns to TONY.)* Yes, I'd—like that too.
TONY. *(Tremulous.)* Then there's spring and autumn. If you could—see your way clear about those, Miss Sycamore? *(Crossing to ALICE.)*
ALICE. *(Again a little pause.)* I might.
TONY. I guess that's the whole year. We haven't forgotten anything, have we?
ALICE. No.
TONY. Well, then — *(Another pause; their eyes meet. TONY starts to embrace ALICE. And at this moment, PENNY is heard from stairway. TONY crosses to back of GRANDPA'S chair.)*
PENNY. *(Off stage.)* Is that you, Alice? What time is it? *(She comes into room, wrapped in a bathrobe.)* Oh! *(In sudden embarrassment.)* Excuse me, Mr. Kirby. I had no idea—that is, I—*(She senses the situation.)*—I didn't mean to interrupt anything.
TONY. Not at all, Mrs. Sycamore.
ALICE. *(Quietly.)* No, Mother.
PENNY. I just came down for a manuscript—*(Fumbling at her desk.)*—then you can go right ahead. Ah, here it is. "Sex Takes a Holiday." Well—good night, Tony.
TONY. Good night, Mrs. Sycamore.
PENNY. Oh, I think you can call me Penny, don't you, Alice? At least I hope so. *(With a little laugh she vanishes up stairs.)* *(TONY turns back to ALICE. Before PENNY'S rippling laugh quite dies, BANG! from the cellar. TONY jumps.)*



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... .. *(Crossing few steps R.)* Well, if it's true about the summer, how would you feel about—the winter?
ALICE. *(Seeming to weigh the matter. Turns to TONY.)* Yes, I'd—like that too.
TONY. *(Tremulous.)* Then there's spring and autumn. If you could—see your way clear about those, Miss Sycamore? *(Crossing to ALICE.)*
ALICE. *(Again a little pause.)* I might.
TONY. I guess that's the whole year. We haven't forgotten anything, have we?
ALICE. No.
TONY. Well, then — *(Another pause; their eyes meet. TONY starts to embrace ALICE. And at this moment, PENNY is heard from stairway. TONY crosses to back of GRANDPA'S chair.)*
PENNY. *(Off stage.)* Is that you, Alice? What time is it? *(She comes into room, wrapped in a bathrobe.)* Oh! *(In sudden embarrassment.)* Excuse me, Mr. Kirby. I had no idea—that is, I—*(She senses the situation.)*—I didn't mean to interrupt anything.
TONY. Not at all, Mrs. Sycamore.
ALICE. *(Quietly.)* No, Mother.
PENNY. I just came down for a manuscript—*(Fumbling at her desk.)*—then you can go right ahead. Ah, here it is. "Sex Takes a Holiday." Well—good night, Tony.
TONY. Good night, Mrs. Sycamore.
PENNY. Oh, I think you can call me Penny, don't you, Alice? At least I hope so. *(With a little laugh she vanishes up stairs.)* *(TONY turns back to ALICE. Before PENNY'S rippling laugh quite dies, BANG! from the cellar. TONY jumps.)*
TONY. What's that?
ALICE. *(Quietly. She crosses to below table.)* It's all right, Tony. That's father.
TONY. Oh—this time of night? *(Coming D.S.)*



We encounter penny briefly, where she is looking for a manuscript and we find that things do not really end in that home; they are all the time working, they are all the time playing, they are all the time engaging with the things which gives them a lot of pleasure. It also makes it easier for them to navigate through the crisis in many ways.

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ALICE. (*Ominously—turns to TONY.*) Any time of night. Any time of day. (*She stands silent.*) (*In the pause, TONY gazes at her fondly.*)

TONY. (*Crossing to ALICE.*) You know, you're more beautiful, more lovely, more adorable than anyone else in the whole world.

ALICE. (*As he starts to embrace her, she backs away.*) Don't, Tony.

TONY. What? (*As ALICE shakes her head.*) My dear, just because your mother . . . all mothers are like that, Alice, and Penny's a darling. You see I'm even calling her Penny.

ALICE. I don't mean that. (*She faces him squarely—crosses to TONY.*) Look, Tony, this is something I should have said a long time ago, but I didn't have the courage. (*Turns away.*) I let myself be swept away because . . . I loved you so.

TONY. (*Crosses to ALICE.*) Darling!

ALICE. No, wait, Tony. I want to make it clear to you. Listen, you're of a different world . . . a whole different kind of people. Oh I don't mean money or socially . . . that's too silly. But your family and mine . . . it just wouldn't work, Tony. It just wouldn't work. (*ALICE crosses to R. below TONY.*)

(*The sound of the outer door closing.*)

ED. (*Head in hallway off stage.*) All right, have it your way. (*At the sound of the voice, TONY crosses to L.*) She can't dance. That's why they pay her all that money . . . because she can't dance. (*ALICE takes a few steps to R.*)

ESSIE. (*Still not in sight.*) Well, I don't call that dancing what she does. (*She appears in archway followed by ED.*) Oh, hello! How was the ballet? (*Throwing her hat on desk.*)

ALICE. It was fine, Essie.

TONY. Wonderful.

ED. (*Follows into room after ESSIE.*) Hello there.



When Tony wonders whether these things are happening, there is also this the noise which keeps coming from the cellar. Tony wonders whether it is alright at this time of the night. Alice, any time of night, any time of day; so that is how that is what which describes her family.

She very soon and in very direct terms she also tells Tony; no way Tony, “I want to make it clear to you. Listen you are of a different world, a whole different kind of people. I do not need money or socially, that is too silly. But your family and mine, it just would not work Tony, it just would not work.”

There is a certain social standing, a certain economic standing and apart from that which penny is entirely aware of; but she is also trying to convey that, it is a bit much more than that the way people look at life, it is not just about having less money or having less social standing.

It is of course, silly too; but more than that it is about the way one the, the way one negotiates through the world about these how these families respond to the different aspects of the world.

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DC SWEEP AWAY DECLAIMER A RETURN YOU DO.
TONY. (Crosses to ALICE.) Darling!
ALICE. No, wait, Tony. I want to make it clear to you. Listen, you're of a different world . . . a whole different kind of people. Oh, I don't mean money or socially . . . that's too silly. But your family and mine . . . it just wouldn't work, Tony. It just wouldn't work. (ALICE crosses to R. below TONY.)
(The sound of the outer door closing.)
ED. (Heard in hallway off stage.) All right, have it your way. (At the sound of the voice, TONY crosses to L.) She can't dance. That's why they pay her all that money . . . because she can't dance. (ALICE takes a few steps to R.)
ESSIE. (Still not in sight.) Well, I don't call that dancing what she does. (She appears in archway followed by ED.) Oh, hello! How was the ballet? (Throwing her hat on desk.)
ALICE. It was fine, Essie.
TONY. Wonderful.
ED. (Following into room after ESSIE.) Hello there.
TONY. Hello.
ESSIE. Look, what do you people think? Ed and I just saw Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Do you think she can dance, Mr. Kirby? (Crossing over to TONY.)
TONY. Why yes, I always thought so.
ESSIE. What does she do anyhow? (Crossing to TONY.) Now look, you're Fred Astaire, and I'm Ginger Rogers. (Pats herself close to TONY.)
ALICE. Essie, please!

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ESSIE. I only want to use him for a minute. Now look, Mr. Kirby . . . (Putting her arms around TONY's neck.)
ALICE. Essie, you're just as good as Ginger Rogers. We all agree.
ESSIE. You see, Ed?
ED. (Crossing to arch. Backing up.) Yeh. . . . Come on, Essie . . . we're bumping in here.
ESSIE. Oh they've been together all evening. . . . (Crosses up to arch.) Good night, Mr. Kirby. Good night, Alice.
TONY. Good night, Mrs. Carmichael.
ED. Good night, Essie, did you ask Grandpa about us having a baby? (Crossing up to stairs.)
ESSIE. Oh yes—he said to go right ahead.
(They are out of sight up stairs.)
ALICE. (Crossing L. to below table.) You see, Tony? That's what it would be like.
TONY. (Crossing over to ALICE.) Oh I didn't mind that. Anyhow, we're not going to live with your family. It's just you and I.
ALICE. No it isn't . . . it's never quite that. I love them, Tony. I love them deeply. Some people could break away, but I couldn't. I know they do rather strange things. . . . But they're gay and they're fun and . . . I don't know . . . there's a kind of nobility about them.
TONY. Alice, you talk as though only you could understand them. That's not true. Why every family has got curious little traits. What of it? My father raises orchids at ten thousand dollars a bulb. (ALICE crosses up R. to back of chair.) Is that sensible? My mother believes in spiritualism. That's just as bad as your mother writing plays, isn't it?
ALICE. It goes deeper, Tony. Your mother believes in spiritualism because it's fashionable, and your father raises orchids because he can afford to. My mother writes plays because eight years ago a typewriter was delivered here by mistake. (She crosses to R.)
TONY. Darling, what of it?



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I love them deeply. Some people could break away, but I couldn't. I know they do rather strange things. . . . But they're gay and they're fun and . . . I don't know . . . there's a kind of nobility about them.

TONY. Alice, you talk as though only you could understand them. That's not true. Why every family has got curious little traits. What of it? My father raises orchids at ten thousand dollars a bulb. (ALICE crosses up n. to back of chair.) Is that sensible? My mother believes in spiritualism. That's just as bad as your mother writing plays, isn't it?

ALICE. It goes deeper, Tony. Your mother believes in spiritualism because it's fashionable, and your father raises orchids because he can afford to. My mother writes plays because eight years ago a typewriter was delivered here by mistake. (She crosses to n.)

TONY. Darling, what of it?

ALICE. (Crossing back to chair.) And—and look at Grandpa. Thirty-five years ago he just quit business one day. He started up to his office in the elevator and came right down again. He just stopped. He could have been a rich man, (Sitting n. of table.) but he said it took too much time. So for thirty-five years, he's just collected snakes, and gone to circuses and commencements. It never occurs to any of them . . .

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(GRANDPA comes down stairs.)

This difference is suddenly, we find that, it gets fore-grounded in this discussion, which we will quickly read through. “I do not mind that anyhow, you are not going to live with your family, it is just you and I. No, it is not, it is never quite that. I love them, Tony I love them deeply. Some people could break away, but I could not. I know they do rather strange things; but they are gay and they are fun and I do not know, there is a kind of nobility about them.”

It is a very interesting word to use in this context. Here when we look at this and also map this against the pursuit of American dream; we begin to see that, in some instances the ones who have been seen as failures, they are also sometimes choosing to be failures, because they are pursuing things in a slightly different way, in a nobler way.

While this play is not entirely celebrating the way of life, the outlook and the worldview that the Sychamore family seems to have adopted; it is clearly making a statement about the possibility of alternate world views. The need to accommodate them, if that is more individualistic; if that is more fulfilling for a certain person or for a certain individual.

And this family as a whole we find that, they are complete misfits in New York, they are complete misfits in the American economy; they are almost very radically and flippantly challenging what the American dream is all about. But there is also another possibility that, it is perhaps the American society that enables them to live like this as well, to

pursue their eccentric dreams without it affecting them, without it affecting them in a on a daily basis.

As we continue to read through this, “Alice you talk as only you could understand them that is not true. Why every family has got curious little traits. What of it? My father raises orchids at ten thousand dollars a bulb.” Here is where we also find, there are certain other kinds of eccentricities; here we may also very briefly recall the British, the writer Virginia Woolf, who has this short story solid objects.

There she talks about that is in the context of Britain, the political context; there the short story talks about two characters, who have the potential in them to make it really big in the politics and British politics, they are running for parliament and the one of them has a chance to make it really big in that ah context.

But this one person, one of the two friends, he decides to just give it all away, all of a sudden quite randomly and he goes after solid objects; that becomes his hobby, he picks up these random objects, sometimes stones, little broken pieces, he goes after them. He becomes obsessed concerned with those solid objects which otherwise do not have any value.

He begins to collect them day in and day night and he loses his sanity according to the rest of the world and even his friend, who was otherwise a very loyal ally till the end is forced to leave him; because they begin to inhabit two different world views all together. One person who was given a political career, because he suddenly realized how worthless it is and there is no dramatic incident which brought about that change; he suddenly decides to go after solid objects, which are also used useless and worthless.

Woolf was trying to comment on certain kinds of pursuits, which are considered as useless; because they do not seem to be having any legitimizing value about it. Because there historian, someone who goes after artifacts will be valued more; because there is a certain system, there is a knowledge system, a scholarship around it. But if that sort of a legitimizing cover is not present, none of these pursuits could be valued, none of these pursuits could be honored; on the other hand, it could be seen as markers of insanity.

That is what is happening over here. The Kirby family there Tony says, his father raises orchids that ten thousand dollars a bulb; that is not seen as an eccentricity, it is in a

certain sense, but that does not question his sanity. It is not like grandpa having snakes at home, it is not her; because grandpa does not do anything else other than attending commencement ceremonies or running this family and heading the meal time.

It ultimately boils down to whether the pursuit is giving one something in return. So, that seems to be the fine difference over here, when if we continue to read through this; “my father raises orchids at ten thousand dollars a bulb. Is that sensible? My mother believes in spiritualism. Just as bad, that is just as bad as your mother writing plays, is not it?”

It goes deeper, Tony. Your mother believes in spiritualism, because it is fashionable; it is still an anything it is odd, it could be seen as eccentric, but there is something it invokes, it is something very fashionable to do, it accentuates your position in the society. It does not threaten or damage what you are, it acts as, and it is more like an accessory.

Your father raises orchids, because he can afford to.” There is a fine difference between who is a lot; for whom it is legitimately alright to pursue certain meaningless passions, quote unquote meaningless passions. When one can afford to or when one is always already pleased within assertion, within a certain sociopolitical segment.

He can afford to do what he wants to with his life, because there is a security; there is a financial and social security about him, about his family, about what he is doing. And once that right has not been earned in legitimate ways; because if we look at Vanderhof, we get to know that he is someone who quit his business, just like the characters in Virginia Woolf’s solid objects.

He had quit his business and he just collects snakes and goes to circuses and commencements; he has not earned the right to while away his time like that. Which is where here Mister Kirby, Mister Kirby raising orchids, it is not seen as something eccentric and something insane.

But on the other hand whatever Mister Vanderhof has doing is seen as eccentric and insane. It is a very telling commentary, it is a very telling critique about the social political system, about the economic order which legitimizes certain kinds of activities and delegitimizes and even forces to see certain activities is completely insane.

The play makes it easier to deal with this question; because it is also placed, it is also placed as a comedy as a situational fast. “When Alice is responding; it goes deeper, Tony. Your mother believes in spiritualism, because it is fashionable and your father raises orchids, because he can afford to.

My mother writes plays, because eight years ago a typewriter was delivered here by mistake. And Tony seems to be the idealist, just the way he was introduced us. He is one of those rare characters, whose not taking offense, who’s not even surprised. Alice, and look at grandpa thirty five years ago he just quit business one day.”

He started up to his office in the elevator and came down right again. He just stopped. He could have been a rich man, but he said it took too much time. So, for thirty-five years, he has just collected snakes and gone to circuses and commencements. It never occurs to any of them. The important thing is neither Vanderhof nor anyone in his family, they do not seem to be having any regrets about what they could have done.

“There does not seem to have occurred any dramatic incident, which forced grandpa to quit his business; he just decided to quit, because it was taking up too much of time and you cannot do it all at the end of the day. It is a very profound, a very deep spiritual philosophical realization that this family has arrived it; but it fails to fit into the formats, the usual acceptable formats of the ways of living.”

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GRANDPA. (*Pausing in doorway*.) Hello there, children!
TONY. (*Turns to GRANDPA*.) Good evening, Mr. Vanderhof.
ALICE. Hello, Grandpa.
GRANDPA. (*Coming into the room*.) How's the weather? Looks like a nice summer evening.
ALICE. Yes, it's lovely, Grandpa.
GRANDPA. (*Starting up*.) Well, I'm off. Good-bye, Mr. Kirby . . .
I've got a date with the policeman on the corner.
TONY. (*Crossing U.S.*) Policeman?
GRANDPA. We've got a standing date—twelve-thirty every night. Known him since he was a little boy. He's really a doctor, but after he graduated, he came to me and said he didn't want to be a doctor—he had always wanted to be a policeman. So I said, “You go ahead and be a policeman, if that's what you want to be,” and that's what he did. . . . How do you like my new hat?
TONY. It's very nice, Mr. Vanderhof.
GRANDPA. (*Regarding hat*.) Yeh, I like it. The Government gave it to me. (*Exits U.S.*)
DONALD. (*Entering from kitchen U.S. with an accordion slung over his shoulder*.) Oh, excuse me. I didn't know you folks was in here.
ALICE. (*Reigned*.) It's all right, Donald.
DONALD. Rhea kind of fancied some candy and I . . . Oh, there it is. (*Crossing to buffet*.) You all don't want it, do you?
ALICE. No, Donald.
DONALD. (*Crossing to R.*) Thanks. . . . Did you have a nice evening?
ALICE. Yes, Donald.
DONALD. (*Edging over another step*.) Nice dinner?
ALICE. Yes, Donald.
DONALD. (*Another step to the R.*) Was the ballet nice?
ALICE. Yes, Donald.
DONALD. That's nice. (*He exits through kitchen door R.*)
ALICE. (*Rising*.) Now! Now, do you see what I mean? Could you explain Donald to your father? Could you explain Grandpa? You couldn't, Tony, you couldn't! I love you, Tony, but I love them too! And it's no use, Tony! It's no use! (*Crosses R. She is weeping now in spite of herself*.)
TONY. (*Takes her hands, quietly says*.) There's only one thing you've said that matters, that makes any sense at all. You love me.



At the same all of this is happening in Vanderhof's family. We also very briefly they encounter grandpa and right after that Donald, who Donald is he comes to visit Rebha, who is the colored maid, who was introduced in scene 1.

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kiss; sigh.) Oh, dear, I guess I ought to . . . *(Backing away. He looks at his watch.)* Good night, darling. Until tomorrow.
ALICE. *(Crosses to TONY—they kiss.)* Good night.
TONY. Isn't it wonderful we work in the same office? Otherwise I'd be hanging around *here* all day.
ALICE. *(Starts with TONY for the hall.)* Won't it be funny in the office tomorrow—seeing each other and just going on as though nothing had happened?
TONY. Thank God I'm vice-president. *(Turns up.)* I can dictate to you all day. *(Accordion.)* "Dear Miss Sycamore: I love you, I love you, I love you." *(They embrace.)*
ALICE. Oh, darling! You're such a fool.
TONY. *(An arm about her as he starts toward hallway U.L.)* Why don't you meet me in the drugstore in the morning—before you go up to the office? I'll have millions of things to say to you. *(Picks up his hat as they head for the door.)*
ALICE. *(Off stage.)* All right.
TONY. And then lunch, and then dinner tomorrow night.
ALICE. Oh, Tony! *What will people say?*
TONY. It's got to come out sometime. In fact, if you know a good housewife, I'd like to do a little shouting. *(She laughs—a happy little ripple. They are out of sight in hallway by this time; their voices become inaudible.)*
(PAUL, at this point, decides to call it a day down in the cellar. He comes through door, followed by MR. PINNA. He is carrying a small metal container, filled with powder.)
PAUL. *(Crossing to table C.)* Yes, sir, Mr. De Pinna, we did a good night's work.
DE PINNA. *(Following.)* That's what. Five hundred Black Panthers, three hundred Willow Trees, and eight dozen Junior Kiddie Bombs. *(ALICE comes back from hallway, still under the spell of her love.)*
PAUL. Pretty good! . . . Why, hello, Alice. You just come in? . . .



We get a sense of the kind of professional relationship they have to. "I am the vice president. I can dictate to you all day. She is perhaps something like an assistant to in this Kirby and Company. Alice in spite of this her upbringing, in spite of having coming from, having come from such an eccentric family; she seems to be very concerned about what people will say."

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DE PINNA. (Following.) That's what. Five hundred duck rants, three hundred Willow Trees, and eight dozen Junior Kiddie Bombers. (ALICE comes back from hallway, still under the spell of her love.)
PAUL. Pretty good! . . . Why, hello, Alice. You just come in?
ALICE. (Softly; leans against wall.) No. No, I've been home quite a while.
PAUL. Have a nice evening?
ALICE. (Almost singing it.) I had a beautiful evening. Father.
PAUL. Say, I'd like you to take a look at this new red fire. Will you turn out the lights, Mr. De Pinna? I want Alice to get the full effect.



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(DE PINNA goes up to switch.)
ALICE. (Who hasn't heard a word.) What, Father?
PAUL. Take a look at this new red fire. It's beautiful. (DE PINNA switches lights out; PAUL touches a match to the powder. The red fire blazes, shedding a soft glow over the room.) There! What do you think of it? Isn't it beautiful?
ALICE. (Radiant; her face aglow, her voice soft.) Yes. Oh, Father, everything's beautiful, it's the most beautiful red fire in the world! (She rushes to him and throws her arms about him, almost unable to bear her own happiness.)

CURTAIN



Tony on the other hand does not seem to be worrying about that at all and he seems to be entirely okay with them being seen publicly together. This combination of these two families coming together, these two individuals who are quite different in their social standing, in their world views; they are coming together, it seems to be this perfect kind of romance.

This is what the play is trying to over and again suggest is that, there is a world order, a socio-political order, an economic order within which families, and individuals are stuck. But there are also options to work, to navigate our ones way through this.

By giving a comic interface to this, he makes this critique more palatable and more poignant. As a play progresses, we realize that it is not just about the eccentricities; it is about the deeper things which the play is trying to foreground. It is about the deeper things which are being questioned over here.

We will soon look at some of the historical contexts, which are important in order to situate this play as a critique of its times, a critique of the world order, within which the play is located at the same time, the play is trying to go against the grain of that order as well.