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The enigma of Gatsbys past, and the various rumours which swirl around concerning it, also adds to his allure. Fitzgerald also uses flashback.E.g. with Jordan Bakers recounting of meeting Gatsby and Daisy as young lovers in 1917.In Tess of the Durbervilles, the central protagonist is haunted by, and unable to escape, her past. Hardys insistence on Tess ancestry, and his use of ancient, prehistoric settings (such as Stonehenge - the place of Tess arrest) help to elevate Tess story to tragedy.Jump to other topicsUnlimited access to 10,000+ open-ended exam questionsMini-mock exams based on your study historyUnlock 800+ premium courses & e-booksGet started with Seneca PremiumForeshadowing & InevitabilityPage 3A LevelEnglish LiteratureAQAEEnglish Lit: AQA A Level Death of a Salesman2.2.3Jump to other topicsUnlimited access to 10,000+ open-ended exam questionsMini-mock exams based on your study historyUnlock 800+ premium courses & e-booksGet started with Seneca PremiumPage 4A LevelEnglish LiteratureAQAEEnglish Lit: AQA A Level Death of a Salesman2.2.4Jump to other topicsUnlimited access to 10,000+ open-ended exam questionsMini-mock exams based on your study historyUnlock 800+ premium courses & e-booksGet started with Seneca PremiumPage 5A LevelEnglish LiteratureAQAEEnglish Lit: AQA A Level Death of a Salesman2.2.5Death of a Salesman and Richard II both feature protagonists who prefer to live in fantasy but are ultimately confronted by reality. As Miller says in the opening stage direction, an air of the dream pervades the Loman household and, in Act One, we have seen Willy retreat into fantasy when challenged by reality: Oh, Ill knock em dead next week.In Richard II, the King surrounds himself with flatterers who only tell him what he wants to hear and, as a result, his reign is littered with mistakes which eventually lead to his own downfall.Likewise, Richard trusts in the divine right of Kings, chosen and anointed by God, to rule: The breath of worldly men cannot depose / The deputy elected by the Lord." However, reality will intrude upon Richard.Jump to other topicsUnlimited access to 10,000+ open-ended exam questionsMini-mock exams based on your study historyUnlock 800+ premium courses & e-booksGet started with Seneca PremiumPage 6A LevelEnglish LiteratureAQAEEnglish Lit: AQA A Level Death of a Salesman3.1.1Jump to other topicsUnlimited access to 10,000+ open-ended exam questionsMini-mock exams based on your study historyUnlock 800+ premium courses & e-booksGet started with Seneca PremiumPage 7A LevelEnglish LiteratureAQAEEnglish Lit: AQA A Level Death of a Salesman3.1.2After losing his job of 34 years, the memory of Bens job offer, the opportunity of a lifetime, resurfaces in Willys mind. Willy is rejected by Howard, essentially sacked from the company, and left alone on stage. In his distress, Willy reaches out to Ben (Oh, Ben, how did you do it?) and recalls Bens offer of a position in Alaska. After losing his job of 34 years, the memory of Bens job offer, the opportunity of a lifetime, resurfaces in Willys mind. An audience may see buried feelings of regret in Willy remembering this now, but we also see Willys faith in the dream which keeps him in New York and New England... and thats the wonder, the wonder of this country, that a man can end with diamonds here on the basis of being liked!Willy is kept at home by the example of Dave Singleman, the salesman who died at 84 years of age after a career of success, a man who was remembered and loved and helped by so many people. Willys repetition of wonder helps to capture his child-like belief in this fantasy.His use of the metaphor diamonds is a deliberate reference to the source of Bens wealth. Willy is trying to tell Ben that he can equal his brothers success.Willy has a rare moment of self-discovery at the end of this scene, admitting how hollow his boasts of popularity have been. Willy, in a state of crisis and lost in his thoughts of Ben and the Ebbses Field game, arrives at Charleys office. After an emotional reunion with Bernard, now a successful attorney, Willy asks Charley for money but turns down Charleys offer of a job. Willys pride will not allow him to accept a job from Charley.Charley, youre the only friend I got. Isnt that a remarkable thing?Willy has a rare moment of self-discovery at the end of this scene, admitting how hollow his boasts of popularity have been. However, there is little sense of relief here for the audience as this line follows Willys other epiphany (discovery) that, after a whole career, you end up worth more dead than alive, suggesting that Willy is again thinking of suicide.Unlimited access to 10,000+ open-ended exam questionsMini-mock exams based on your study historyUnlock 800+ premium courses & e-booksGet started with Seneca PremiumA melody is heard, played upon a flute. It is small and fine, telling of grass and trees and the horizon. The curtain rises. Before us is the Salesmans house. We are aware of lowering, anguished shapes behind it, surrounding it on all sides. Only the blue light of the sky falls upon the house and forestage, the surrounding area shows an angry glow. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. Even before a character enters or speaks, we are introduced to some of the important themes and figures of speech in these stage directions, the first words of the play. Music is heard and flute is personified, as it tells of a pastoral and idyllic scene of grass and trees. This sets a peaceful tone. When the curtain rises, the house of salesman Willy Loman is revealed. Having a home of ones own is one of the most frequently cited examples of having attained the American Dream. But the Loman dream and home appear to be under threat. The city has encroached on the house, now surrounded on all sides by towering skyscrapers, suggesting that Willy is trapped in his big dreams. The "angry glow of orange" contrasts with the image of the blue sky, creating an unsettling atmosphere and foreshadowing future events. The color orange is personified here. The passages theme of nature vs city symbolizes the conflict within Willy. His love of the great outdoors competes with his salesmans dream of finding prosperity and building success in the artificial and materialistic world of the city. I was driving along, you understand? And I was fine. I was even observing the scenery. You can imagine, me looking at scenery, on the road every week of my life. But its so beautiful up there, Linda, the trees are so thick, and the sun is warm. I opened the windshield and just let the warm air bathe over me. And then all of a sudden Im goin off the road! Im tellin'ya, I absolutely forgot I was driving. If Idve gone the other way over the white line I mightve killed somebody. So I went on again and five minutes later Im dreamin again. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. Having been on the road as a traveling salesman for 34 years, Willy Loman is showing signs of mental instability. In this conversation with his wife Linda, he describes how he lapses in and out of a dream state while driving on his sales trip to New England, almost careering off the road. Willys difficulty in distinguishing between reality and illusion is shown here, as his mind constantly oscillates between one state and the other. This speech also deals with the theme of nature vs city. Willy rhapsodizes about the heavenly scenery of rural America that he encounters on his trip "so beautiful up therethe trees are so thick, and the sun is warm." With his passion for nature, Willy should have taken a job outdoors, instead of an office job. His decision to opt for a life in New York city clearly seems to be the wrong one. He is a man more in tune with the natural world who in this passage is yearning to escape and be free. Willys suicide is foreshadowed here. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. Happy and Biff joke about their fathers growing mental instability. Making light of Willys bad driving, his unsympathetic sons prefer to see the funny side of his inability to see reality rather than the danger. This passage is full of irony and foreshadowing of Willys suicide by car crash. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. This passage deals with the conflict between Willy and Biff. When Biff asks if his father says anything bad about him, Happy explains that the reason for Willys unkindness to him is because Biff is aimless with no direction to his life. However, Biff suggests that there is more to Willys moodiness than that. Both brothers are right. Willy is upset over what he sees as Biffs lack of progress in job and career, but Willy also feels a disappointment to himself and his family. Biff is also hinting that he knows something bad about his father, a secret he doesnt share with Happy. We learn later that the teenage Biff walked in on Willy having an affair with a woman in a Boston hotel room. This revelation is foreshadowed here. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. At the beginning of the play young Biffs University of Virginia sneakers are symbolic of the promising future he has before him. The star of his high school football team, a proud Willy boasts that Biff has scholarships to three universities and there is little standing in the way of his success. But it is the misplaced pride of a deluded father, who deceives himself into believing that Biffs popularity rather than hard work is his springboard to success. A young Bernard, son of Willys friend Charley, makes his first appearance in this flashback of Willys. But Willy ignores the studious boys warnings that Biffs high school teacher is threatening to fail him at math because he is not studying. Bernards role in the play may be minor one, but it is a significant one. His warning to Willy is foreshadowing of Biffs failure to graduate from high school. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. The kind of moral values Willy has instilled in his sons leaves a lot to be desired. Here Willys neighbor Charley has criticized him for sending his boys to a nearby construction site to get sand to rebuild the front porch and they return with stolen timber. Willy proudly boasts about his childrens fearlessness, actually praising and encouraging their stealing. But Charley retorts that the jails are full of fearless characters, foreshadowing that Biff will wind up going to jail for stealing a suit. I dont say hes a great man. Willy Loman never made a lot of money. His name was never in the paper. Hes not the finest character that ever lived. But hes a human being, and a terrible thing is happening to him. So attention must be paid. Hes not to be allowed to fall in his grave like an old dog. Attention, attention must finally be paid to such a person. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. In one of the plays most famous speeches, Linda makes this impassioned appeal for the ordinary human being to be respected and afforded their dignity. Accepting her husbands weaknesses, she strongly defends him to her two sons after Biff calls him crazy and says he has no character. Her soliloquy admonishes and pleads with them not to abandon him. It is her cry of insistence on the dignity of the weak, those cast aside by the system, and not just the strong. The life and death of the little man is of as much importance as that of the great man, she believes. The message of her speech is that every human being matters and no one is disposable. This includes an insignificant person like Willy, betrayed and abandoned by a capitalist system that has no further use for him. Miller uses pathos throughout the play but here it is heightened as Linda, who is devoted to Willy, asks for respect to be shown to her flawed husband. During this key moment we hear in Lindas voice the rage of Miller as he questions the morality of a society that uses people as tools for profit and then discards them. Employing a graphic simile, Linda pleads with Biff to reconcile with his father and not abandon him so that he dies "like an old dog." Linda appears to accept the inevitability of Willys imminent death, which is foreshadowed here. The passage shows her deep devotion to Willy. Im Im ashamed to. How can I mention it to him? Every day I go down and take away that little rubber pipe. But, when he comes home, I put it back where it was. How can I insult him that way? I dont know what to do. I live from day to day, boys. I tell you, I know every thought in his mind. It sounds so old-fashioned and silly, but I tell you he put his whole life into you and youve turned your backs on him. (She is bent over in the chair, weeping, her face in her hands.) Biff, I swear to God! Biff, his life is in your hands! Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. Linda Loman is the classic enabler, whose passive ways contributes to the dysfunction of the Loman men. She supports their bad decisions and fails to call them out when they are wrong. Her enabling is very obvious when she learns of her husbands suicide attempts. He has been attaching a rubber pipe to the gas line and inhaling the deadly carbon monoxide. Instead of urging her husband to stop, Linda says nothing out of fear of insulting him, but simply removes the pipe each day. She admonishes her sons Biff and Happy for turning their backs on their father, insinuating that their abandonment is linked to his suicidal thoughts. This passage foreshadows Willys suicide. All right, pal, all right. Its all settled now. Ive been remiss. I know that, Mom. But now Ill stay, and I swear to you, Ill apply myself. (Kneeling in front of her, in a fever of self-reproach.) Its just you see, Mom, I dont fit in business. Not that I wont try. Ill try, and Ill make good. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 1. Biff admits to being the neglectful son, after Linda chides him and his brother for not helping more with their father. Biff promises to reform and and stay in New York city and find a job. But when he warns "I dont fit into business," we know that he will have difficulty fitting into Willys expectations for him to follow his father into the world of business and sales. This is foreshadowed here. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 2. Biff appeals to his brother Happy to help Willy after his display of mental and emotional instability at the restaurant. Worried that Willy is going to kill himself, Biff shows Happy the hose found in Willys basement. Yet the two brothers abandon their father in the restaurant and leave with two girls. Willys suicide is foreshadowed here. A man cant go out the way, he came in, Ben, a man has got to add up to something. You cant, you cant You gotta consider, now. Dont answer so quick. Remember, its a guaranteed twenty-thousand-dollar proposition. Now look, Ben, I want you to go through the ins and outs of this thing with me. Ive got nobody to talk to, Ben, and the woman has suffered, you hear me?Its twenty thousand dollars on the barrelhead. Guaranteed, gilt-edged, you understand? Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 2. Willy has a conversation with his hallucination of brother Ben in a passage filled with despair and hope. A man has to accomplish something, he points out to Ben. Having failed in life, Willy hopes to be successful in death by leaving his family a financial legacy. His plan is to commit suicide and give his family twenty thousand pounds through his life insurance. There is irony in Willy saying that his wife Linda has suffered, because killing himself will prolong her suffering. Willys suicide is foreshadowed here. BEN: Its called a cowardly thing, William. WILLY: Why? Does it take more guts to stand here the rest of my life ringing up a zero? BEN (yielding): Thats a point, William. (He moves, thinking, turns.) And twenty thousand that is something one can feel with the hand, it is there. WILLY (now assured, with rising power): Oh, Ben, thats the whole beauty of it! I see it like a diamond, shining in the dark, hard and rough, that I can pick up and touch in my hand. Not like an appointment! This would not be another damned fool appointment, Ben, and it changes all the aspects. Because he thinks Im nothing, see, and so he spites me. But the funeral (Straightening up) Ben, that funeral will be massive! Theyll come from Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire! All the oldtimers with the strange license plates that boy will be thunderstruck, Ben, because he never realized I am known! Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey I am known, Ben, and hell see it with his eyes once and for all. Arthur MillerDeath of a Salesman, Act 2. Willy, talking to his hallucination of Ben, fantasizes that he will achieve the success in death that he failed to reach in life. He has fallen short of his American Dream of acquiring material success while alive. But he believes that the twenty thousand dollars life insurance money his family will receive after his suicide will make up for that. In a simile Willy compares this money to a diamond, diamonds being the symbol of wealth used throughout the play and associated with brother Ben. Willy deceives himself into believing that his funeral will be massive and attended by many of the people who knew and worked with him. His estranged son Biff will realize how wrong he was wrong about his dad by the size of the funeral, he believes. Willys words turn to be ironic, since nobody outside the family apart from two neighbors turns up for the funeral. Willys suicide is foreshadowed here. Death of a Salesman, a play by Arthur Miller, is replete with symbols that foreshadow and underscore the protagonists demise. The ubiquitous rain, which soaks the Loman familys Brooklyn apartment, symbolizes Willy Lomans emotional turmoil and the impending loss of his dreams. Biff Lomans football, once a symbol of hope and potential, has become a reminder of his shattered aspirations and the futility of chasing the American Dream. The jungle, a place of both danger and promise, represents Willys struggle to survive in a competitive and unforgiving society. Finally, the flute, a haunting melody that permeates the play, evokes the fleeting nature of life and the inevitability of death. Symbols in Death of a SalesmanSettingCharactersDialogueSymbols in Death of a SalesmanSymbols are essential to the plays themes and character development. They can be found in the setting, the characters, and the dialogue.SettingThe city: The city represents the modern world, which is full of competition and materialism.Willys house: Willys house represents his American Dream. It is a symbol of his success and his familys happiness.The forest: The forest represents Willys escape from the harsh realities of life. It is a place where he can be himself and dream of a better future.CharactersWilly Loman: Willy is the protagonist of the play. He is a salesman who is struggling to make ends meet. He is a symbol of the American Dream, which is often unattainable.Linda Loman: Linda is Willys wife. She is a devoted and loving woman who tries to support her husband. She is a symbol of the American housewife, who is often overlooked and undervalued.Biff Loman: Biff is Willys eldest son. He is a former football star who is struggling to find his place in life. He is a symbol of the American teenager, who is often lost and confused.Happy Loman: Happy is Willys younger son. He is a successful businessman who is always on the go. He is a symbol of the American workaholic, who is often driven by greed and ambition.See also Mastering Conflict Resolution And Negotiation For SuccessDialogueThe jungle is dark but full of diamonds. This quote is from Willys brother, Ben. It represents the American Dream, which is often difficult to achieve but ultimately worth striving for.A salesman is got to dream, boy. It comes with the territory.This quote is from Willy. It represents the importance of dreams in life. The world is a cage: This quote is from Biff. It represents the feeling of being trapped and unable to escape.The following table provides a summary of the major symbols in Death of a Salesman.SymbolMeaningThe cityThe modern world, which is full of competition and materialism.Willys houseWillys American Dream.The forestWillys escape from the harsh realities of life.Willy LomanThe American Dream, which is often unattainable.Linda LomanThe American housewife, who is often overlooked and undervalued.Biff LomanThe American teenager, who is often lost and confused.Happy LomanThe American workaholic, who is often driven by greed and ambition.The jungle is dark but full of diamondsThe American Dream, which is often difficult to achieve but ultimately worth striving for.A salesman is got to dream, boy. It comes with the territoryThe importance of dreams in life.The world is a cageThe feeling of being trapped and unable to escape.Question 1:What significance do symbols hold in the understanding of Arthur Millers Death of a Salesman?Answer:Symbols play a crucial role in Death of a Salesman by providing deep insights into the plays themes, characters, and the struggle for meaning in life. Miller employs a wide range of symbolic elements, each meticulously crafted to enhance the plays emotional resonance and universal appeal. By understanding these symbols, audiences gain a deeper appreciation for the characters motivations, the complexities of their relationships, and the broader social and psychological issues explored in the play.See also Genetic And Physical Maps: Comprehensive Genome MappingQuestion 2:How does the use of light and darkness contribute to the thematic exploration of Death of a Salesman? Answer:Light and darkness are central symbols in Death of a Salesman, illuminating the characters internal struggles and the plays exploration of illusion versus reality. Miller utilizes bright, natural light to symbolize hope, optimism, and the pursuit of the American Dream. Conversely, darkness often represents despair, disillusionment, and the harsh realities of life. Through the interplay of these contrasting elements, Miller highlights the protagonist Willy Lomans desperate attempts to cling to a fading dream, while exposing the shadows that threaten to consume him.Question 3:What is the significance of the rubber hose in the play Death of a Salesman?Answer:The rubber hose in Death of a Salesman is a powerful symbol of Willy Lomans self-destruction and the suffocating grip of the past. Willys attachment to the hose, which is used to connect the refrigerator to the outside, represents his desperate attempts to escape his current circumstances and relive the glory days of his youth. However, the hose ultimately becomes a symbol of Willys own mortality and the inevitability of death. Millers use of the rubber hose as a recurring motif underscores the cyclical nature of Willys life and the tragic consequences of his unresolved conflicts.Well, folks, there you have ita closer look at the powerful symbols woven throughout Arthur Millers Death of a Salesman. Theyre like signposts guiding us through Willys tragic journey, highlighting his desperation, shattered dreams, and ultimately, his tragic demise. Thanks for reading, and if you enjoyed this deep dive, be sure to swing by again for more literary explorations. Stay curious, and lets keep peeling back the layers of our favorite stories together. Sitting in Howards office during Act 2, Willy recalls the late salesman Dave Singlemans storied professional legacy. The moment foreshadows Willys own eventual death: Do you know? When he diedand by the way he died the death of a salesman, in his green velvet slippers in the smoker of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford, going into Bostonwhen he died, hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral. Things were sad on a lotta trains for months after that. Willys monologue foreshadows his own tragic ending. Dave Singlemans death of a salesman immediately recalls the plays very title, cuing the reader to expect Willys suicide. In sharing the beloved salesmans story, Willy lays down a narrative template that forecasts the arc of his own.As anticipated, Willy does die. But the two endings diverge in important and devastating ways. Like Singleman, Willy dies in transit and alone. Unlike Singleman, however, his death is neither glorious nor well-attended. Hundreds of colleagues mourn at the salesmans funeral, but at Willys ceremony, Linda remarks about the absence of attendees. Willy offers up a eulogy for Singleman, but his own death gets met with Charleys damning critique: hes a man way out there in the blue, riding on a smile and a shoeshine. Willys life charts a pathetic contrast against the one that he glorifies. Failing to be as remembered and loved as the subject of his story, Willy tries desperately to convince himself otherwise. What he does discover, however, is only that there is no rock bottom to his life.

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