

Twentieth Century American Drama
Prof. Merin Simi Raj
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

Lecture - 25
You Can't Take it With You Part 4

(Refer Slide Time: 00:14)

ACT II

As curtain rises, GRANDPA is seated R. of the table, PAUL above table, and a newcomer, GAY WELLINGTON, is seated L. of table. PENNY stands with one of her scripts at L. of table and ED is standing to R. of table. DONALD stands back of GAY WELLINGTON holding tray of used dinner dishes. GAY is drinking as curtain rises. ED stands R. holding type stick.

GAY. All right, I said to him, you can take your old job . . . (*She drinks.*)



PENNY. I'm ready to read you the new play, Miss Wellington, any time you are.

GAY. (*Pours.*) Just a minute, dearie. Just a minute. (*Drinks again.*)

(*ED preoccupied with type stick.*)

PENNY. The only thing is—I hope you won't mind my mentioning this, but—you don't drink when you're acting, do you, Miss Wellington? I'm just asking, of course.

GAY. (*Crossing to PENNY.*) I'm glad you brought it up. Once a play opens, I never touch a drop. Minute I enter a stage door, the bottle



This is an NPTEL lecture on the Act-II of *You Can't Take It With You*. The setting has been arranged and how the tone has been set for the play is already discussed. When Act-II begins, we are introduced to a new character. “There is a newcomer Gay Wellington.”

We find that Penny who enjoys writing scripts. “Penny stands with one of her scripts as left of the table, and Ed is standing to the right of the table, Donald stands back of Gay Wellington holding tray of used dinner dishes, Gay is drinking as curtain rises and Ed is standing holding type stick.”

(Refer Slide Time: 00:57)

table, and a newcomer, GAY WELLINGTON, is seated L. of table. PENNY stands with one of her scripts at L. of table and ED is standing to R. of table. DONALD stands back of GAY WELLINGTON holding tray of used dinner dishes. GAY is drinking as curtain rises. ED stands R. holding type stick.

GAY. All right, I said to him, you can take your old job . . . (She drinks.)

PENNY. I'm ready to read you the new play, Miss Wellington, any time you are.

GAY. (Pours.) Just a minute, dearie. Just a minute. (Drinks again.) (ED preoccupied with type stick.)

PENNY. The only thing is—I hope you won't mind my mentioning this, but—you don't drink when you're acting, do you, Miss Wellington? I'm just asking, of course.

GAY. (Crossing to PENNY.) I'm glad you brought it up. Once a play opens, I never touch a drop. Minute I enter a stage door, the bottle gets put away until intermission.

(RHEBA enters U.R. and crosses down to table carrying a tray.)

(RHEBA enters U.R. and crosses down to table carrying a tray.)



Penny is ready to read the new play to Miss Wellington, and there is a very inclusive space over here, welcoming newer characters and everyone is so sort of familiar with what is happening in the family.

This inclusivity is also being foregrounded as a very American thing over here, simultaneously, in realist as well as in sarcastic ways. The situational comedy here becomes accentuated with the entry of every character. It also brings out a different side of each character whom we have already met.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:37)

ready. (Suddenly her gaze becomes transfixed. She shakes her head as though to dislodge the image, then looks again and receives verification. Puts gin bottle and glass on table.) When I see snakes, it's time to lay down. (She makes for couch R.) (ESSIE starts downstairs.)

PENNY. (Crossing back of table to couch.) Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh, but those are real, Miss Wellington! (DONALD enters up R. bearing a tray. PAUL rises.) They're Grandpa's. Those are real! (GAY has passed right out cold.) Oh, dear! I hope she is not going to — Miss Wellington!

ED. (Crossing up to hand press.) She's out like a light.

PAUL. (Crossing U.S. a step.) Better let her sleep it off.

DONALD. Rheba, Miss Wellington just passed out. (Exits U.R.)

RHEBA. (Off stage.) Good.

PENNY. Do you think she'll be all right?

GRANDPA. Yes, but I wouldn't cast her in the religious play.

PENNY. Well, I suppose I'll just have to wait.

(ED bangs the hand press. ESSIE crosses down to chair L.)

GRANDPA. Next time you meet an actress on the top of a



There is some discussion about Penny's disengagement with play writing.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:44)

GRANDPA. Next time you meet an actress on the top of a bus, Penny, I think I'd send her the play instead of bringing her home to read it.

(Another bang. PENNY covers GAY with couch cover.)

ESSIE. Ed, I wish you'd stop printing and take those "Love Dreams" around. You've got to get back in time to play for me when Kolenkhov comes. *(A bang of the hand press again.)*

GRANDPA. Kolenkhov coming tonight? *(Goes to bookcase for stamp album and returns to table.)*

ESSIE. *(Executing a few toe steps.)* Yes, tomorrow night's his night, but I had to change it on account of Alice.

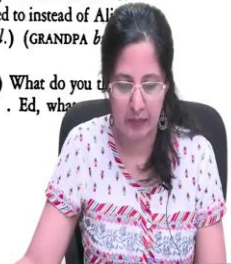
GRANDPA. Oh! . . . Big doings around here tomorrow night, huh?

PENNY. *(Crossing to desk.)* Isn't it exciting? You know I'm so nervous—you'd think it was me he was engaged to instead of Alice.

(Sitting in desk chair. Takes script and pencil.) *(GRANDPA busies himself with album.)*

ESSIE. *(Doing leg exercise. She is L. of table.)* What do you think they'll be like—his mother and father? . . . Ed, what are you doing now?

27



A lot of opinions as always about offered by different members of the family.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:51)

ED. *(Coming down.)* Penny, did you see the new mask I made last night? *(He reveals a new side of his character by suddenly holding a homemade mask before his face.)* Guess who it is?

PENNY. Don't tell me now, Ed. Wait a minute. . . . Helen of Troy?

ED. *(Disappointed.)* It's Mrs. Roosevelt. *(ESSIE on toes. ED puts mask down and exits into kitchen.)* *(PAUL, meanwhile, comes D.R. from buffet with a steel-like contraption in his hand. It's a Meccano set model of the Queen Mary. He puts it down on floor and proceeds to sit down beside it.)*

PAUL. You know the nice thing about these Meccano sets, you can make so many different things with them. Last week it was the Empire State Building.

GRANDPA. What is it this week?

PAUL. Queen Mary.

GRANDPA. Hasn't got the right hat on.

(DE PINNA enters from R. of hall. PENNY sits. ED comes in from kitchen bringing a pile of candy boxes beautifully wrapped and tied together for purposes of delivery. He crosses to U.C.)

ED. . . . Look, Mr. De Pinna—would you open the door and see if



(Refer Slide Time: 01:55)

PENNY. Yes, dear. (*Drunken mutter from GAY.*) Here's some.
ALICE. (*Crossing to table. As she sights GAY.*) Why, what happened to your actress friend? Is she giving a performance?
PENNY. No, she's not acting, Alice. She's really drunk. (*ESSIE dances to R. of GRANDPA's chair.*)
ALICE. Essie, dear, you're going to give Rheba the kitchen all day tomorrow, aren't you? Because she'll need it.
ESSIE. Of course, Alice. I'm going to start some Love Dreams now, so I'll be 'way ahead. (*She goes into kitchen U.R.*)
ALICE. Thanks, dear. . . . (*Crossing to PENNY.*) Look, Mother, I'm coming home at three o'clock tomorrow. Will you have everything down in the cellar by that time? The typewriter, and the snakes, and the xylophone, and the printing press . . .
GRANDPA. And Miss Wellington.
ALICE. And Miss Wellington. That'll give me time to arrange the table, and fix the flowers.
GRANDPA. The Kirbys are certainly going to get the wrong impression of this house.
ALICE. You'll do all that, won't you, Mother?
PENNY. Of course, dear.



We will quickly move on to this scene where they are getting prepared, they are preparing themselves to meet the Kirby's. Tony Kirby with whom Alice has a romantic relationship. They are inviting the Kirby's being invited over for dinner. This is how Alice would love to prepare for the big day for the evening.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:19)

snakes, and the xylophone, and the printing press . . .
GRANDPA. And Miss Wellington.
ALICE. And Miss Wellington. That'll give me time to arrange the table, and fix the flowers.
GRANDPA. The Kirbys are certainly going to get the wrong impression of this house.
ALICE. You'll do all that, won't you, Mother?
PENNY. Of course, dear. . . . (*Turns.*)
ALICE. . . . And I think we'd better have cocktails ready by seven-fifteen, in case they happen to come a little early. . . . I wonder if I ought to let Rheba cook the dinner. What do you think, Grandpa?
GRANDPA. Now, Alice, I wouldn't worry. From what I've seen of the boy I'm sure the Kirbys are very nice people, and if everything isn't so elaborate tomorrow night, it's all right too.
ALICE. (*Crossing to back of table.*) Darling, I'm not trying to press them, or pretend we're anything that we aren't. I just want everything to go off well.
GRANDPA. (*Putting his hand over ALICE's.*) No reason to worry, Alice.



“Look, mother, I am coming home at 3 o'clock tomorrow. Will you have everything down in the cellar by that time? The typewriter, the snakes, the xylophone, the printing press.” This is how the living room looks as at the moment. It is certainly an odd sight

for anyone who is coming in, the typewriter, the snake, the xylophone, the printing press and we find that Miss Wellington continues to stay there and she is drinking over there. She needs to be removed from the scene as well.

Grandpa is saying the Kirby's are certainly going to get the wrong impression of this house. He does not want to hide what the family is. He is also articulating his concern about that. But still Alice sticks to his plan about Rheba cooking, she is also wondering whether Rheba should be allowed to, whether they should let Rheba cook dinner. From what I have seen of the boy I am sure the Kirby's are very nice people, and if everything is not so elaborate tomorrow night, it is all right too."

There is another thing about this play, the way these characters are being pitched, these families are being pitched against each other, and there are no villains over here. It is not that the Kirby's are essentially bad people. Both families are nice people with their own eccentricities and with their own issues. It is just about arriving finding this midway where they can communicate as well.

"Alice is also trying to justify this. I am not trying to impress them or pretend we are anything that we are not. I just want everything to go off well. No reason why it should not, Alice. She wants to, not in a very pretentious way though, she wants to hide certain embarrassing facts and certain things which could become uncomfortable because she is the only one who has any real connect with the world outside."

(Refer Slide Time: 04:01)

PENNY. We're all going to do everything we can to make it a nice party.

ALICE. (*Crossing to L.*) Oh, my darlings, I love you. You're the most wonderful family in the world, and I'm the happiest girl in the world. I didn't know anyone could be so happy. Why, this past week has been like—floating. He's so wonderful, Grandpa. (*Crossing to back of table.*) Why, just seeing him—you don't know what it does to me.

GRANDPA. Just seeing him. Just seeing him for lunch, and dinner, and until four o'clock in the morning, and at nine o'clock *next* morning you're at the office again and there he is. Just seeing him, huh?

ALICE. I don't care! I'm in love! (*Kisses GRANDPA and starts for U.R. She swings open kitchen door.*) Rheba! Rheba! (*She goes into kitchen.*)

GRANDPA. Nice, isn't it? Nice to see her so happy.

PENNY. (*Rises—crosses to table.*) Yes, I remember when I was engaged to Paul—how happy I was. And you know, I still feel that



They are all prepared to make this a very good party.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:08)

gaged to Paul—how happy I was. And you know, I still feel that way.
GRANDPA. I know. . . . Nice the way Ed and Essie get along too, isn't it?
PENNY. And Donald and Rheba, even though they're *not* married. . . . Do you suppose Mr. De Pinna will ever marry anyone, Grandpa?
GRANDPA. *(A gesture toward couch.)* Well, there's Miss Wellington.
PENNY. Oh, dear, I *wish* she'd wake up. If we're going to read the play tonight —
(DE PINNA comes up from cellar, D.R., bringing along a rather large-sized unframed painting.)
DE PINNA. Mrs. Sycamore, look what I found! *(He turns canvas around, revealing a portrait of a somewhat lumpy and largely naked discus thrower.)* Remember? *(He props picture on chair above table.)*
PENNY. *(Backs away.)* Why, of course. It's my painting of you as The Discus Thrower. Look, Grandpa.



(Refer Slide Time: 04:11)

GRANDPA. *(As he fishes envelope out of his pocket. Opens letter.)* Government ought to stop sending me letters. Want me to be at the United States Marshal's office Tuesday morning at ten o'clock. Look at that. *(Throws letter to KOLENKHOF.)*
KOL. *(Peering at letter.)* Ah! Income tax! They have got you, Grandpa.
GRANDPA. *(Puts letter back in pocket.)* Mm. I'm supposed to give 'em a lot of money so as to keep Donald on relief.
DONALD. You don't say, Grandpa? *You going* to pay it from now on?
GRANDPA. That's what they want.
DONALD. You mean I can come right *here* and get it instead of standing in that line?
GRANDPA. No, Donald. I'm afraid you will have to waste a full hour of your time every week.
DONALD. Well, I don't like it. It breaks up my week. *(Exits U.)*
KOL. He should have been in Russia when the Revolution



So, in between the rest of the family they continue doing their thing, Ellie Essie is trying to continue with her practice, at the same time she is also making candy. We also find that there is something slightly problematic that they will soon get into.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:23)

Then he would have stood in line . . . a bread line. Ah, Grandpa, what they have done to Russia. Think of it! The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina, a cousin of the Czar, she is a waitress in Childs' Restaurant! I ordered baked beans from her, only yesterday. It broke my heart. A crazy world, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. Oh, the world's not so crazy, Kolenkhov. It's the people in it. Life's pretty simple if you just relax. ✓

KOL. (*Rising, crosses U.C.*) How can you relax in times like these?

GRANDPA. Well, if they'd relax there wouldn't be times like these. That's just my point. Life is kind of beautiful if you let it come to you. (*Crossing to buffet for his target and darts.*) But the trouble is, people forget that. I know I did. I was right in the thick of it . . . fighting, and scratching and clawing. Regular jungle. One day it just kind of struck me, I wasn't having any fun. (*GRANDPA, having hung his target on cellar door, returns to table.*)

KOL. So you did what?

GRANDPA. (*Standing below the table.*) Just relaxed. Thirty-five years ago, that was. And I've been a happy man ever since. (*Throws a dart and sits.*)

ALICE. (*Entering from kitchen.*) Good evening, Mr. Kolenkhov.



“Kolenkhov now comes up with this very interesting piece of information, he should have been Russia when the revolution came. Then he would have stood in line in a bread line. Ah, grandpa, what they have done to Russia. Think of it. The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina, a cousin of the Czar, she is a waitress in a certain restaurant over here. I ordered baked beans from her, only yesterday. It broke my heart. A crazy world.”

There is a changing world order over here which if there is something international world order is changing and something the play is drawing attention to without getting into a discussion about it. And what is very admirable about a play like this is that, these characters do try to normalize the situation. It is what Kolenkhov is entirely.

It is very tragic what the situation that he has just described, and it's entirely crazy too. But the way the play chooses to go ahead with it, it is in a very self-reflexive way. There is an attempt, there is a deliberate attempt to make everything into a bearable comedy, to make everything into a situational fast, and they quite successfully, they do it, and they quite successfully do that as well.

“Kolenkhov also asked this question perhaps it's also indicative about some a question from the audience as well, how can you relax in times like this? This is in response to what the grandpa says. That Life is pretty simple if you just relax.”

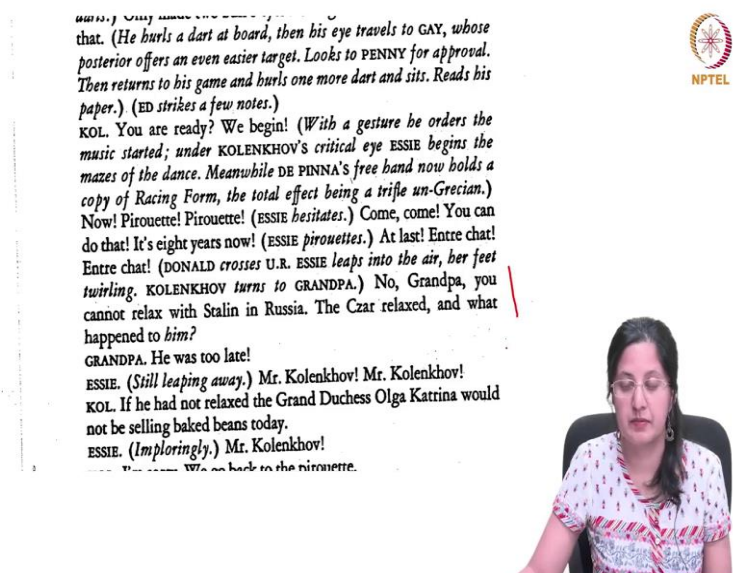
Grandpa of all the people he is the one who is qualified to give these advices to not just to Kolenkhov, but also these well accomplished, the successful industrial people such as the Kirby's.

“Well, if they would relax there would not be times like these. That is just my point. Life is kind of beautiful if we let it come to you. There are these snippets of conversation where a lot of philosophical death could be read into it, but it is not the kind of play which will dead continue to harp on those aspects, but that the point is not lost on the audience at all.

But the trouble is, people forget that. I know I did. I was right in the thick of it, fighting, and scratching and clawing. Regular jungle. One day it kind of struck me, I was not having any fun.” We also realized that there are certain common elements which have brought all of these characters together.

They were all stuck in some uncomfortable, unpleasant rot in life, when they suddenly realize that they are really not living life to the fullest, and then they need to take a detour, and move on to do something that they actually love doing.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:06)



that. (He hurls a dart at board, then his eye travels to GAY, whose posterior offers an even easier target. Looks to PENNY for approval. Then returns to his game and hurls one more dart and sits. Reads his paper.) (ED strikes a few notes.)

KOL. You are ready? We begin! (With a gesture he orders the music started; under KOLENKHOV's critical eye ESSIE begins the mazes of the dance. Meanwhile DE PINNA's free hand now holds a copy of Racing Form, the total effect being a trifle un-Grecian.) Now! Pirouette! Pirouette! (ESSIE hesitates.) Come, come! You can do that! It's eight years now! (ESSIE pirouettes.) At last! Entre chat! Entre chat! (DONALD crosses U.R. ESSIE leaps into the air, her feet twirling. KOLENKHOV turns to GRANDPA.) No, Grandpa, you cannot relax with Stalin in Russia. The Czar relaxed, and what happened to him?



GRANDPA. He was too late!

ESSIE. (Still leaping away.) Mr. Kolenkhov! Mr. Kolenkhov!

KOL. If he had not relaxed the Grand Duchess Olga Katrina would not be selling baked beans today.

ESSIE. (Imploringly.) Mr. Kolenkhov!

... We go back to the pirouette.



Kolenkhov again briefly gets back to this discussion and he makes this point. “No, grandpa, you cannot relax with Stalin in Russia. The Czar relaxed, and what happened to him? Grandpa says, he was too late.”

(Refer Slide Time: 07:17)

paper.) (ED strikes a few notes.)
KOL. You are ready? We begin! (With a gesture he orders the music started; under KOLENKHOV'S critical eye ESSIE begins the mazes of the dance. Meanwhile DE PINNA'S free band now holds a copy of Racing Form, the total effect being a trifle un-Grecian.)
Now! Pirouette! Pirouette! (ESSIE hesitates.) Come, come! You can do that! It's eight years now! (ESSIE pirouettes.) At last! Entre chat! Entre chat! (DONALD crosses U.R. ESSIE leaps into the air, her feet twirling. KOLENKHOV turns to GRANDPA.) No, Grandpa, you cannot relax with Stalin in Russia. The Czar relaxed, and what happened to him?
GRANDPA. He was too late!
ESSIE. (Still leaping away.) Mr. Kolenkhov! Mr. Kolenkhov!
KOL. If he had not relaxed the Grand Duchess Olga Katrina would not be selling baked beans today.
ESSIE. (Imploringly.) Mr. Kolenkhov!
KOL. I'm sorry. We go back to the pirouette.
PENNY. Could you pull in your stomach, Mr. De Pinna? (Door bell.) That's right.

46



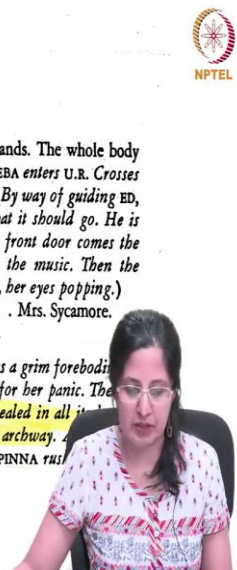
If he had not relaxed Grand Duchess Olga Katrina would not be selling baked beans today. This is like another side of reality which the play does not forget to foreground. It is also like, it is laying out a number of things over here for the audience to choose. It is trying to bring things from together from different points of view, different world views.

There is clearly a celebration, there is clearly a celebration of a non-conformist point of view, but it is also an accommodating. It is also putting in the other points of view for one to see and evaluate.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:06)

KOL. A little freer. A little freer with the hands. The whole body must work. Ed, help us with the music. (RHEBA enters U.R. Crosses to hall door.) The music must be free, too. (By way of guiding ED, KOLENKHOV hums the music at the pace that it should go. He is even pirouetting a bit himself.) (From the front door comes the murmur of voices, not quite audible over the music. Then the stunned figure of RHEBA comes into archway, her eyes popping.)
RHEBA. (Heavy whisper.) Mrs. Sycamore . . . Mrs. Sycamore.
PENNY. What, Rheba?

(RHEBA edges over R. With a gesture that has a grim foreboding, motions toward the still invisible reason for her panic. There is a second's pause, and then the reason is revealed in all its horror. The KIRBYS, in full evening dress, stand in archway. Behind them, MR. and MRS. KIRBY, and TONY. DE PINNA runs in.)



That is perhaps the one of the winning formulas of, one of the winning formulas of this play like it is laying out everything for us to be able to evaluate and which is why even after decades, the play continues to be a success when it is revived, when it is adapted and re-adapted.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:14)

them, MR. and MRS. KIRBY, and TONY. DE PINNA rushes to cellar door carrying his model stand with him. KOLENKHOV runs to alcove to squirm into his shirt and coat. ESSIE makes for alcove, also. ED pushes xylophone in place and hastily dons his coat. RHEBA crosses to buffet. DONALD comes, D.R. still carrying soiled dinner linen. PENNY utters a stifled gasp; she puts the painting against wall with the easel. Then removes her smock and tam. GRANDPA, alone of them all, rises to the situation. With a kind of old world grace, he puts down his newspaper and makes the guests welcome.)

TONY. Good evening.

GRANDPA. *(Rising and crossing to back of table.)* How do you do?

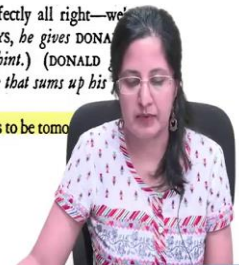
KIRBY. *(Uncertainly.)* How do you do?

TONY. Are we too early?

GRANDPA. No, no. Come right in. It's perfectly all right—we're glad to see you. *(His eyes still on the KIRBYS, he gives DONALD a good push toward kitchen, by way of a hint.)* *(DONALD promptly, with a quick little stunned whistle that sums up his feelings. RHEBA looking back exits U.R.)*

PENNY. Why—yes. Only—we thought it was to be tomorrow.

MRS. KIRBY. Tomorrow night!



We get into the core of this act. When, we saw at the beginning of this act that Alice and the rest of the family they are preparing for the Kirby's to receive the Kirby's for dinner and something really there is a twist over here. There is second's pause, and then the reason is revealed in all its horror. The Kirby's, in full evening dress, stand in archway. All three of them, Mister and Misses Kirby and Tony.

There is certainly a very disastrous situation because the family is not prepared to meet them. Things have not been hidden from away from the, taken away from the living, with the snakes until there, the typewriter is still there, the xylophone is still there, and all of them are there in their usual chaotic self.

They all show up and the Vanderhof, Sycamore family, they are least prepared for it. Grandpa, alone rises to the situation. With a kind of old world grace, he puts down his newspaper and makes the guest welcome.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:12)

TONY. Are we too early?
GRANDPA. No, no. Come right in. It's perfectly all right—we're glad to see you. *(His eyes still on the KIRBYS, he gives DONALD a good push toward kitchen, by way of a hint.)* (DONALD goes, promptly, with a quick little stunned whistle that sums up his feelings. RHEBA looking back exits U.R.)
PENNY. Why—yes. Only—we thought it was to be tomorrow night.
MRS. KIRBY. Tomorrow night!
KIRBY. What!
GRANDPA. Now, it's perfectly all right. Just make yourselves at home. *(Crossing to back of table. Placing chair.)*
KIRBY. Tony, how could you possibly —
TONY. I—I don't know. I thought —
MRS. KIRBY. Really, Tony! This is most embarrassing.
GRANDPA. Not at all. Why, we weren't doing a thing.



47

“Good evening. How do you do? And the Kirby’s also sense that there is some discomfort. Are we too early? No, no. Come right in. It is perfectly all right; we are glad to see you.” It sounds very certain, it is very unmodern in a certain way. It is very un-American in a certain way, where they are ready to welcome guests at any point of time.

Penny is cannot put up a show beyond a point. Penny says we thought it was to be tomorrow night. Tomorrow night. What? It is perfectly all right. Just make yourselves at home. Tony, how could you possibly. I do not know, I thought. Really, Tony.” This is most embarrassing. There is an unpleasant situation over here, but let us see how they begin to address this.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:50)

PENNY. No, no. Just a quiet evening at home.
GRANDPA. That's all. . . . Now don't let it bother you. This is Alice's mother, Mrs. Sycamore.
PENNY. How do you do.
GRANDPA. . . . Alice's sister, Mrs. Carmichael . . . Mr. Carmichael . . . Mr. Kolenkhov. (KOLENKHOV comes down, bows and discovers his shirt tail exposed. Thrusts it into his trousers. At this point DE PINNA takes an anticipatory step forward, and GRANDPA is practically compelled to perform the introduction. Crossing to DE PINNA.) And—Mr. De Pinna.
THE KIRBYS. How do you do?
DE PINNA. Don't mind my costume. I'll take it right off.
GRANDPA. Mr. De Pinna, would you tell Mr. Sycamore to come right up? Tell him that Mr. and Mrs. Kirby are here.
PENNY. (Her voice a heavy whisper.) And be sure to put his pants on.
DE PINNA. (Whispering right back.) All right. . . . Excuse me. (He vanishes—discus, Racing Form, and all—D.R.) (At this point PENNY hastily throws a couch cover over GAY. PENNY pushes GAY'S



(Refer Slide Time: 09:54)

DE PINNA. (Whispering right back.) All right. . . . Excuse me. (He vanishes—discus, Racing Form, and all—D.R.) (At this point PENNY hastily throws a couch cover over GAY. PENNY pushes GAY'S posterior with her knee. GRANDPA, crossing R., places chair.)
MRS. KIRBY. (Crossing to GRANDPA'S chair.) Thank you.
PENNY. (Crossing to arch U.L.) I'll tell Alice that you're — (She is at foot of stairs.) Alice! Alice, dear! (KIRBY comes D.L. The voice of ALICE from above, "What is it?") Alice, will you come down, dear? We've got a surprise for you. (She comes back into the room, summoning all her charm.) Well!
GRANDPA. Mrs. Kirby, may I take your wrap? (Removes it.)
MRS. KIRBY. Well—thank you. If you're perfectly sure (She turns.) that we're not — (Suddenly she sees snakes and lets out a scream.)
GRANDPA. Oh, don't be alarmed, Mrs. Kirby. They're perfectly harmless.
MRS. KIRBY. Thank you. (She sinks into a chair, weakly.)
GRANDPA. Ed, take 'em into the kitchen.
(TONY takes his father's hat to hall and returns to the room. ED at



So, very soon Misses Kirby, she notices the snakes and she let us out a scream and then the snakes are being taken away into the kitchen.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:00)

room, summoning all her charm.) Well!

GRANDPA. Mrs. Kirby, may I take your wrap? *(Removes it.)*

MRS. KIRBY. Well—thank you. If you're perfectly sure *(She turns.)* that we're not — *(Suddenly she sees snakes and lets out a scream.)*

GRANDPA. Oh, don't be alarmed, Mrs. Kirby. They're perfectly harmless.

MRS. KIRBY. Thank you. *(She sinks into a chair, weakly.)*



GRANDPA. Ed, take 'em into the kitchen.

(TONY takes his father's hat to hall and returns to the room. ED at once obeys. Takes snake solarium to kitchen.)

PENNY. *(Putting Japanese bowl c. of buffet.)* Of course we're so used to them around the house —

MRS. KIRBY. I'm sorry to trouble you, but snakes happen to be —

48



The Kirby's begin to get a sense of the eccentricity about the family how unconventional things are, and it also makes some uncomfortable in certain ways.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:12)

KIRBY. I feel very uncomfortable about this. Tony, how could you have done such a thing?

TONY. I'm sorry, Dad. I thought it was tonight.

KIRBY. It was very careless of you. *Very!*

PENNY. Oh, now, anybody can get mixed up, Mr. Kirby.



GRANDPA. Penny, how about some dinner for these folks? They've come for dinner, you know.

MRS. KIRBY. Oh, please don't bother. *(ED enters U.R.)* We're really not hungry at all.

PENNY. *(Crosses to ED.)* But it's not a bit of bother. Ed!— *(Her voice drops to a loud whisper.)* Ed, tell Donald to run down to the A. and P. and get half a dozen bottles of beer, and—ah—some canned salmon — *(Her voice comes up again.)* Do you like canned salmon, Mr. Kirby?

KIRBY. *(A step in to R.)* Please don't trouble, Mrs. Sycamore. I have a little indigestion, anyway.

PENNY. Oh, I'm sorry. . . . How about you, Mrs. Kirby? Do you like canned salmon?



This is about what they apologize to each other and Tony is also apologizing though we know at a later point towards the end of the play that Tony had done this deliberately just, so his family would get a picture of what the Sycamores are really because Tony in some form like Alice.

He is also able to see the nobility of these different pursuits. He is also the see the nobility of what they are rejecting, and what they have rejected, and how they are leading on with their lives.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:42)

... HOW ABOUT YOU, MRS. KIRBY? DO YOU like canned salmon?
MRS. KIRBY. (*You just know that she hates it.*) Oh, I'm very fond of it.
PENNY. You can have frankfurters if you'd rather.
MRS. KIRBY. (*Regally.*) Either one will do.
PENNY. (*To ED again.*) Well, make it frankfurters and some canned corn, and Campbell's Soup— (*ED crosses U.R. to door, PENNY following.*) Got that, Ed?
ED. (*Going out kitchen door U.R.*) Okay!
PENNY. (*Calling after him.*) And tell him to hurry! (*PENNY again addresses the KIRBYS. Comes down R.*) The A. and P. is just at the corner, and frankfurters don't take any time to boil.
GRANDPA. (*As PAUL comes through cellar door D.R.*) And this is Alice's father, Mr. Sycamore. Mr. and Mrs. Kirby.
THE KIRBYS. How do you do?
PAUL. I hope you'll forgive my appearance.

(*ALICE starts down stairs.*)

PENNY. This is Mr. Sycamore's busiest time of the year. Just the Fourth of July he always



(Refer Slide Time: 10:44)

... (*ED crosses U.R. to door, PENNY following.*) Got that, Ed?
ED. (*Going out kitchen door U.R.*) Okay!
PENNY. (*Calling after him.*) And tell him to hurry! (*PENNY again addresses the KIRBYS. Comes down R.*) The A. and P. is just at the corner, and frankfurters don't take any time to boil.
GRANDPA. (*As PAUL comes through cellar door D.R.*) And this is Alice's father, Mr. Sycamore. Mr. and Mrs. Kirby.
THE KIRBYS. How do you do?
PAUL. I hope you'll forgive my appearance.

(*ALICE starts down stairs.*)

PENNY. This is Mr. Sycamore's busiest time of the year. Just before the Fourth of July he always —

(*And then ALICE comes down. She is a step into the room before she realizes what has happened; then she fairly freezes in her tracks.*)



49



So, coming back to this act. We find that Alice comes down and the sight is quite scary and she freezes in her tracks because she is least prepared to welcome Kirby's.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:51)



ALICE. (*At arch.*) Oh!
TONY. (*Crossing up to her.*) Darling, I'm the most dull-witted person in the world. I thought it was tonight.
ALICE. (*Staggered.*) Why, Tony, I thought you — (*To the KIRBYS. Coming D.L. of table.*) I'm so sorry—I can't imagine—why, I wasn't—have you all met each other?
KIRBY. Yes, indeed.
MRS. KIRBY. How do you do, Alice?
ALICE. (*Not even yet in control of herself.*) How do you do, Mrs. Kirby? I'm afraid I'm not very—presentable.
TONY. (*Crossing down to ALICE.*) Darling, you look lovely.
KIRBY. (*A step toward ALICE.*) Of course she does. Don't let this upset you, my dear—we've all just met each other a night sooner, that's all.



(Refer Slide Time: 10:55)



PENNY. Oh, that's all done, ALICE. (*DONALD, who is coming, crosses through kitchen door; hurries across room and out front way. He is followed into room by ED, who joins the family circle. GRANDPA crosses to back of table.*) That's all been attended to.

(*Door slams on DONALD's exit.*)


ALICE. (*Sensing that DONALD is on way to round up a meal crosses over to PENNY.*) But Mother—what did you send out for? Because Mr. Kirby suffers from indigestion—he can only eat certain things.
KIRBY. (*Crossing to L. of table.*) Oh, it's all right. It's all right.
TONY. Of course it is, darling.
PENNY. I asked him what he wanted, Alice.
ALICE. (*Doubtfully.*) Yes, but —
KIRBY. Now, now, it's not as serious as all that. Just because I have a little indigestion.
KOL. (*Coming down to R. of table.*) Perhaps it is not indigestion at all, Mr. Kirby. Perhaps you have stomach ulcers.
ALICE. Don't be absurd, Mr. Kolenkhov!
GRANDPA. You mustn't mind Mr. Kolenkhov, Mr. Kirby. He's a Russian, and Russians are inclined to look on the dark side.



We are being told by Alice that Mister Kirby, he suffers from indigestion, and one should be careful about the kind of food that they are ordering, they are making for him. And Kolenkhov being the kind of person that he is spelling out what he thinks it is.

“Perhaps it is not indigestion at all, Mister Kirby. Perhaps you have stomach ulcers. Do not be absurd, Mister Kolenkhov. You must not mind Mister Kolenkhov, Mister Kirby. He is a Russian, and Russians are inclined to look on the dark side.”

(Refer Slide Time: 11:24)




KOL. All right, I am a Russian. But a friend of mine, a Russian, died from stomach ulcers.
KIRBY. Really, I—
ALICE. (*Desperately.*) Please, Mr. Kolenkhov! Mr. Kirby has indigestion and that's all. (PAUL drifts up to R. of buffet.)
KOL. (*With a Russian shrug.*) All right, let him wait. (*Crossing over to R.*)
GRANDPA. Do sit down, Mr. Kirby. Make yourself comfortable.
KIRBY. Thank you. (*He sits L. of table.*)
PENNY. (*Sitting above table.*) Well— (*She sighs; a pause, a general shifting.*) (PAUL drifts U.R. ALICE joins TONY L.)
GRANDPA. (*Coming D.S. Leaping into the breach.*) Tell me, Kirby, how do you find business conditions? Are we pretty well off of the depression?
KIRBY. What? . . . Yes, I think so. Of course, it all depends on the market.
GRANDPA. But you figure that things are going to keep getting better?
KIRBY. Broadly speaking, yes. As a matter of fact, industry is now operating at sixty-four per cent of full capacity, as against eighty-two per cent in 1925. (GAY rises.) Of course, in 1929—



“Kolenkhov, all right, I am Russian. But a friend of mine, a Russian, died from stomach ulcers.” So, none of them are really making it easy and this discussion on the indigestion later we will see it will come back again with grandpa pointing out that perhaps the unhappiness is the root of all this indigestion.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:43)



ing?
KIRBY. Broadly speaking, yes. As a matter of fact, industry is now operating at sixty-four per cent of full capacity, as against eighty-two per cent in 1925. (GAY rises.) Of course, in 1929—
GAY. (*She weaves unsteadily across room singing—“There was a young lady from Wheeling who had a remarkable feeling!” ALICE crosses D.L. The imposing figure of KIRBY intrigues GAY.*) Wo-o-o— (*She pinches his cheeks and with that lunges on her way up stairs.*)
PENNY. She—ah—
(*The KIRBYS, of course, are considerably astounded by this exhibition. The SYCAMORES have watched it with varying degrees of frozen horror. ALICE in particular is speechless; it is GRANDPA who comes to her rescue.*)
GRANDPA. (*Crossing to back of table.*) That may seem a little strange to you people, but she's not quite accountable for her actions. A friend of Mrs. Sycamore's. She came to dinner last night.



They are trying to, grandpa is trying to make them comfortable, and the Kirby's are also trying being nice people. They are also trying their best to blend in. And there is a brief discussion about the industry. As a matter of fact, industry is now operating at 64 percent

of full capacity, as against 82 percent in 1925. At that moment, Gay rises, Gay Wellington, if you remember she was drunk, she was there in a corner, she rises and interrupting this.

This is a tone, this is in very metaphorically, it sums up the setting, and tone into which the play is getting into. There is economic depression. There is some details about what is happening out there on Wall Street and there is this comic interruption, which does not make any sense. Of course, in 1929, and Gay, she weaves unsteadily across the room singing, “There was a young lady from Wheeling who had a remarkable feeling.”

Alice crosses the imposing figure of Kirby intrigues Gay. She pinches his cheeks with that lunges on her way upstairs. The Kirby’s of course, are considerably astounded by this exhibition. The Sycamores have watched it with varying degrees of frozen horror. Alice in particular is speechless; it is grandpa who comes to her rescue.

This is also a comment on, this is also a commentary on how the play is responding to what is happening in the country at the moment. There are certain very grave morbid discussions about figures, about how things are going down, how it might take a while for the economy to pick up. All of these discussions are interjected with the comicality of this play with a farce that it is trying to provide as a tool of escape as a tool to escape the reality.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:29)

... young lady from Wheeling who had a remarkable feeling.” ALICE crosses D.L. The imposing figure of KIRBY intrigues GAY.) Wo-o-o — (She pinches his cheeks and with that lunges on her way up stairs.)



PENNY. She—ah —

(The KIRBYS, of course, are considerably astounded by this exhibition. The SYCAMORES have watched it with varying degrees of frozen horror. ALICE in particular is speechless; it is GRANDPA who comes to her rescue.)

GRANDPA. (Crossing to back of table.) That may seem a little strange to you people, but she’s not quite accountable for her actions. A friend of Mrs. Sycamore’s. She came to dinner and was overcome by the heat. (Sits above table.)

PENNY. Yes, some people feel it, you know, more than Perhaps I’d better see if she’s all right. Excuse me please goes hastily up stairs.)

ALICE. (Crossing to L. of table.) It is awfully hot.



(Refer Slide Time: 13:32)

pause.) You usually escape all this hot weather, don't you, Mrs. Kirby? Up in Maine?
MRS. KIRBY. (*On the frigid side.*) As a rule. I had to come down this week, however, for the Flower Show.
TONY. Mother wouldn't miss that for the world. That blue ribbon is the high spot of her year.
ESSIE. (*Crossing down to r. of table.*) I won a ribbon at a Flower Show once. For raising onions. Remember, Alice?
ALICE. (*Quickly.*) That was a Garden Show, Essie.
ESSIE. (*Crosses to couch.*) Oh, yes. (*PENNY comes busting down stairs again U.L. Comes D.L. KIRBY rises.*)
PENNY. I think she'll be all right now. . . . Has Donald come back yet?
ALICE. No, he hasn't.
PENNY. Well, he'll be right back, and it won't take any time at all. I'm afraid you must be starved.
KIRBY. (*Going U.C.*) Oh, no. Quite all right. (*He sees PAUL's Meccano boat model.*) Hello! What's this? I didn't know there were little children in the house.



The kind of little details that we get throughout this, it also further shows how they inhabit completely different worlds.

“You usually escape all this hot weather, do not you, Misses Kirby? Up in Maine? Misses Kirby, as a rule. I had to come down for the Flower Show. Mother would not miss that for the world. That blue ribbon is the highest spot of the year.” It is a very different world altogether, very different aspirations, very different ambitions, and routines.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:00)

PAUL. Oh, no. That's mine.
KIRBY. Really? Well, I suppose every man has his hobby. Or do you use this as a model of some kind?
PAUL. No, I just play with it.
KIRBY. I see.
TONY. Maybe you'd be better off if you had a hobby like that, Dad.
Instead of raising orchids.
KIRBY. (*Crossing down to back of table. Indulgently.*) Yes, I wouldn't be surprised. (*PENNY sits L. of table. ALICE comes down R.*)
ALICE. (*Leaping on this as a safe topic.*) Oh, do tell us about your orchids, Mr. Kirby. (*KIRBY crosses up to alcove. ALICE addresses others.*) You know, they take six years before they blossom, don't they? Think of that!
KIRBY. (*Addressing GRANDPA and PENNY. Warming to his subject.*) Oh, some of them take longer than that. I've got one coming along now that I've waited ten years for.
PENNY. (*Making a joke.*) Believe it or not, I was waiting for an orchid. (*PAUL laughs.*)
KIRBY. (*ESSIE sits.*) Ah—yes. Of course during that time they re-



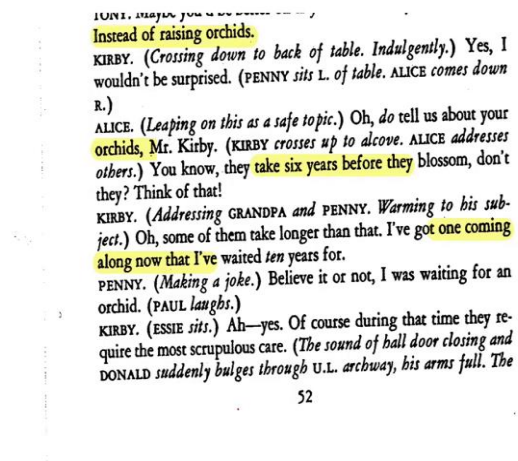
And just when they get into the discussion about hobbies because everything that they see in the Sycamore family, it is all pointing out towards something eccentric. The Kirby's are genuinely unable to comprehend what it is.

“Kirby's trying to neutralize that discussion saying I suppose every man has his hobby or do you use this as a model of some kind. No, I just play with it. This is certainly these two gentlemen, they inhabit clearly in different worlds.”

Their adult world views are very different that they are not able to sink in with the idea of the hobby to, hobby means very different for both of them. Maybe you would be better off if you had a hobby like that, dad. Tony is trying to neutralize the situation here instead of raising orchids.

So, now the discussion “Alice also finds that as a very convenient distraction to take the family to get the family to discuss about the orchids. Oh, do tell us about your orchids, Mister Kirby. They take 6 years before they blossom, do not they?”

(Refer Slide Time: 15:04)



“Some of them longer than that. I have got one coming along that I waited for 10 years.”

(Refer Slide Time: 15:10)

DONALD. Yes'm. Only they didn't have any frankfurters, so I got pickled pig's feet. (Exits U.R.)



(KIRBY blanches at the very idea. He crosses to L. below the table. ED sits U.S. end of couch.)

ALICE. (Following DONALD to kitchen door. Taking command.) Never mind, Donald—just bring everything into the kitchen. (She turns at kitchen door.) Mr. Kirby, please tell them all about the orchids—I know they'd love to hear it. And—excuse me. (She goes U.R.) (PENNY crosses, looks off into kitchen, and comes down R. of table.)

GRANDPA. Kind of an expensive hobby, isn't it, Mr. Kirby—raising orchids?

KIRBY. (Sits L. of table.) Yes, it is, but I feel that if a hobby gives one sufficient pleasure, it's never expensive.

GRANDPA. That's very true. (PAUL, ESSIE and ED are sitting couch. TONY is at the desk.)

KIRBY. You see, I need something to relieve the daily nerve strain. After a week in Wall Street I'd go crazy if I didn't have something like that.



On the one hand, they come across this very non-conformist. But there is also a certain inescapable practicality about them. Grandpas, it is kind of an expensive hobby, is not it, Mister Kirby, raising orchids?

(Refer Slide Time: 15:24)

couch. TONY is at the desk.)

KIRBY. You see, I need something to relieve the daily nerve strain. After a week in Wall Street I'd go crazy if I didn't have something like that. Lot of men I know have yachts—just for that very reason.



GRANDPA. (Mildly.) Why don't they give up Wall Street?

KIRBY. How's that?

GRANDPA. I was just joking.

MRS. KIRBY. I think it's necessary for everyone to have a hobby. Of course, it's more to me than a hobby, but my great solace is—spiritualism.

PENNY. Spiritualism? Now, Mrs. Kirby, everybody knows that's a fake.

MRS. KIRBY. (Freezing.) To me, Mrs. Sycamore, spiritualism is—well—I would rather not discuss it, Mrs. Sycamore. (She looks at KIRBY.)

KIRBY. He rises.)

PAUL. (Rising from couch and crossing to PENNY.) Remember, Penny, you've got one or two hobbies of your own.

PENNY. Yes, but not silly ones.

53



“Yes, it is, but I feel that if a hobby gives one sufficient pleasure, it is never expensive. That is very true. You see, I need something to relieve the daily nerve strain. After a week in Wall Street, I would go crazy if I did not have something like that. Lot of men I know have yachts, just for that very reason.

And grandpa is asking another very practical question which will only sound insane to Kirby's ears. Why do not they give up Wall Street? How is that? I was just joking. I think it is necessary for everyone to have a hobby. It is more to me than a hobby, but my great solace is spiritualism.

Misses Kirby pitching in with what she thinks it her, it is her hobby. Penny being the being Penny, she is unable to say, unable to fake anything. And she says, spiritualism? Now, Misses Kirby, everybody knows that is a fake."

Paul is also trying to intervene in this and trying to tell Penny that you also have hobbies of your own, but according to her writing plays that is not a silly hobby. But of course, going after spiritualism that certainly is a silly hobby.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:33)

GRANDPA. *(With a little cough.)* I don't think it matters what the hobby is—the important thing is to have one.

KOL. *(Crossing over back of table to D.L., in front of desk.)* To be ideal, a hobby should improve the body as well as the mind. The Romans were a great people! Why? What was their hobby? Wrestling. In wrestling you have to think quick with the mind and act quick with the body.

KIRBY. Yes, but I'm afraid wrestling is not very practical for most of us. *(He gives a deprecating little laugh.)* I wouldn't make a very good showing as a wrestler.

KOL. You could be a great wrestler. You are built for it. Look! *(With a startlingly quick movement KOLENKHOV grabs KIRBY'S arms, knocks his legs from under him with a quick movement of a foot, and presto! KIRBY is flat on his whatisis. Not only that, but instantaneously KOLENKHOV is on top of him. MRS. KIRBY rises. Just at this moment ALICE re-enters the room—naturally, she stands petrified. Then rushes immediately to the rescue, TONY and ED arriving at the scene of battle first. Amidst the general confusion they*



So, grandpa is again bringing it into our, trying to bring in resolution by saying, the important thing is to have one.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:42)

ing at the scene of battle first. Amidst the general confusion they help KIRBY to his feet.)
ALICE. Mr. Kirby! Are you—hurt?
TONY. Are you all right, Father?
KIRBY. *(Pulling himself together.)* I—I—uh — *(He blinks, uncertainly.)* Where are my glasses?
ALICE. Here they are, Mr. Kirby. . . . Oh, Mr. Kirby, they're broken. *(PAUL turns to PENNY.)*
KOL. *(Full of apology.)* Oh, I am sorry. But when you wrestle again, Mr. Kirby, you will of course not wear glasses!
KIRBY. *(Coldly furious.)* I do not intend to wrestle again, Mr. Kolenkhov. *(He draws himself up, stiffly, and in return gets a sharp pain in the back. He gives a little gasp.)*
TONY. *(He assists his father to chair L. of table.)* Better sit down, Father.
ALICE. *(Crossing to KOLENKHOV.)* Mr. Kolenkhov, how could you do such a thing? Why didn't somebody stop him? *(KOLENKHOV turns U.S.)*
MRS. KIRBY. *(Rises.)* I think, if you don't mind, perhaps we had better be going. *(Gathers wraps.)* *(GRANDPA rises.)*
—MOTHER!



“Kolenkhov, also has a very tangential discussion about the Romans over there, about wrestling and things again take a very prompt and ugly turn when with a startling quick movement Kolenkhov grabs Kirby’s arms knocks, his legs from under him with a quick movement of a foot and presto Kirby is flat on his waist.” So, and not only that, but instantaneously Kolenkhov is on top of him. It takes a while for them to, all of them to recover from that.


(Refer Slide Time: 17:11)

do such a thing? Why didn't somebody stop him? *(KOLENKHOV turns U.S.)*
MRS. KIRBY. *(Rises.)* I think, if you don't mind, perhaps we had better be going. *(Gathers wraps.)* *(GRANDPA rises.)*
TONY. Mother!
ALICE. *(Close to tears.)* Oh, Mrs. Kirby—please! Please don't go! Mr. Kirby—please! I—I've ordered some scrambled eggs for you, and—plain salad — Oh, please don't go!



Kirby does not want to wrestle, obviously. And Kolenkhov, fails to see what he did wrong. That he fails to see how this was, this had to take an unpleasant turn.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:13)



KOL. (Comes D.L.) I am sorry if I did something wrong. And I apologize. (Crosses U.L.)

ALICE. I can't tell you how sorry I am, Mr. Kirby. If I'd been here

KIRBY. (From a great height.) That's quite all right.

TONY. Of course it is. It's all right, Alice. (To MRS. KIRBY.) We're not going. (Arm around ALICE.)


(A moment's silence—no one knows quite what to say. Then MRS. KIRBY looks at KIRBY and sits. Then KIRBY sits. Finally GRANDPA sits.)

PENNY. (Brightly.) Well! That was exciting for a minute, wasn't it?


GRANDPA. (Quickly.) You were talking about your orchids, Kirby. Do you raise many different varieties?

KIRBY. (Still unbending.) I'm afraid I've quite forgotten about my orchids. (More silence, and everyone very uncomfortable.)

ALICE. I'm—awfully sorry, Mr. Kirby.



(Refer Slide Time: 17:20)



ALICE. I'm—awfully sorry, Mr. Kirby.

KOL. (Coming D.L. Exploding.) What did I do that was so terrible? I threw him on the floor! Did it kill him?

ALICE. Please, Mr. Kolenkhov. (An annoyed gesture from KOLENKHOV. He sits in desk chair. Another general pause.)

PENNY. I'm sure dinner won't be any time at all now. (Crosses U.R., looks off into kitchen. A pained smile from MRS. KIRBY.)

ESSIE. (Coming D.S.R.) Would you like some candy while you're waiting, Mr. Kirby? I've got some freshly made.

KIRBY. My doctor does not permit me to eat candy. Thank you.

ESSIE. But these are nothing, Mr. Kirby. Just coconut and marshmallow and fudge.

ALICE. Don't, Essie.

ESSIE. Well — (Crosses to couch. They sit there again.)


RHEBA appears in kitchen doorway, beckoning violently to ALICE.

RHEBA. (In a loud whisper.) Miss Alice! Miss Alice!

ALICE. Excuse me. (Starts U.R.) What is it, Rheba? (Quickly to RHEBA's side.)

RHEBA. The eggs done fell down the sink.

ALICE. (Desperately.) Make some more! Onick!



(Refer Slide Time: 17:24)

waiting, Mr. Kirby? I've got some freshly made.
KIRBY. My doctor does not permit me to eat candy. Thank you.
ESSIE. But these are nothing, Mr. Kirby. Just coconut and marshmallow and fudge.
ALICE. Don't, Essie.
ESSIE. Well — (Crosses to couch. They sit there again.) (Then RHEBA appears in kitchen doorway, beckoning violently to ALICE.)
RHEBA. (In a loud whisper.) Miss Alice! Miss Alice!
ALICE. Excuse me. (Starts U.R.) What is it, Rheba? (Quickly flies to RHEBA's side.)
RHEBA. The eggs done fell down the sink.
ALICE. (Desperately.) Make some more! Quick!
RHEBA. I ain't got any.
ALICE. Send Donald out for some!
RHEBA. (Disappearing U.R.) All right.

55



So, they tried to talk about orchids which does not work.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:25)



ALICE. (Calling after her.) Tell him to hurry! (She turns back to the KIRBYS.) I'm so sorry. There'll be a little delay, but everything will be ready in just a minute. (At this moment DONALD fairly shoots out of kitchen door and across living room, beating the Olympic record for all time. SLAM on DONALD's exit. He exits through ball door U.L. PENNY tries to ease situation with a gay little laugh. It doesn't quite come off, however.) "Woosh!"
TONY. I've certainly put you people to a lot of trouble, with my stupidity.
GRANDPA. Not at all, Tony.
PENNY. (Coming down R. of table.) Look! Why don't we all play a game of some sort while we're waiting?
TONY. Oh, that'd be fine.
ALICE. Mother, I don't think Mr. and Mrs. Kirby —
KOL. (Rising from desk chair.) I have an idea. I know a wonderful trick with a glass of water. (He reaches for a full glass that stands on desk. Crosses to KIRBY and holds it over KIRBY's head.)
ALICE. (Quickly.) No, Mr. Kolenkhov.
GRANDPA. (Rises, shaking his head.) No-o, Mr. Kolenkhov. (Sits.)



And that is when Penny comes up with this idea about whether why do not we all play a game of some sort.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:31)

stands on desk. Crosses to KIRBY and holds it over KIRBY'S HEAD.)
ALICE. (*Quickly.*) No, Mr. Kolenkhov.
GRANDPA. (*Rises, shaking his head.*) No-o, Mr. Kolenkhov. (*Sits.*)
(*A shrug and KOLENKHOV returns glass to desk.*)
PENNY. But I'm sure Mr. and Mrs. Kirby would love this game.
It's perfectly harmless.
ALICE. Please, Mother . . .
KIRBY. I'm not very good at games, Mrs. Sycamore.
PENNY. (*Crossing below table to the desk.*) Oh, but *any* fool could
play this game, Mr. Kirby. All you do is write your name on a piece
of paper — (*Getting pads and pencils.*) (*TONY helps KOLEN-*
KHOV and himself to pads and pencils.)
ALICE. But, mother, Mr. Kirby doesn't want —
PENNY. Oh, he'll love it! (*Going right on distributing pencils,*
pads.) Here you are, Mr. Kirby. Write your name on this piece of
paper. And Mrs. Kirby, you do the same on this one. (*PAUL, ESSIE*
and ED sit on couch. ESSIE takes pencils, ED pads.)
ALICE. Mother, what *is* this game?
PENNY. (*Crossing back of table to L. KOLENKHOV sits at desk.*) I
used to play it at school. It's called **Forget-Me-Not**. Here you are,
Grandpa. Now, I'm going to call out five words—just anything at





This is perhaps the deepest the play gets, with a certain unintentional, inadvertent, psychological revelations from particularly from the Kirby's.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:39)

paper. And Mrs. Kirby, you do the same on this one. (*PAUL, ESSIE*
and ED sit on couch. ESSIE takes pencils, ED pads.)
ALICE. Mother, what *is* this game?
PENNY. (*Crossing back of table to L. KOLENKHOV sits at desk.*) I
used to play it at school. It's called **Forget-Me-Not**. Here you are,
Grandpa. Now, I'm going to call out five words—just anything at
all—and as I say each word, you're to put down the first thing that
comes into your mind. Is that clear? For instance, if I say "grass,"
you might put down "green"—just whatever you think of, see? Or
if I call out "chair," you might put down "table." It shows the re-

56



“They play this game which Penny says they used to play it at school. It is called forget-me-not. She will call out 5 words, just anything at all, and the others are expected to put down the first thing that they that come to their mind. It is like a free association. So, for instance, if she says grass, you might put down green or a chair table. So, so whatever comes to each person's mind in an instant?”

(Refer Slide Time: 18:04)

actions people have to different things. You see how simple it is, Mr. Kirby?

TONY. Come on, Father! Be a sport!

KIRBY. (*Stiffly.*) Very well. I shall be happy to play it.

PENNY. You see, Alice? He *does* want to play.

ALICE. (*Uneasily.*) Well —

PENNY. Now, then! Are we ready?

KOL. Ready!

PENNY. Now, remember—you must play fair. Put down the first thing that comes into your mind.

KIRBY. (*Pencil poised.*) I understand.

PENNY. Everybody ready? . . . The first word is "potatoes." (*She repeats it.*) "Potatoes." . . . Ready for the next one? . . . "Bathroom." (*ALICE shifts rather uneasily.*)

ALICE. Mother! (*But seeing that no one else seems to mind, she relaxes again.*)

PENNY. Bathroom!—Got that?

KOL. Go ahead.



(Refer Slide Time: 18:12)

PENNY. All ready? . . . "Lust."

ALICE. Mother, this is not exactly what you —

PENNY. Nonsense, Alice—that word's all right.

ALICE. Mother, it's *not* all right.

MRS. KIRBY. (*Unexpectedly.*) Oh, I don't know. (*To ALICE.*) It seems to me that's a perfectly fair word.

PENNY. (*To ALICE.*) You see? Now, you mustn't interrupt the game. (*ALICE drifts u.s.*)

KIRBY. May I have that last word again, please?

PENNY. "Lust," Mr. Kirby.

KIRBY. (*Writing.*) I've got it.

GRANDPA. This is quite a game, isn't it?

PENNY. Sssh, Grandpa. . . . All ready? . . . "Honeymoon."

(*ESSIE snickers a little, which is all it takes to start PENNY off. Then she suddenly remembers herself.*) Now, Essie! . . . All right, last word is "Sex."

ALICE. (*Under her breath.*) Mother! (*Crossing to buffet.*)

PENNY. Everybody got "sex"? . . . All right— (*She takes to and KOLENKHOV's papers.*) now give me all the papers you have your paper, Mr. Kirby? (*Crosses back of table*)



So, they begin to play this and the first one is potatoes, and the next is bathroom, and lust, honeymoon, and finally, sex.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:19)

seems to me that's a perfectly fair word.
PENNY. (To ALICE.) You see? Now, you mustn't interrupt the game. (ALICE drifts U.S.)
KIRBY. May I have that last word again, please?
PENNY. "Lust," Mr. Kirby.
KIRBY. (Writing.) I've got it.
GRANDPA. This is quite a game, isn't it?
PENNY. Sssh, Grandpa. . . . All ready? . . . "Honeymoon."
(ESSIE snickers a little, which is all it takes to start PENNY off. Then she suddenly remembers herself.) Now, Essie! . . . All right. The last word is "Sex."
ALICE. (Under her breath.) Mother! (Crossing to buffet.)
PENNY. Everybody got "sex"? . . . All right— (She takes TONY's and KOLENKHOV's papers.) now give me all the papers. May I have your paper, Mr. Kirby? (Crosses back of table to R. gather the pads.) (Three at table tear off sheets. ED hands three papers to PENNY.)
GRANDPA. What happens now?



57



Some of these terms Alice begins to wonder if that could cause some discomfort, but the Kirby seemed to be entirely game for that, and now they are reading out the responses.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:29)

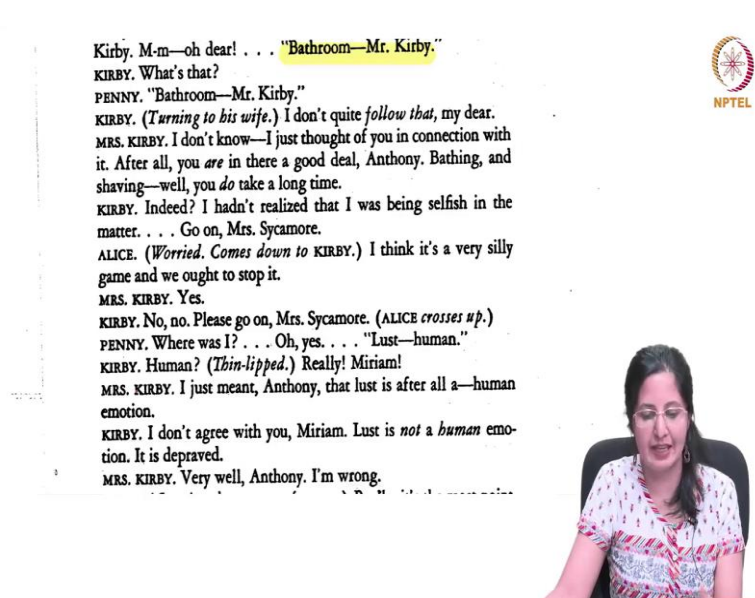
PENNY. Oh, this is the best part. Now I read out your reactions. (Coming D.R.)
KIRBY. I see. It's really quite an interesting game.
PENNY. I knew you'd like it. I'll read your paper first, Mr. Kirby. (To the others.) I'm going to read Mr. Kirby's paper first. Listen, everybody! This is Mr. Kirby. . . . "Potatoes—steak." That's very good. See how they go together? Steak and potatoes?
KIRBY. (Modestly, but obviously pleased with himself.) I just happened to think of it. (ALICE turns front.)
PENNY. It's very good. . . . "Bathroom—toothpaste." Well! "Lust—unlawful." Isn't that nice? "Honeymoon—trip." Yes. (Giggle.) And "sex—male." Oh yes, of course . . . you are. That's really a wonderful paper, Mr. Kirby.
KIRBY. (Taking a curtain call.) Thank you. . . . It's more than just a game, you know. It's sort of an experiment in psychology, isn't it?
PENNY. Yes, it is—it shows just how your mind works. Now we'll see how Mrs. Kirby's mind works. . . . Ready? . . . This is Mrs. Kirby. . . . "Potatoes—starch." I know just what you mean, Mrs.



Kirby interestingly, he begins to take a fancy towards the game. "It is really quiet an interesting game. And now she is reading out the responses from first from Kirby's, Mister Kirby's "potatoes-steak". That is very good. See how they go together? Steak and potatoes? Kirby modestly, but, obviously, pleased with himself. He seems to have given the right responses as we would see over here.

He is giving at least, he is trying to give the right responses and making it all sync it well which is what he is also trying to do with his life. Penny is in some way right that this game will also tell us much about each character. “Bathroom-toothpaste.” “Lust-unlawful.” “Honeymoon-trip.” And “Sex-male.”” As a matter of fact, something which fits the correct box, very conventional according to the responses.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:27)



Kirby. M-m—oh dear! . . . “Bathroom—Mr. Kirby.”
KIRBY. What’s that?
PENNY. “Bathroom—Mr. Kirby.”
KIRBY. (*Turning to his wife.*) I don’t quite *follow that*, my dear.
MRS. KIRBY. I don’t know—I just thought of you in connection with it. After all, you *are* in there a good deal, Anthony. Bathing, and shaving—well, you *do* take a long time.
KIRBY. Indeed? I hadn’t realized that I was being selfish in the matter. . . . Go on, Mrs. Sycamore.
ALICE. (*Worried. Comes down to KIRBY.*) I think it’s a very silly game and we ought to stop it.
MRS. KIRBY. Yes.
KIRBY. No, no. Please go on, Mrs. Sycamore. (*ALICE crosses up.*)
PENNY. Where was I? . . . Oh, yes. . . . “Lust—human.”
KIRBY. Human? (*Thin-lipped.*) Really! Miriam!
MRS. KIRBY. I just meant, Anthony, that lust is after all a—human emotion.
KIRBY. I don’t agree with you, Miriam. Lust is *not* a human emotion. It is depraved.
MRS. KIRBY. Very well, Anthony. I’m wrong.

We know she moves on to read Penny moves on to read what Misses Kirby has written. ““Potatoes-starch.” I know just what you mean. “Bathroom-Mister Kirby”. So, immediately Kirby, Mister Kirby takes offense and Misses Kirby says, after all you are in there a good deal Anthony, bathing and shaving, well you do take a lot of time.

Alice begins to realize the direction that the game could potentially take and she wants to stop it, but Kirby also wants them to the Kirby’s also wants, but the Kirby’s also want Penny to move on.”

(Refer Slide Time: 20:05)

ALICE. (*worried. Comes down to Kirby.*) I think it's a very silly game and we ought to stop it.
MRS. KIRBY. Yes.
KIRBY. No, no. Please go on, Mrs. Sycamore. (*ALICE crosses up.*)
PENNY. Where was I? . . . Oh, yes. . . . "Lust—human."
KIRBY. Human? (*Thin-lipped.*) Really! Miriam!
MRS. KIRBY. I just meant, Anthony, that lust is after all a—human emotion.
KIRBY. I don't agree with you, Miriam. Lust is *not* a human emotion. It is depraved.
MRS. KIRBY. Very well, Anthony. I'm wrong.
ALICE. (*Crossing down to L. of KIRBY.*) Really, it's the most pointless game. Suppose we play Twenty Questions?

58



“Penny continues. This is Misses Kirby’s list, “Lust-human.” And this is something which is entirely offensive, quite sacrilegious to Kirby, who had written down against lust as unlawful. So, really, Miriam. I just meant, Anthony, that lust is after all a human emotion.

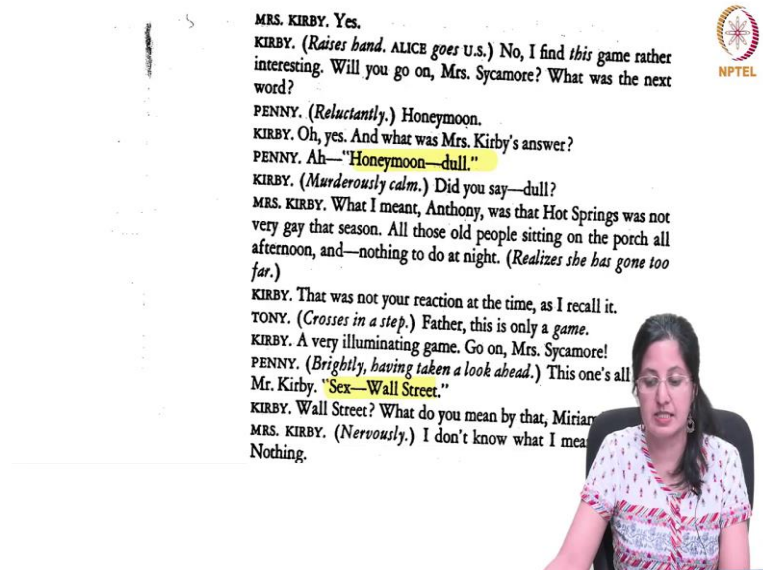
I do not agree with you Miriam. Lust is not a human emotion. It is depraved. Very well, Anthony. I am wrong. It quite sums up the compatibility between them or rather the incompatibility between them, and the world views that they hold which are very different.”

This is a very telling revelation given that they are being pitched against the Sycamores, who are entirely seen as eccentric, who are seen as completely irrelevant to in the context of the society that they are living in. But at least they seem to be in sync, in the philosophy, in their approach towards life.

There are no surprises that the Sycamores can spring on each other. But, here with this simple game we find that the Kirby’s, Mister Kirby and Misses Kirby they are also surprising each other about their, the value systems that they hold.

It is also quite telling how little they know about each other, they how little they know about the each other’s opinion about themselves.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:25)



MRS. KIRBY. Yes.
KIRBY. (*Raises hand. ALICE goes U.S.*) No, I find *this* game rather interesting. Will you go on, Mrs. Sycamore? What was the next word?
PENNY. (*Reluctantly.*) Honeymoon.
KIRBY. Oh, yes. And what was Mrs. Kirby's answer?
PENNY. Ah—"Honeymoon—dull."
KIRBY. (*Murderously calm.*) Did you say—dull?
MRS. KIRBY. What I meant, Anthony, was that Hot Springs was not very gay that season. All those old people sitting on the porch all afternoon, and—nothing to do at night. (*Realizes she has gone too far.*)
KIRBY. That was not your reaction at the time, as I recall it.
TONY. (*Crosses in a step.*) Father, this is only a *game*.
KIRBY. A very illuminating game. Go on, Mrs. Sycamore!
PENNY. (*Brightly, having taken a look ahead.*) This one's all Mr. Kirby. "*Sex—Wall Street.*"
KIRBY. Wall Street? What do you mean by that, Miriam?
MRS. KIRBY. (*Nervously.*) I don't know what I mean.
Nothing.

The next thing in the list, "Honeymoon-dull." That works as almost like the final nail in the coffin. "Kirby murderously calm, did you say dull?"

What I meant, Anthony, was that Hot Springs was not very gay that season. All those old people sitting on the porch all afternoon, and nothing to do at night. Realizing she has gone too far. This space, this family's space becomes very liberating for the Kirby's, though not in a in a very nice surprising way. That was not your reaction at the time, as I recall it. Tony, father, this is only a game. A very illuminating game. Go on, Misses Sycamore."

(Refer Slide Time: 22:08)

KIRBY. Wall Street? What do you mean by that, Miriam?
MRS. KIRBY. (*Nervously.*) I don't know what I meant, Anthony. Nothing.
KIRBY. But you must have meant something, Miriam, or you wouldn't have put it down.
MRS. KIRBY. It was just the first thing that came into my head, that's all.
KIRBY. But what does it mean? Sex—Wall Street.
MRS. KIRBY. (*Annoyed.*) Oh, I don't know what it means, Anthony. It's just that you're always talking about Wall Street, even when — (*She catches herself.*) I don't know what I meant. . . . Would you mind terribly, Alice, if we didn't stay for dinner?
(*Rises. GRANDPA and KOLENKHOV rise. Also ESSIE, ED and PAUL.*) I'm afraid this game has given me a headache.
ALICE. (*Quietly.*) I understand, Mrs. Kirby.
KIRBY. (*Rises. Clearing his throat.*) Yes, possibly we'd better postpone the dinner, if you don't mind. (*KOLENKHOV drifts U.C.*)
PENNY. But you're coming tomorrow night, aren't you?
MRS. KIRBY. (*Quickly.*) I'm afraid we have an engagement tomorrow night. (*Wrap is half on shoulders.*)



“Penny is very pepped up, very pumped up about this. This one’s all, right. “Sex-Wall Street.” Wall Street, what do you mean by that, Miriam? I do not know what I meant, Anthony. Nothing. But you must have meant something, Miriam, or you would not have put it down.” So, being pushed to spell out what she had in mind, Misses Kirby goes with it. “It was just the first thing that came into my head that is all.

But, what does it mean? Sex-Wall Street. Misses Kirby is now annoyed, and she just spells it out. Oh, I do not know what that means, Anthony. It is just that you are always talking about Wall Street, even when; she catches herself. I do not know what I meant. Would you mind terribly, Alice, if we did not stay for dinner. The damage has already been done. I am afraid this game has given me a headache.”

So, what is most interesting is that it is not the Sycamores who gave a headache to Mister to Misses Kirby, it is not the Sycamores who made things uncomfortable between Mister Kirby and Misses Kirby. It is those the unresolved issues or the things that they have never spoken about before.

It is quite obvious that in their very politically correct, sophisticated setting, they have never discussed these matters of lust, of sex, of the time that they spend in bathroom. These are the things which come to the forefront only when they are in a space like the Vanderhof Sycamore family.

Interestingly, that living room becomes this space of where imminent psychological liberation is possible, where anyone can voice anything that they have in their mind without feeling any hesitation about it.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:47)

... it's just that you're always talking about Wall Street, even when — *(She catches herself.)* I don't know what I meant. . . . Would you mind terribly, Alice, if we didn't stay for dinner? *(Rises. GRANDPA and KOLENKHOV rise. Also ESSIE, ED and PAUL.)* I'm afraid this game has given me a headache. ALICE. *(Quietly.)* I understand, Mrs. Kirby. KIRBY. *(Rises. Clearing his throat.)* Yes, possibly we'd better postpone the dinner, if you don't mind. *(KOLENKHOV drifts U.C.)* PENNY. But you're coming tomorrow night, aren't you? MRS. KIRBY. *(Quickly.)* I'm afraid we have an engagement tomorrow night. *(Wraps his hand on shoulders.)* KIRBY. Perhaps we'd better postpone the whole affair a little while. The hot weather and—ah — TONY. *(Smouldering.)* I think we're being very ungracious, Father. Of course we'll stay to dinner—tonight.

59



And in the Sycamore family, they are never judged for being anything, for having any opinion, for being for having any of those having this value system or the other value system or not having a value system.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:02)

MRS. KIRBY. *(Unyielding.)* I have a very bad headache, Tony. KIRBY. *(To TONY.)* Come, come, Tony, I'm sure everyone understands. *(KOLENKHOV continues drifting down to back of the table.)* TONY. *(Flaring.)* Well, I don't. I think we ought to stay. ALICE. *(Very low. She comes down to TONY.)* No, Tony. TONY. What? ALICE. We were fools, Tony, ever to think it would work. It won't. Mr. Kirby, I won't be at the office tomorrow. I—won't be there at all any more. *(Crosses D.L. below desk.)* TONY. *(Follows her. Puts his arm around her.)* Alice, what are you talking about? KIRBY. *(To ALICE.)* I'm sorry, my dear—very sorry. . . . Are you ready, Miriam? MRS. KIRBY. *(With enormous dignity. She crosses over to KIRBY.)* Yes, Anthony. TONY. Darling, you mustn't mind this.





(Refer Slide Time: 24:04)

TONY. Darling, you mustn't mind this.
KIRBY. Oh—it's been very nice to have met you all. (*With MRS. KIRBY, he goes as far as the archway.*)
MRS. KIRBY. Yes, lovely.
KIRBY. Are you coming, Tony?
TONY. No, Father. I'm not.
KIRBY. (*Crossing up to arch with MRS. KIRBY.*) I see. . . . Your mother and I will be waiting for you at home. . . . Good night.
PENNIE and ESSIE. Good night.

(Before the KIRBYS can take more than a step toward the door, however, a new FIGURE looms up in the archway. It is a quiet and competent-looking individual with a steely eye, and two more just like him loom up behind him.)

THE MAN. (*Very quietly.*) Stay right where you are, everybody. (*There is a little scream from MRS. KIRBY, an exclamation from PENNY.*) Don't move.
PENNY. Oh, good heavens!
KIRBY. (*Speaks on cue "Don't move."*) How dare you? Why, what does this mean?



So, again the dinner is being brought to a very abrupt end for obvious reasons.



(Refer Slide Time: 24:06)

PENNIE and ESSIE. Good night.

(Before the KIRBYS can take more than a step toward the door, however, a new FIGURE looms up in the archway. It is a quiet and competent-looking individual with a steely eye, and two more just like him loom up behind him.)

THE MAN. (*Very quietly.*) Stay right where you are, everybody. (*There is a little scream from MRS. KIRBY, an exclamation from PENNY.*) Don't move.
PENNY. Oh, good heavens!
KIRBY. (*Speaks on cue "Don't move."*) How dare you? Why, what does this mean?
GRANDPA. What is all this?
KIRBY. I demand an explanation!
THE MAN. Keep your mouth shut, you! (*PENNY turns to PAUL. ED backs up as G-Man crosses R. He advances slowly into the room,*

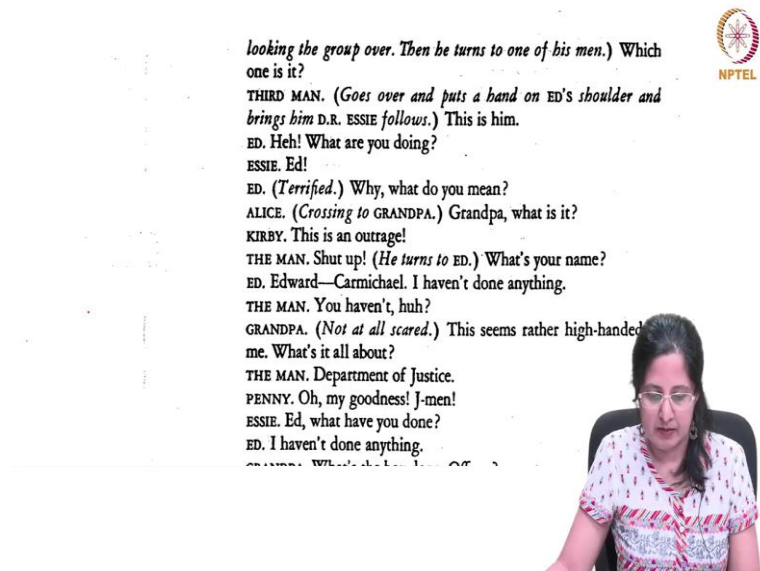
60



And just when the Kirby's are about to leave, here something more dramatic is happening. And even for the Kirby's, this night turns out to be unusually eccentric, unusually dramatic. We find that before the Kirby's can take more than a step toward the door, a new figure looms up in the archway. It is a quiet and competent-looking individual with a steely eye, and two more just like him loom up behind him.

“Stay right where you are, everybody. There is a little scream from Misses Kirby, an exclamation from Penny. Do not move. Oh, good heavens. How dare you? Why this why? What does this mean what is all this? I demand an explanation. Keep your mouth shut.

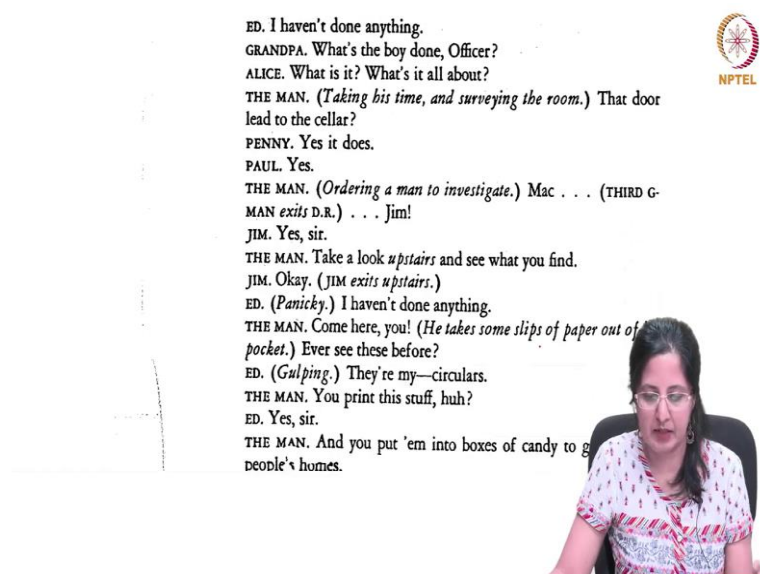
(Refer Slide Time: 24:51)



looking the group over. Then he turns to one of his men.) Which one is it?
THIRD MAN. *(Goes over and puts a hand on ED's shoulder and brings him D.R. ESSIE follows.)* This is him.
ED. Heh! What are you doing?
ESSIE. Ed!
ED. *(Terrified.)* Why, what do you mean?
ALICE. *(Crossing to GRANDPA.)* Grandpa, what is it?
KIRBY. This is an outrage!
THE MAN. Shut up! *(He turns to ED.)* What's your name?
ED. Edward—Carmichael. I haven't done anything.
THE MAN. You haven't, huh?
GRANDPA. *(Not as all scared.)* This seems rather high-handed of me. What's it all about?
THE MAN. Department of Justice.
PENNY. Oh, my goodness! J-men!
ESSIE. Ed, what have you done?
ED. I haven't done anything.

The Kirby's are in this situation for the first time perhaps, but even the even for the Sycamores, this is a very unusual situation.”

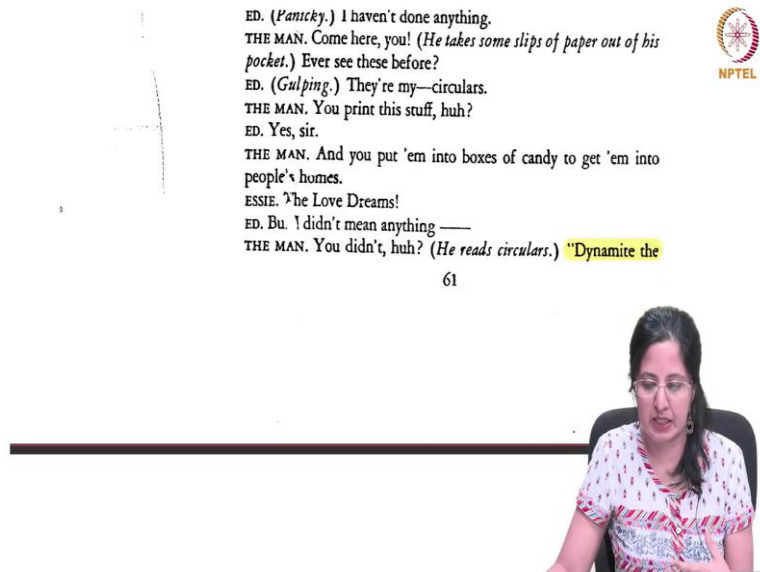
(Refer Slide Time: 24:59)



ED. I haven't done anything.
GRANDPA. What's the boy done, Officer?
ALICE. What is it? What's it all about?
THE MAN. *(Taking his time, and surveying the room.)* That door lead to the cellar?
PENNY. Yes it does.
PAUL. Yes.
THE MAN. *(Ordering a man to investigate.)* Mac . . . *(THIRD MAN exits D.R.)* . . . Jim!
JIM. Yes, sir.
THE MAN. Take a look *upstairs* and see what you find.
JIM. Okay. *(JIM exits upstairs.)*
ED. *(Panicky.)* I haven't done anything.
THE MAN. Come here, you! *(He takes some slips of paper out of pocket.)* Ever see these before?
ED. *(Gulping.)* They're my—circulars.
THE MAN. You print this stuff, huh?
ED. Yes, sir.
THE MAN. And you put 'em into boxes of candy to give to people's homes.

“This is about Ed, Edward Carmichael. I have not done anything. You have not, huh? This seems rather high-handed to me. What is it all about? But if you notice, grandpa is not scared here at all. So, this is he is from the Department of Justice. What have you done? I have not done anything. What is the boy done, officer? What is it? What is it all about? That door lead to the cellar? Yes it does.”

(Refer Slide Time: 25:24)



ED. (*Panicky.*) I haven't done anything.
THE MAN. Come here, you! (*He takes some slips of paper out of his pocket.*) Ever see these before?
ED. (*Gulping.*) They're my—circulars.
THE MAN. You print this stuff, huh?
ED. Yes, sir.
THE MAN. And you put 'em into boxes of candy to get 'em into people's homes.
ESSIE. The Love Dreams!
ED. Bu. I didn't mean anything —
THE MAN. You didn't, huh? (*He reads circulars.*) "Dynamite the

61

So, take a look upstairs and see what you find. “The Ed is continuing to say I have not done anything. And this man who is there, from the Department of Justice. He takes some slips of paper out of his pocket, ever see these before? These are my circulars.

You print this stuff huh, and you put them into boxes of candy to get into people's homes.” This is what they had been doing all day that day, distributing candy, and they had been using this circulars, these circulars that Ed had been printing out too.

(Refer Slide Time: 25:58)

Capitol!" "Dynamite the White House!" "Dynamite the Supreme Court!" "God is the State; the State is God!"
ED. But I didn't mean that. I just like to print. Don't I, Grandpa?
(DONALD enters U.L.)
GRANDPA. (*Waves ED and ESSIE U.S.*) Now, Officer, the Government's in no danger from Ed. Printing is just his hobby, that's all. He prints anything.
THE MAN. He does, eh?
PENNY. I never heard of such nonsense.
KIRBY. I refuse to stay here and —
(DE PINNA, at this point, is shoved through cellar door by MAC, protesting as he comes.)
DE PINNA. Hey, let me get my pipe, will you? Let me get my pipe!
MAC. Shut up, you! . . . We were right, Chief. They've got enough gunpowder down there to blow up the whole city.
PAUL. But we only use that —
THE MAN. Keep still! . . . Everybody in this house is under arrest.
KIRBY. What's that?
MRS. KIRBY. Oh, good heavens!



So, this is how the circulars read, “Dynamite the capital.” “Dynamite the White House.” “Dynamite the supreme court.” “God is the state, the state is God.” “I did not mean that. I just like to print. Do not I, grandpa? Printing is just his hobby that is all. He prints anything.”

Here is a family just the way they do not understand the logic or the rationale behind income tax. They also do not understand how printing is also political activity, how printing is also an activity for which one needs the states permission, how these could be, how these sort of words, that printing and circulating certain kind of words could be seen as seditious.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:35)

KIRBY. *What's that?*
MRS. KIRBY. Oh, good heavens!
GRANDPA. Now look here, Officer—this is all nonsense.
DE PINNA. You'd better let me get my pipe. I left it —
THE MAN. Shut up, all of you!
KOL. It seems to me, Officer —
THE MAN. Shut up! *(From the stairs comes sound of drunken singing—"There was a young lady," etc. GAY, wrapped in PENNY'S negligee, is being carried down stairway by a somewhat bewildered G-man.)*
JIM. Keep still, you! Stop that! Stop it!
THE MAN. Who's that?
GRANDPA. That is my mother! *(He sits.)*
KOL. The fireworks! The fireworks! *(And then we hear from the cellar. A whole year's supply of fireworks just goes off.)*
RHEBA. *(Enters U.R.)* Donald! Donald!
(MRS. KIRBY'S scream is just a little louder than the explosion.)
KIRBY. Miriam! Miriam! Are you all right? Are you all right?
TONY. *(Dashing to his mother.)* It's all right! Mother! There's no danger.



(Refer Slide Time: 26:38)

THE MAN. *What's that?*
GRANDPA. That is my mother! *(He sits.)*
KOL. The fireworks! The fireworks! *(And then we hear from the cellar. A whole year's supply of fireworks just goes off.)*
RHEBA. *(Enters U.R.)* Donald! Donald!
(MRS. KIRBY'S scream is just a little louder than the explosion.)
KIRBY. Miriam! Miriam! Are you all right? Are you all right?
TONY. *(Dashing to his mother.)* It's all right! Mother! There's no danger.
ALICE. Grandpa! Grandpa! *(Crosses to GRANDPA.)*
GRANDPA. *(Ever so quietly.)* Well, well, well!



Here, they are now being arrested very soon for circulating such a seditious material and just in the middle of this. This is an unusual night even by the standards of the Sycamore family. “A whole years, supply of fireworks, it just goes off.” So, in the cellar, there is the entire fire crackers, they all just go off because De Pinna did not do something. It was his pipe which was responsible for it.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:03)

DE PINNA. (*Wrenching himself loose from the G-man.*) Let go of me! I've got to go down there!

PAUL. Good lord! (*With DE PINNA, he dashes into the cellar.*)

PENNY. My manuscripts! I've got to save my manuscripts! (*She dashes to her desk.*)

ED. My xylophone! How will I get the xylophone out?

ESSIE. Mr. Kolenkhov! Mr. Kolenkhov!



KOL. Do not worry! Do not worry!

DONALD. (*Rushing toward the kitchen.*) It's all right, Rheba, it's all right!

THE G-MAN. (*Vainly trying to keep order.*) Line up, you people! Line up, all of you!

(*And GAY just keeps singing.*)

CURTAIN



We find that in the middle of all this Penny is bothered about saving her manuscripts, Ed is worried about his xylophone, and they are all now they have to spend the night in jail as this the act II comes to an end.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:20)

ACT III

The following day, RHEBA is in the midst of setting table for dinner, pausing occasionally in her labors to listen to the Edwin C. Hill of the moment—DONALD. With intense interest and concentration, he is reading aloud from a newspaper.



DONALD. "... for appearance in the West Side Court this morning. After spending the night in jail, the defendants, thirteen in all, were brought before Judge Callahan and given suspended sentences for manufacturing fireworks without a permit."

RHEBA. (*Puts plate down.*) Yah. Kept me in the same cell with a strip teaser from a burlesque show.

DONALD. I was in the cell with Mr. Kirby. My, he was mad!

RHEBA. (*Sets knife and fork.*) Mrs. Kirby and the strip teaser—they were fighting all night.

DONALD. Whole lot about Mr. Kirby here. (*RHEBA places napkins. Reading again.*) "Anthony W. Kirby, head of Kirby & Co., 62 Wall Street, who was among those apprehended, declared he was



So, maybe very quickly, we will move on to act III, where it is the following day and they are back to their living room, and in their mind if you go through the way they begin to talk about it nothing seems to have changed for them.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:39)

DONALD. Whole lot about Mr. Kirby here. (RHEBA places napkins. Reading again.) "Anthony W. Kirby, head of Kirby & Co., 62 Wall Street, who was among those apprehended, declared he was in no way interested in the manufacture of fireworks, but refused to state why he was on the premises at the time of the raid. Mr. Kirby is a member of the Union Club, the Racquet Club, the Harvard Club, and the National Geographic Society." My, he certainly is a joiner!

RHEBA. (Pushes in chair above table.) All them rich men are Elks or something.

DONALD. (Looking up from his paper.) I suppose, after all this, Mr. Tony ain't ever going to marry Miss Alice, huh?

RHEBA. No, suh, and it's too bad, too. Miss Alice sure loves that boy.

DONALD. Ever notice how white folks always getting themselves in trouble?

RHEBA. Yassuh, I'm glad I'm colored.

DONALD. Me, too.

RHEBA. (She sighs heavily. Turns chair L. in.) I don't know what I'm going to do with all that food out in the kitchen. Ain't going to be no party tonight, that's sure.



They are going about it just in a regular way and they are also able to in a way hilariously talk about the time that they had spent in jail. "Donald say, I was in cell, I was in the cell with Mister Kirby. My, he was mad. Donald and Rheba are having this conversation." The crisis is not about a having spent the day in jail, about what happened right after that.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:03)

Club, and the National Geographic Society." My, he certainly is a joiner!

RHEBA. (Pushes in chair above table.) All them rich men are Elks or something.

DONALD. (Looking up from his paper.) I suppose, after all this, Mr. Tony ain't ever going to marry Miss Alice, huh?

RHEBA. No, suh, and it's too bad, too. Miss Alice sure loves that boy.

DONALD. Ever notice how white folks always getting themselves in trouble?

RHEBA. Yassuh, I'm glad I'm colored.

DONALD. Me, too.

RHEBA. (She sighs heavily. Turns chair L. in.) I don't know what I'm going to do with all that food out in the kitchen. Ain't going to be no party tonight, that's sure.


DONALD. Ain't we going to eat it anyhow?



Because now, Alice is preparing to leave home because all this became a bit too much for her and she is preparing to leave home and spend time in the mountains as the play

tells us. Donald and Rheba also have this very brief exchange over here about how. Ever notice how white folks always getting themselves in trouble. Yassuh, I am glad, I am colored.


(Refer Slide Time: 28:26)



RHEBA. *(Gets salad plates from buffet.)* Well, I'm cooking it, but I don't think anybody going to have an appetite.
DONALD. I'm hungry.
RHEBA. *(Setting salad forks.)* Well, *they ain't*. They're all so broke up about Miss Alice.
DONALD. What's she want to go 'way for? Where's she going?
RHEBA. *(Puts half of salad plates D.S. of table.)* I don't know—mountains some place. And she's going, all right, no matter what they say. I know Miss Alice when she gets that look in her eye.
DONALD. Too bad, ain't it?
RHEBA. Sure is.
(DE PINNA comes up from cellar, bearing earmarks of the previous day's catastrophe. There is a small bandage around his head and one eye, and another around his R. hand. He also limps.)
DE PINNA. Not even a balloon left. Look. *(Pointing)*



(Refer Slide Time: 28:31)



PAUL. *(Going to her.)* Now, now, reemmy.
PENNY. I can't help it, Paul. Somehow I feel it's our fault.
PAUL. It's mine more than yours, Penny. All these years I've just been—going along, enjoying myself, when maybe I should have been thinking more about Alice.
PENNY. Don't say that, Paul. You've been a wonderful father. And husband, too.
PAUL. *(Crossing to L. of table.)* No, I haven't. Maybe if I'd gone ahead and been an architect—I don't know—something Alice could have been proud of. I felt that all last night, looking at Mr. Kirby.
PENNY. But we've been so happy, Paul.
PAUL. I know, but maybe that's not enough. I used to think it was, but—I'm kind of all mixed up now.
PENNY. *(After a pause.)* What time is she going?
PAUL. Pretty soon. Train leaves at half past seven.
PENNY. Oh, if only she'd see Tony. I'm sure he could persuade her.
PAUL. But she won't, Penny. He's been trying all day.
PENNY. Where is he now?
PAUL. *(Crossing below table to R.)* I don't know—I suppose walk—



We will notice that almost the entire family, they are all unhappy that they made Alice unhappy because that is not what any of them wanted to do through these their actions.

“Penny and Paul, they are having this exchange they think they have wronged Alice in some form. I cannot help it, Paul. Somehow, I feel it is our fault. It is mine more than

yours Penny. All these years, I have just been going along, enjoying myself, when maybe I should have been thinking more about Alice. Do not say that Paul, you have been a wonderful father and husband too.” So, contrast this with the Kirby’s. So, in spite of this there is a way in which the family is able to stick together, in a very human way.

Paul says maybe if I had gone ahead and been an architect something Alice could have been proud of, I felt that all last night looking at Mister Kirby. They are not, they are not unrealistic in certain ways. They are all able to see where Alice comes from as well.

(Refer Slide Time: 29:25)

PAUL. . . . I feel so sorry for Tony, too.
PENNY. No, I don't suppose so. . . .
(GRANDPA comes down stairs L.—unsmiling, but not too depressed by the situation. PENNY, anxiously, rises.) Well?—Grandpa?
GRANDPA. Now, Penny, let the girl alone.
PENNY. But, Grandpa ———
GRANDPA. (Crossing back of table to chair R.) Suppose she goes to the Adirondacks? She'll be back. You can take just so much Adirondacks, and then you come home.
PENNY. (Sits desk chair.)—Oh, but it's all so terrible, Grandpa.
GRANDPA. In a way, but it has its bright side, too. (Sits R. of table.)
PAUL. How do you mean?
GRANDPA. Well, Mr. Kirby getting into the patrol wagon, for one thing, and the expression on his face when he and Donald had to take a bath together. I'll never forget that if I live to be a hundred, and I warn you people I intend to. If I can have things like that going on.
PENNY. (Rises—crosses to L. of table.) Oh, it was even worse with Mrs. Kirby. When the matron stripped her. There was a burlesque



“Paul also realizes like how he is all mixed up now, but Penny also reassures him that, but we have been so happy. That seems to be again the bottom line of this play.

The grandpa is also reliving the previous night’s events. Well, Mister Kirby getting into the patrol wagon, for one thing, and the expression on his face when he and Donald had to take a bath together. I will never forget that if I live to be a hundred, and I warn you people I intend to. If I can have things like that going on. He is able to see the right side of all this, and he is able to see humor in spite of what has happened.”

(Refer Slide Time: 30:06)

everybody. *(She includes the whole group. Crosses down to table —picks up a dart.)* I love you all—you know that. But I just have to go away for a while. I'll be all right. . . . Father, did you phone for a cab?



PAUL. No, I didn't know you wanted one.

PENNY. Oh, I told Mr. De Pinna to tell you, Paul. Didn't he tell you?

ED. Oh, he told me, but I forgot.

ALICE. *(The final straw.)* Oh, I wish I lived in a family that didn't always forget everything. That—that behaved the way other people's families do. I'm sick of corn flakes, and—Donald, and—oh—*(Unconsciously, in her impatience, is surprised to find dart suddenly in her hand.)*—everything! *(She dashes dart to floor.)*

Why can't we be like other people? Roast beef, and two green vegetables, and—doilies on the table and—a place you could bring your friends to—without— *(Unable to control herself further, she bursts out of room, into kitchen U.R.)*

ESSIE. I'll—see if I can do anything. *(She goes into kitchen.)*
(The others look at each other for a moment, helplessly, with a sigh, drops into her chair again. PAUL drifts



Alice wants to quietly go away, and to be herself, and there is some brief instance which kind of justifies her decision.

“She is asking Paul whether he had phoned for a cab. I did not know you wanted one. Oh, I told Mister De Pinna to tell you, Paul. Did not he tell you? Oh, he told me, but I forgot. Alice that is a final straw for her. Even after all this they just do not seem to be getting it. Oh, I wish I lived in a family that did not always forget everything. That, behaved the way other people’s families do. I am sick of corn flakes, and Donald, and oh everything.”

Why cannot we be like other people roast beef, and two green vegetables, and doilies on the table, and a place you could bring your friends to without? She does not complete that sentence without being embarrassed, without perhaps ending up in jail.

(Refer Slide Time: 31:00)

me talk to you. *(They are both gone—up the stairs.)* (ESSIE comes out of kitchen.)
ESSIE. Where'd they go?
(ED, with a gesture, indicates upstairs region.)
ED. Upstairs.
ESSIE. *(Looking upstairs.)* She walked right out the minute he came in. *(PENNY sits at desk. ESSIE sits L. of table as DE PINNA also emerges from kitchen U.R.)*
DE PINNA. *(Crossing down to GRANDPA.)* Knocked the olive oil right out of my hand. I'm going to smell kind of fishy.
GRANDPA. How're you feeling, Mr. De Pinna? Hand still hurting you?
DE PINNA. No, it's better.
PAUL. Everything burnt up, huh? Downstairs?
DE PINNA. *(Nodding, sadly.)* Everything. And my Roman costume, too.
GRANDPA. *(To PENNY.)* M-m-m. I told you there was a bright side to everything. All except my twenty-three years' back income tax. *(He pulls an envelope out of his pocket.)* I get another letter every



Grandpa is trying to look at the bright side of it.

(Refer Slide Time: 31:12)

you?
DE PINNA. No, it's better.
PAUL. Everything burnt up, huh? Downstairs?
DE PINNA. *(Nodding, sadly.)* Everything. And my Roman costume, too.
GRANDPA. *(To PENNY.)* M-m-m. I told you there was a bright side to everything. All except my twenty-three years' back income tax. *(He pulls an envelope out of his pocket.)* I get another letter every day.
DE PINNA. Say, what are you going to do about that, Grandpa?
GRANDPA. Well, I had a kind of idea yesterday. It may not work, *(KOLENKHOV starts on from U.L. door.)* but I'm trying it, anyhow.
DE PINNA. *(Eagerly.)* What is it?
(Suddenly KOLENKHOV appears in the arch U.L.)
KOL. Good evening, everybody!



“There was a bright side to everything. All except my 23 years back income tax. That is the only real thing that he has encountered as far as he is concerned over here. What are you going to do about that, grandpa? Well, I had a kind of an idea yesterday. It may not work, but I am trying, anyhow.”

(Refer Slide Time: 31:31)

PENNY. Why, Mr. Kolenkhov!
GRANDPA. Hello, Kolenkhov.
KOL. Forgive me. The door was open.
GRANDPA. Come on in.
KOL. (Comes into room.) You will excuse my coming today. I realize you are—upset.
PENNY. That's all right, Mr. Kolenkhov.
ESSIE. I don't think I can take a lesson, Mr. Kolenkhov. I don't feel up to it.
KOL. (Uncertainly.) Well, I—ah —
PENNY. Oh, but do stay to dinner, Mr. Kolenkhov. We've got all that food out there, and somebody's got to eat it.
KOL. I will be happy to, Madame Sycamore.
PENNY. Fine.
KOL. Thank you. . . . Now, I wonder if I know you well enough to ask of you a great favor.
PENNY. Why, of course, Mr. Kolenkhov. What is it?
KOL. (Comes d.s.) You have heard me talk about my



(Refer Slide Time: 31:34)

KOL. (Comes d.s.) You have heard me talk about my friend, the Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.
PENNY. Yes?
KOL. She is a great woman, the Grand Duchess. (To group.) Her cousin was the Czar of Russia, and today she is a waitress in Childs' Restaurant, Times Square.
PENNY. Yes, I know. If there's anything at all that we can do, Mr. Kolenkhov . . .
KOL. I tell you. The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina has not had a good meal since before the Revolution.
GRANDPA. She must be hungry.
KOL. And today the Grand Duchess not only has her day off—Thursday—but it is also the anniversary of Peter the Great. A remarkable man!
PENNY. (Rises.) Mr. Kolenkhov, if you mean you'd like the Grand Duchess to come to dinner, why, we'd be honored.
ESSIE. (Rises.) Oh, yes!
KOL. (With a bow.) In the name of the Grand Duchess, I bid you. (Starts for door.)
PENNY. I can hardly wait to meet her. Where is she now?



So, even before they complete the discussion Kolenkhov comes in with the Grand Duchess of Olga Katrina, who is now a waitress in the restaurant. She is taken a day off because it is an anniversary of Peter the Great. There is some insight into the Russian history, and how she is reliving that day.

(Refer Slide Time: 31:49)

Thursday—but it is also the anniversary of Peter the Great. A remarkable man!

PENNY. (*Rises.*) Mr. Kolenkhov, if you mean you'd like the Grand Duchess to come to dinner, why, we'd be honored.

ESSIE. (*Rises.*) Oh, yes!

KOL. (*With a bow.*) In the name of the Grand Duchess, I thank you. (*Starts for door.*)

PENNY. I can hardly wait to meet her. Where is she now?

KOL. She is outside in the street, waiting. I bring her in. (*And he goes out* U.L. DE PINNA *rushes to the cellar door for his coat off stage.*)

69



(Refer Slide Time: 31:50)

PENNY. (*Feverishly.*) Ed, straighten your tie. Essie, your dress. How do I look? All tight?

(KOLENKHOV *appears in hallway and stands at rigid attention.*)

GRANDPA. You know, if this keeps on I want to live to be a hundred and fifty.

KOL. (*His voice booming.*) The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina! (*And GRAND DUCHESS OLGA KATRINA, wheat cakes and maple syrup out of her life for the day, sweeps into the room. She wears a dinner gown that has seen better days, and the whole is surmounted by an extremely tacky-looking evening wrap, trimmed with bits of ancient and moth-eaten fur. But once a Grand Duchess, always a Grand Duchess. She rises above everything—Childs, evening wrap, and all.*) Your Highness, permit me to present Madame Sycamore —(PENNY, *having seen a movie or two in her time, knows just what to do. She curtsies right to the floor, and catches hold of a chair just in time.*) Madame Carmichael—(ESSIE *does a curtsy that begins where all others leave off. Starting on her toes, she merges "The Divine Swan" with an extremely elaborate genuflection.*) Grandpa



(Refer Slide Time: 31:52)

GRANDPA. (*With a little bow.*) Madame.
KOL. Mr. Carmichael, Mr. Sycamore, and Mr. De Pinna.
(*PAUL and ED content themselves with courteous little bows, but not so the social-minded DE PINNA. He curtsies to the floor—and stays there for a moment.*)
GRANDPA. All right now, Mr. De Pinna.
(*DE PINNA gets to his feet again. ESSIE crosses down to chair L. of table.*)
PENNY. Will you be seated, Your Highness?
GRAND DUCHESS. (*Sits L. of table.*) Thank you. You are most kind.
(*GRANDPA sits.*)
PENNY. (*ESSIE sits above table.*) We are honored to receive you, Your Highness. (*Backing away.*)
GRAND DUCHESS. I am most happy to be here. How soon is dinner?
(*To PENNY.*)
PENNY. (*A little startled.*) Oh, it'll be quite soon, Your Highness—very soon.
GRAND DUCHESS. I do not mean to be rude, but I must be back at the




And she also, she is a guest who is being very well received in the family and that is something they all switched the old world order at that moment. And they welcome Duchess Olga as a as duchess, not as a waitress.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:04)


GRANDPA. All right now, Mr. De Pinna.
(*DE PINNA gets to his feet again. ESSIE crosses down to chair L. of table.*)
PENNY. Will you be seated, Your Highness?
GRAND DUCHESS. (*Sits L. of table.*) Thank you. You are most kind.
(*GRANDPA sits.*)
PENNY. (*ESSIE sits above table.*) We are honored to receive you, Your Highness. (*Backing away.*)
GRAND DUCHESS. I am most happy to be here. How soon is dinner?
(*To PENNY.*)
PENNY. (*A little startled.*) Oh, it'll be quite soon, Your Highness—very soon.
GRAND DUCHESS. I do not mean to be rude, but I must be back at the restaurant by eight o'clock. I am substituting for another waitress.



(Refer Slide Time: 32:05)




KOL. I will make sure you are on time, Your Highness.
GRAND DUCHESS. Thank you, Kolenkhov.
DE PINNA. You know, Highness, I think you *waited on me* in Childs' once. The Seventy-second Street place?
GRAND DUCHESS. No, no. That was my sister.
KOL. The Grand Duchess Natasha.
GRAND DUCHESS. *I work in Times Square.*
DE PINNA. Oh!
GRANDPA. *Quite a lot of your folks living over here now, aren't there?*
GRAND DUCHESS. *(To GRANDPA.)* Oh, yes—many. *(Front.)* My uncle, the Grand Duke Sergei—he is an *elevator man* at Macy's. A very nice man. *(To GRANDPA.)* Then there is my cousin, Prince Alexis. He will not speak to the rest of us because he works at Carnegie. He is in ladies' underwear.
KOL. When he was selling hot dogs at Coney Island he used to talk to you.
GRAND DUCHESS. Ah, Kolenkhov, our time is coming.




And she also offers to cook for them. It is even though they are spending the day, right after having spent the night in jail, and even though Alice is about to go away, there is a certain normalcy that this play is continued to maintain that all of these members are continue to maintain in spite of the circumstances.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:21)



GRAND DUCHESS. Ah, Kolenkhov, our time is coming. My sister, Natasha, is studying to be a manicurist, Uncle Sergei they have promised to make floorwalker, and next month I get transferred to the *Fifth Avenue Childs'*. From there it is only a step to *Schrafft's'*, and *(To GRANDPA.)* then we will see what Prince Alexis says!
GRANDPA. *(Nodding.)* I think you've got him.
GRAND DUCHESS. You are telling me? *(She laughs in a triumphant Russian laugh, in which KOLENKHOV joins.)*
PENNY. Your Highness—did you know the Czar? Personally, I mean.
GRAND DUCHESS. Of course—he was my cousin. It was terrible, what happened, but perhaps it was for the best. Where could he get a job now?
KOL. Pravda, Pravda. That is true.
GRAND DUCHESS. *(Philosophically.)* And poor relations are poor relations. It is the same in every family. My cousin, the King of Sweden—he was very nice to us for about ten years. Every once in a while he would send a money order. But then he saw the Czar. *(To GRANDPA.)* I just cannot go on. I am not doing so well and I cannot blame him.



There is also a very brief, some attention is being given to certain other members like the Grand Duke Sergei, who works as an elevator man at Macy's. And this also drawing attention to how the there are situation in Russia is really bad, and how they are also

trying to make both the ends meet by working in these various odd menial jobs in America in New York.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:47)



a job now? . . . where could he get

KOL. Pravda, Pravda. That is true.

GRAND DUCHESS. (*Philosophically.*) And poor relations are poor relations. It is the same in every family. My cousin, the King of Sweden—he was very nice to us for about ten years. Every once in a while he would send a money order. But then he said, (*To GRANDPA.*) I just cannot go on. I am not doing so well myself. I do not blame him.

PENNY. No, of course not. . . . Would you excuse me for just a moment? (*She goes to foot of stairs and stands peering up anxiously, hoping for news of ALICE.*)

71



(Refer Slide Time: 32:48)

DE PINNA. (*The historian at heart. Crosses in a step.*) Tell me, Grand Duchess, **is it true** what they say about Rasputin?

GRAND DUCHESS. Everyone wants to know about Rasputin. . . . Yes, my dear sir, it is true. And how.

DE PINNA. You don't say?

KOL. Your Highness, we have to watch the time.

GRAND DUCHESS. Yes, I must not be late. The manager does not like me. **He is a Communist.** (*To PENNY.*)



PENNY. We'll hurry things up, Essie, why don't you go out in the kitchen and see if you can help Rheba? (*DE PINNA crossing D.R. PAUL drifts U.S.*)

GRAND DUCHESS. (*Rising. ESSIE and GRANDPA also rise, ED backs U.S.*) I will help, too. I am a very good cook.

PENNY. Oh, but Your Highness! Not on your day off!

GRAND DUCHESS. I do not mind. (*Front turn.*) Where is your kitchen? (*KOLENKHOV takes her wrap to batrack.*)

ESSIE. Right through here, but you're the guest of honor, Your



There are also these De Pinna he who is also a historian at heart. “He asks whether it is true what they say about Rasputin, and, she also confirms that yes everyone wants to know about Rasputin, it is true and how. She also has to rush. She has to leave and she says, the manager does not like me this in the restaurant where she works as the waitress.”

(Refer Slide Time: 33:19)

Highness.
GRAND DUCHESS. But I love to cook! Come, Kolenkhov! (*Beckons to KOLENKHOV.*) If they have got sour cream and pot-cheese I will make you some blintzes! (*And sweeps through kitchen door.*)
KOL. Ah! Blintzes! . . . Come, Pavlova! We show you something! (*With ESSIE, he goes into the kitchen.*)
DE PINNA. Say! The Duchess is all right, isn't she? Hey, Duchess! Can I help? (*And into the kitchen.*)
ED. Gee! She's got a wonderful face for a mask, hasn't she?
PENNY. Really, she's a very nice woman, you know. Considering she's a Grand Duchess.
GRANDPA. Wonderful what some people go through, isn't it? And still keep kind of gay, too.
PENNY. M-m. She made me forget about everything for a minute. (*She returns to stairs and stands listening.*)
PAUL. I'd better call that cab, I suppose.
PENNY. No, wait, Paul. Here they are. Maybe Tony has — (*She stops as ALICE's step is heard on stair. She enters—dressed for traveling. TONY looms up behind her.*)
ALICE. (*Crossing to above table.*) Ed, will you go up and bring my



“The manager does not like me. He is a communist, right. But she offers to cook for them, some blintzes.”

(Refer Slide Time: 33:23)

PENNY. Really, she's a very nice woman, you know. Considering she's a Grand Duchess.
GRANDPA. Wonderful what some people go through, isn't it? And still keep kind of gay, too.
PENNY. M-m. She made me forget about everything for a minute. (*She returns to stairs and stands listening.*)
PAUL. I'd better call that cab, I suppose.
PENNY. No, wait, Paul. Here they are. Maybe Tony has — (*She stops as ALICE's step is heard on stair. She enters—dressed for traveling. TONY looms up behind her.*)
ALICE. (*Crossing to above table.*) Ed, will you go up and bring my bag down?
TONY. (*Quickly.*) Don't you do it, Ed! (*ED hesitates, uncertain.*)
ALICE. Ed, please!
TONY. (*A moment's pause; then he gives up.*) All right, Ed. Bring



(Refer Slide Time: 33:26)

it down. (ED goes up stairs.) Do you know that you've got the stubbornest daughter in all forty-eight states? (The doorbell rings.)
ALICE. That must be the cab. (She goes to door.) (TONY crosses to U.C. PAUL crosses to R.)
GRANDPA. If it is, it's certainly wonderful service.

(To the considerable surprise of everyone, the voice of KIRBY is heard at the front door. GRANDPA rises, goes to back of his chair.)

KIRBY. Is Tony here, Alice?

ALICE. (At R. of arch.) Yes. Yes, he is. Come in, Mr. Kirby. (KIRBY comes in.)

GRANDPA. How do you do?

KIRBY. (Uncomfortably.) Ah—good evening.

PENNY. Good evening.

KIRBY. Forgive my intruding. . . . Tony, I want you to come with me. Your mother is very upset.

TONY. (He looks at ALICE.) Very well, Father. . . .

Alice.



This is the setting before Tony walks in. “Tony is also trying to convince Alice to stay. She immediately realizes, that you have got the stubbornness daughter in all 48 states. Grandpa also comes to join the discussion.”

(Refer Slide Time: 33:39)

Alice.

ALICE. (Very low.) Good-bye, Tony.

KIRBY. (Trying to ease the situation.) I need hardly say that this is as painful to Mrs. Kirby and myself as it is to you people. I—I'm sorry, but I'm sure you understand.

GRANDPA. (Coming down to table.) Well, yes—and in a way, no. Now, I'm not the kind of person tries to run other people's lives, but the fact is, Mr. Kirby, I don't think these two young people have got as much sense as—ah—you and I have.

ALICE. (Tense.) Grandpa, will you please not do this?

GRANDPA. (Disarmingly.) I'm just talking to Mr. Kirby. A cat can look at a king, can't he? (ALICE, with no further words, takes up phone and dials. There is finality in her every movement.)

PENNY. You—you want me to do that for you, Alice?

ALICE. No, thanks, Mother.

PAUL. (Looks at PENNY.) You've got quite a while before the train goes, Alice.

ALICE. (Into phone.) Will you send a cab to 761 Claremont away, please? . . . That's right. Thank you. (She hangs up.)



Mister Kirby is also there. As mentioned at the beginning, it is not like they are they are not essentially evil people, they do not want them to separate in an irrational way, but Mister Kirby realizes that they come from very different worlds altogether.

(Refer Slide Time: 34:08)

sorry, but I must you understand.

GRANDPA. *(Coming down to table.)* Well, yes—and in a way, no. Now, I'm not the kind of person tries to run other people's lives, but the fact is, Mr. Kirby, I don't think these two young people have got as much sense as—ah—you and I have.

ALICE. *(Tense.)* Grandpa, will you please not do this?

GRANDPA. *(Disarmingly.)* I'm just talking to Mr. Kirby. A cat can look at a king, can't he? *(ALICE, with no further words, takes up phone and dials. There is finality in her every movement.)*

PENNY. You—you want me to do that for you, Alice?

ALICE. No, thanks, Mother.

PAUL. *(Looks at PENNY.)* You've got quite a while before the train goes, Alice.

ALICE. *(Into phone.)* Will you send a cab to 761 Claremont, right away, please? . . . That's right. Thank you. *(She hangs up. R.)*

PAUL. Alice!

ALICE. *(Embrace.)* Father!

KIRBY. Are you ready, Tony?

73



“Grandpa is now trying to have a conversation with Mister Kirby. I am not the kind of person tries to run into other people’s lives, but the fact is Mister Kirby I do not think these two young people have got as much sense as you and I have.”

(Refer Slide Time: 34:10)

GRANDPA. Mr. Kirby, I suppose after last night you think this family is kind of crazy?

KIRBY. No, I would not say that, although I am not accustomed to going out to dinner and spending the night in jail.

GRANDPA. Well, you've got to remember, Mr. Kirby, you came on the wrong night. Now tonight, I'll bet you, nothing'll happen at all. Maybe. *(Coming down R. of his chair.)*

KIRBY. *(Crossing to table.)* Mr. Vanderhof, it was not merely last night that convinced Mrs. Kirby and myself that this engagement would be unwise.

TONY. Father, I can handle my own affairs. *(He crosses to ALICE stage R.)* Alice, for the last time, will you marry me?

ALICE. No, Tony. I know exactly what your father means, and he's right.

TONY. No, he's not, Alice.

GRANDPA. *(Crosses to them.)* Alice, you're in love with this boy, and you're not marrying him because we're the kind of people we are.



“But, initially, even Mister Kirby feels that they are not really fit for each other because I am not accustomed to going out to dinner and spending the night in jail. Grandpa says this was a wrong night, even as per the Sycamore standards, this is not a regular night. This is something which some things went wrong in an unusually dramatic way.”

(Refer Slide Time: 34:32)

and you're not marrying him because we're the kind of people we are.

ALICE. Grandpa —

GRANDPA. I know. You think the two families wouldn't get along. Well, maybe they wouldn't—but who says they're right and we're wrong?

ALICE. I didn't say that, Grandpa. I only feel —

GRANDPA. Well, what I feel is that Tony's too nice a boy to wake up twenty years from now with nothing in his life but stocks and bonds. (ALICE and TONY drift upstage.)

KIRBY. How's that?

GRANDPA. (Turning to KIRBY and crossing to below table.) Yes. Mixed up and unhappy, the way you are.

KIRBY. (Outraged.) I beg your pardon, Mr. Vanderhof. I am a very happy man. (ALICE crosses to printing press.)

GRANDPA. Are you?

KIRBY. Certainly I am.

GRANDPA. (Sits.) I don't think so. What do you think you get your indigestion from? Happiness? No, sir. You get it because most of your time is spent in doing things you don't want to do.



Kirby wants to make this point that they are perhaps not suited for this, for each other. It was not merely last night that convinced Misses Kirby and Mister that this engagement would be unwise. Tony wants to make his point and say that he can handle his own affairs.

But grandpa makes gives it a more philosophical depth, who says they are right and we are wrong. And he is also trying to convince Alice that trying to make her understand things from his point of view.

(Refer Slide Time: 35:16)

ALICE. I didn't say that, Grandpa. I only feel —

GRANDPA. Well, what I feel is that Tony's too nice a boy to wake up twenty years from now with nothing in his life but stocks and bonds. (ALICE and TONY drift upstage.)

KIRBY. How's that?

GRANDPA. (Turning to KIRBY and crossing to below table.) Yes. Mixed up and unhappy, the way you are.

KIRBY. (Outraged.) I beg your pardon, Mr. Vanderhof. I am a very happy man. (ALICE crosses to printing press.)

GRANDPA. Are you?

KIRBY. Certainly I am.

GRANDPA. (Sits.) I don't think so. What do you think you get your indigestion from? Happiness? No, sir. You get it because most of your time is spent in doing things you don't want to do.

KIRBY. I don't do anything I don't want to do.

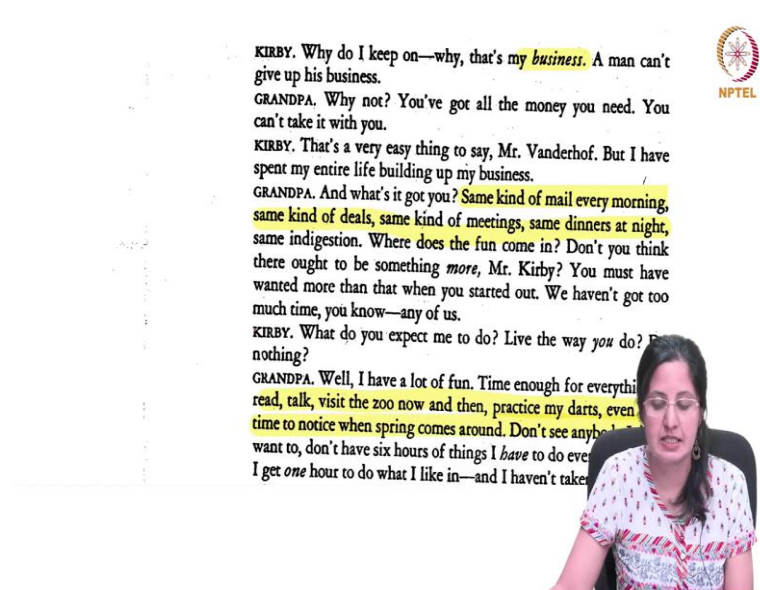
GRANDPA. Yes, you do. You said last night that at the end of a week in Wall Street you're pretty near crazy. Why do you keep on doing it?



This is where he makes perhaps one of the strongest statements in this entire play. “What I feel is that Tony’s too nice a boy to wake up 20 years from now on with nothing in his life but stocks and bonds. Grandpa says this is him telling this to Alice and Kirby, that one would end up being mixed up and unhappy.

He makes this very bold statement that, what do you think you get your indigestion from? Happiness? No, sir. You get it because most of your time is spent in doing things you do not want to do. Kirby gets very defensive.”

(Refer Slide Time: 35:42)



KIRBY. Why do I keep on—why, that's *my business*. A man can't give up his business.

GRANDPA. Why not? You've got all the money you need. You can't take it with you.

KIRBY. That's a very easy thing to say, Mr. Vanderhof. But I have spent my entire life building up my business.

GRANDPA. And what's it got you? Same kind of mail every morning, same kind of deals, same kind of meetings, same dinners at night, same indigestion. Where does the fun come in? Don't you think there ought to be something *more*, Mr. Kirby? You must have wanted more than that when you started out. We haven't got too much time, you know—any of us.

KIRBY. What do you expect me to do? Live the way *you* do? For nothing?

GRANDPA. Well, I have a lot of fun. Time enough for everything: read, talk, visit the zoo now and then, practice my darts, even time to notice when spring comes around. Don't see anybody want to, don't have six hours of things I *have* to do every day. I get *one* hour to do what I like in—and I haven't taken

And says that it is his business, but this is how grandpa defines Kirby’s business. Same kind of email every morning, same kind of deals same kind of meetings, same dinners at night, same indigestion. “Where does the fun come in?”

(Refer Slide Time: 35:59)

want to, don't have six hours of things I *have* to do every day before I get *one* hour to do what I like in—and I haven't taken bicarbonate of soda in thirty-five years. What's the matter with that?

KIRBY. The matter with that? Suppose we *all* did it? A fine world we'd have, everybody going to *zoos*. Don't be ridiculous, Mr. Vanderhof. Who would do the work?

GRANDPA. There's always people that like to work—you can't *stop* them. Inventions, and they fly the ocean. There're always people to go down to Wall Street, too—because they *like* it. But from what I've seen of you I *don't* think you're one of them. I think you're missing something.

KIRBY. (*Crossing toward* PENNY.) I am not aware of missing anything.

GRANDPA. I wasn't either, till I quit. I used to get down to that nine o'clock sharp no matter how I felt. Lay awake nights for I wouldn't get that contract. Used to worry about the world. Got all worked up about whether Cleveland or Blaine was to be elected President—seemed awful important at the time. Who cares now? What I'm trying to say, Mr. Kirby, is thirty-five years that somebody...



“Do not you think there ought to be something more, Mister Kirby? You must have wanted more than that when you started out. We have not got too much time, any one of us.

What do you expect me to do? Live the way you do? Well, I have a lot of fun. Time enough for everything, read, talk, visit the zoo, now and then, practice my darts, even have time to notice when spring comes around.” This is a very fine take on life. The philosophy here is not just about pursuing one’s passion and pleasure. It is also about taking time to enjoy life, to value life. It is much deeper than the superficial eccentric things that are being foregrounded over here.

“And grandpa is also being realistic. Kirby asks, the matter with that? Suppose we all did it? A fine world we would have, everybody going to zoos. Grandpa is not being unrealistic here either. It is not a Utopian dream that he is foregrounding. There is always people like, there is always people that like to work.

You cannot stop them. Inventions, they fly the ocean. There are always people who go down to Wall Street too, because they like it. But from what I have seen of you, I do not think you are one of them because Wall Street according to Kirby himself it drives him crazy and he needs something else, the orchids to relax that is something he loves to do though it is an expensive hobby.”

(Refer Slide Time: 37:16)

...o'clock sharp no matter how I felt. Lay awake nights for fear I wouldn't get that contract. Used to worry about the world, too. Got all worked up about whether Cleveland or Blaine was going to be elected President—seemed awful important at the time, but who cares now? What I'm trying to say, Mr. Kirby, is that I've had thirty-five years that nobody can take away from me, no matter what they do to the world. See?

KIRBY. (*Crossing to table.*) Yes, I do see. And it's a very dangerous philosophy, Mr. Vanderhof. It's—it's un-American. And it's exactly



75



“Kirby is saying he is still continuing to be defensive. I am not aware of missing anything. And grandpa gives another profound advice. I was not either, till I quit. I used to get down to that office 9 o'clock sharp no matter how I felt. Lay awake nights for fear I would not get that contract. Used to worry about the world, too.”

He is familiar with that side of the world. He is not someone, who is always like this. He was not someone who always was this carefree and always wanted to live, always could live life the way he wanted to.

“Got all worked up about whether Cleveland or Blaine was going to be elected President, seemed awfully important at the time. Here is a very judicious, a very judicious rejection of economy and polity, but in not in a very clear and different way. In a way, that it gives enough space for the individual to be foregrounded. But who cares now? What I am trying to say, Mister Kirby, is that I have had 35 years that nobody can take away from me, no matter what they do to the world.”

Kirby makes this which is also a point that the play perhaps is trying to make its un-American. So, that is what makes the family like Sycamore slightly off limits. It is what makes this family look very odd, very exaggerated because it is very un-American. It is exactly why I am opposed to this marriage.

(Refer Slide Time: 38:37)

why I'm opposed to this marriage. (ALICE turns.) I don't want Tony to come under its influence.

TONY. (Crossing down from buffet. A gleam in his eye.) What's the matter with it, Father?

KIRBY. Matter with it? Why, it's—it's downright Communism, that's what it is. (Crosses L.)

TONY. You didn't always think so.

KIRBY. I most certainly did. What are you talking about?

TONY. I'll tell you what I'm talking about. You didn't always think so, because there was a time when you wanted to be a trapeze artist. (ALICE comes down.)

KIRBY. Why—why, don't be an idiot, Tony.

TONY. Oh, yes, you did. I came across those letters you wrote to Grandfather. Do you remember those?

KIRBY. NO! . . . (Turns away.) How dared you read those letters? How dared you?

PENNY. Why, isn't that wonderful? Did you wear tights, Mr. Kirby?

KIRBY. Certainly not! The whole thing is absurd. I was fourteen years old at the time.

TONY. (Crosses a step.) Yes, but at eighteen you wanted to be a saxophone player, didn't you?

KIRBY. Tony!

TONY. And at twenty-one you ran away from home because Grandfather wanted you to go into the business. It's all down there in black and white. You didn't always think so. (Crosses U.S. to R.)

(ALICE turns.)

GRANDPA. Well, well, well!



KIRBY. I may have had silly notions in my youth, but thank God my father knocked them out of me. I went into the business and forgot about them.

TONY. (Crossing back to KIRBY.) Not altogether, Father. There's still a saxophone in the back of your clothes closet.

GRANDPA. There is?

KIRBY. (Quietly.) That's enough, Tony. We'll discuss this later.

TONY. No, I want to talk about it now. I think Mr. Vanderhof is right—dead right. I'm never going back to that office. I've always hated it, and I'm not going on with it. And I'll tell you something



Kirby also thinks it is downright communism. We do see what this lifestyle that the philosophy of life that the Sycamores are standing for, what that gets translated in what forms it gets translated into the world outside as un-American, as something very communist.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:01)

KIRBY. Certainly not! The whole thing is absurd. I was fourteen years old at the time.

TONY. (Crosses a step.) Yes, but at eighteen you wanted to be a saxophone player, didn't you?

KIRBY. Tony!

TONY. And at twenty-one you ran away from home because Grandfather wanted you to go into the business. It's all down there in black and white. You didn't always think so. (Crosses U.S. to R.)

(ALICE turns.)

GRANDPA. Well, well, well!



KIRBY. I may have had silly notions in my youth, but thank God my father knocked them out of me. I went into the business and forgot about them.

TONY. (Crossing back to KIRBY.) Not altogether, Father. There's still a saxophone in the back of your clothes closet.

GRANDPA. There is?

KIRBY. (Quietly.) That's enough, Tony. We'll discuss this later.

TONY. No, I want to talk about it now. I think Mr. Vanderhof is right—dead right. I'm never going back to that office. I've always hated it, and I'm not going on with it. And I'll tell you something



So, this is when as we begin to wrap up this discussion. This is when Tony draws attention to the facts that he had access to some of the letters of his father, where he realizes that at 18, he wanted to be a saxophone player.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:18)

KIRBY. Tony!
TONY. And at twenty-one you ran away from home because Grandfather wanted you to go into the business. It's all down there in black and white. You didn't always think so. (*Crosses U.S. to R.*)
(ALICE turns.)
GRANDPA. Well, well, well!
KIRBY. I may have had silly notions in my youth, but thank God my father knocked them out of me. I went into the business and forgot about them.
TONY. (*Crossing back to KIRBY.*) Not altogether, Father. There's still a saxophone in the back of your clothes closet.
GRANDPA. There is?
KIRBY. (*Quietly.*) That's enough, Tony. We'll discuss this later.
TONY. No, I want to talk about it *now*. I think Mr. Vanderhof is right—dead right. I'm never going back to that office. I've always hated it, and I'm not going on with it. And I'll tell you something else. (*ED starts down the stairs and crosses down to PENNY.*) I didn't make a mistake last night. I knew it was the wrong night. I brought you here on purpose.

76



Kirby is again getting defensive, and trying to reject that.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:26)

ALICE. Tony!
PENNY. Well, for heaven's —
TONY. Because I wanted to wake you up. I wanted you to see a real family—as they really *were*. A family that loved and understood each other. You don't understand *me*. You've never had time. Well, I'm not going to make *your* mistake. I'm clearing out.
KIRBY. Clearing out? What do you mean?
TONY. I mean I'm not going to be pushed into the business just because I'm your son. I'm getting out while there's still time.
KIRBY. But, Tony, what are you going to do?
TONY. I don't know. Maybe I'll be a bricklayer, but at least I'll be doing something *I want to do*. (*Door bell.*)
PENNY. That must be the cab.
GRANDPA. (*Rises and crosses a step to the R.*) Ask him to wait a minute, Ed. (*ED exits ball door U.L.*)
ALICE. Grandpa!
GRANDPA. Do you mind, Alice? (*ALICE goes to alcove back to group. GRANDPA rises, crosses up to TONY.*) You see, Kirby, Tony is going through just what you and I did—





(Refer Slide Time: 39:29)

back to group. GRANDPA rises, crosses up to TONY.) You know, Mr. Kirby, Tony is going through just what you and I did when we were his age. I think if you listen hard enough you can hear yourself saying the same things to your father twenty-five years ago. We all did it. And we were right. How many of us would be willing to settle when we're young for what we eventually get? All those plans we make . . . what happens to them? It's only a handful of the lucky ones that can look back and say that they even came close. (ALICE turns. GRANDPA has hit home. KIRBY turns slowly to look at his son, as though seeing him for the first time. GRANDPA continues.) So . . . before they clean out that closet, Mr. Kirby, I think I'd get in a few good hours on that saxophone. (Comes down to his chair.) (ED returns U.L. A slight pause after KIRBY's business. GRAND DUCHESS, an apron over her evening dress, comes in from kitchen U.R.)

GRAND DUCHESS. I beg your pardon, but before I make the blintzes, how many will there be for dinner?

GRANDPA. Your Highness, may I present Mr. Anthony Kirby, and Mr. Kirby, Jr.? The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.

KIRBY. How's that?



Tony reveals that it was on purpose that they had brought them to that house just so, there will be some sort of an event which will make them understand them better.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:36)

GRAND DUCHESS, an apron over her evening dress, comes in from kitchen U.R.)

GRAND DUCHESS. I beg your pardon, but before I make the blintzes, how many will there be for dinner?



GRANDPA. Your Highness, may I present Mr. Anthony Kirby, and Mr. Kirby, Jr.? The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.

KIRBY. How's that?

GRAND DUCHESS. How do you do? Before I make the blintzes, how many will there be to dinner?

GRANDPA. Oh, I'd make quite a stack of them, Your Highness. Can't ever tell.

77



We realized that watershed event was quite useful for them to understand themselves, and also, for them to understand each other.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:45)

ALICE. Tony!
PENNY. Well, for heaven's —
TONY. Because I wanted to wake you up. I wanted you to see a real family—as they really were. A family that loved and understood each other. You don't understand me. You've never had time. Well, I'm not going to make your mistake. I'm clearing out.
KIRBY. Clearing out? What do you mean?
TONY. I mean I'm not going to be pushed into the business just because I'm your son. I'm getting out while there's still time.
KIRBY. But, Tony, what are you going to do?
TONY. I don't know. Maybe I'll be a bricklayer, but at least I'll be doing something I want to do. (Door bell.)
PENNY. That must be the cab.
GRANDPA. (Rises and crosses a step to the R.) Ask him to wait a minute, Ed. (ED exits hall door U.L.)
ALICE. Grandpa!
GRANDPA. Do you mind, Alice? (ALICE goes to alcove—presses bell—back to group. GRANDPA rises, crosses up to TONY.) You know, Mr. Kirby, Tony is going through just what you and I did when we were his age. I think if you listen hard enough you can hear yourself saying the same things to your father twenty-five years ago. We all did it. And we were right. How many of us would be willing to settle when we're young for what we eventually get? All those plans we make . . . what happens to them? It's only a handful of the lucky ones that can look back and say that they even came close. (ALICE turns. GRANDPA has his home. KIRBY turns slowly to look at his son, as though seeing him for the first time. GRANDPA continues.) So . . . before they clean out that closet, Mr. Kirby, I think I'd get in a few good hours on that saxophone. (Comes down to his chair.) (ED returns U.L. A slight pause after KIRBY'S business. GRAND DUCHESS, an apron over her evening dress, comes in from kitchen U.R.)
GRAND DUCHESS. I beg your pardon, but before I make the blinds, how many will there be for dinner?
GRANDPA. Your Highness, may I present Mr. Anthony Kirby.
Mr. Kirby, Jr.? The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.
KIRBY. How's that?



“And with this, more importantly Tony reaches the self-realization because I wanted you to wake up, I wanted you to see a real family as they really were a family that loved and understood each other. You do not understand me. You have never had time. Well, I am not going to make your mistake. I am clearing out.”

(Refer Slide Time: 40:00)

ALICE. Do you mind, Alice? (ALICE goes to alcove—presses bell—back to group. GRANDPA rises, crosses up to TONY.) You know, Mr. Kirby, Tony is going through just what you and I did when we were his age. I think if you listen hard enough you can hear yourself saying the same things to your father twenty-five years ago. We all did it. And we were right. How many of us would be willing to settle when we're young for what we eventually get? All those plans we make . . . what happens to them? It's only a handful of the lucky ones that can look back and say that they even came close. (ALICE turns. GRANDPA has his home. KIRBY turns slowly to look at his son, as though seeing him for the first time. GRANDPA continues.) So . . . before they clean out that closet, Mr. Kirby, I think I'd get in a few good hours on that saxophone. (Comes down to his chair.) (ED returns U.L. A slight pause after KIRBY'S business. GRAND DUCHESS, an apron over her evening dress, comes in from kitchen U.R.)
GRAND DUCHESS. I beg your pardon, but before I make the blinds, how many will there be for dinner?
GRANDPA. Your Highness, may I present Mr. Anthony Kirby.
Mr. Kirby, Jr.? The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.
KIRBY. How's that?



“Clearing out, what do you mean? I mean I am not going to be pushed into the business just because I am your son. I am getting out while there is still time. But, Tony, what are you going to do? I do not know. Maybe I will be a bricklayer, but at least I will be doing something I want to do.”

This is a whole point. This is a whole philosophy that the play has been trying to push and pushed for as well. Penny also decides to stay back as we would see and grandpa is seeing Kirby, Grandpa is seeing a little of himself in young Tony.

“Tony is going through just what you and I did when we were his age. I think if you listen hard enough, you can hear yourself saying the same things to your father 25 years ago. We all did it and we were right. How many of us would be willing to settle when we are young for what we eventually get?

All those plans we make what happens to them? It is only a handful of the lucky ones that can look back and say that they even came close.” So, before they clean out that closet Mister Kirby, I think I would get in a few hours on that saxophone.

(Refer Slide Time: 41:03)

... before they clean out that closet, Mr. Kirby, I think I'd get in a few good hours on that saxophone. (Comes down to his chair.)
(ED returns U.L. A slight pause after KIRBY's business. GRAND DUCHESS, an apron over her evening dress, comes in from kitchen U.R.)
GRAND DUCHESS. I beg your pardon, but before I make the blintzes, how many will there be for dinner?
GRANDPA. Your Highness, may I present Mr. Anthony Kirby, and Mr. Kirby, Jr.? The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.
KIRBY. How's that?
GRAND DUCHESS. How do you do? Before I make the blintzes, how many will there be to dinner?
GRANDPA. Oh, I'd make quite a stack of them, Your Highness. Can't ever tell.



77



This is how this family operates. There is infinite capacity to oscillate between the big and small things in life. They are philosophizing. But at the same time, paying attention to the saxophone, and paying attention to the blintzes that Olga Katrina has made for dinner.

(Refer Slide Time: 41:20)

GRAND DUCHESS. Good! The Czar always said to me, Olga, do not be stingy with the blintzes. *(She returns to kitchen U.R. leaving a somewhat stunned KIRBY behind her.)* GRANDPA *laughs, crosses D.R.*

KIRBY. Ah . . . who did you say that was, Mr. Vanderhof?

GRANDPA. *(Very offhand. Comes down to below table.)* The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina. She's cooking the dinner.

KIRBY. Oh!

GRANDPA. And speaking of dinner, Mr. Kirby, why don't you and Tony both stay?

PENNY. Oh, please do, Mr. Kirby. We've got all that stuff we were going to have last night. I mean tonight.

GRANDPA. *(Sits R. of table.)* Looks like a pretty good dinner, Mr. Kirby, and I'll kind of give us a chance to get acquainted. Why not stay?

TONY. How about it, Father? Are we staying for dinner?

KIRBY. *(Shifting.)* Why, if you'd care to, Tony, I'd like to, very



(Refer Slide Time: 41:21)

KIRBY. *(Shifting.)* Why, if you'd care to, Tony, I'd like to, very much.

TONY. *(Crossing up to ALICE.)* Now if Alice will send away that cab, Mr. Vanderhof . . .

GRANDPA. How about it, Alice? Going to be a nice crowd. *(ALICE starts down.)* Don't you think you ought to stay for dinner? *(ALICE is hesitant.)*

KIRBY. I'm staying, Alice. The families ought to get to know each other, don't you think?

ALICE. Mr. Kirby . . . Tony . . . oh, Tony!

TONY. Darling. *(They embrace.)*

ALICE. *(Crossing down and kissing GRANDPA.)* Grandpa, you're wonderful!

GRANDPA. I've been telling you that for years.

ESSIE. *(Entering from kitchen U.R., carrying letter and butter dish. She crosses down to GRANDPA.)* Grandpa, here's a letter for you. It was in the icebox.

GRANDPA. Let me see. *(Looking at envelope.)* The Government again.

ESSIE. How do you do, Mr. Kirby?



So, they are all staying back for dinner and the play comes, this is bringing the play to an end.

(Refer Slide Time: 41:24)

other, don't you think?
ALICE. Mr. Kirby . . . Tony . . . oh, Tony!
TONY. Darling. *(They embrace.)*
ALICE. *(Crossing down and kissing GRANDPA.)* Grandpa, you're wonderful!
GRANDPA. I've been telling you that for years.
ESSIE. *(Entering from kitchen U.R., carrying letter and butter dish. She crosses down to GRANDPA.)* Grandpa, here's a letter for you. It was in the icebox.
GRANDPA. Let me see. *(Looking at envelope.)* The Government again.
ESSIE. How do you do, Mr. Kirby?
KIRBY. How do you do?
TONY. *(Crossing to R. with ALICE.)* Won't you step into the office, Miss Sycamore? I'd like to do a little dictating.
ED. I'd better tell that cab. *(Exits U.L.)*
GRANDPA. Well, well, well! *(ED enters U.L.)*

78



And towards the end, grandpa receives the letter from the government again, perhaps again about the taxes. Things do not fundamentally change the Sycamore family fundamentally does not change, but they become they are able to ask certain questions which are not uncomfortable for the family, which are not uncomfortable for them, but it becomes a discomfort which also triggers a change in the Kirby's family.

The play ends on a very pleasant note. It also leaves these questions, there is no solution, and there is no pretty solution that the play leaves for us at the end of it.

But there are these questions which are looming really high, given the historical context, and given its continuing relevance because we are all inhabiting similar kinds of social political and economic conditions even in the contemporary. That is how the modern society has been fashioned, has been has been made to function in a systematic way.