

## *P.18: The dream*

*Comment fully*

All My Sons is a play written by Arthur Miller. It discusses major themes which are the effect of war on the society, generation gap, individual versus community, moral responsibility, and crime and punishment. Chris is the main character who represents a whole generation which is affected by war. Miller shows the conflict between Chris and his father, Keller, in order to bring the buried truth to the light. Moreover Miller uses Kate's dream in order to draw a background for what had happened three years ago to her son, Larry.

In these lines, Kate describes her condition as she is "fast asleep". Thus, she begins to remember the way he flies low near their house. Moreover, she can see him "high up in the clouds". Then she believes this image is so real, which she can touch. However, suddenly he falls and he cries for his mother to help him and the situation looks very real as if Larry was in her room. Thus, she says that she knows that she could help him and stop his falling. She wakes up and it seems to look funny because she hears the wind which resembles Larry's engine. Add to this, she comes out of her room to the tree that is snapped right in front of her eyes. She realises that she is awake.

This dream sheds light on Kate's responsibility, and her inside character. She is a typical mother who still believes that her son will come back for the sake of his loving mother. She wants to fulfil her dreams. She believes that illusion is needed in her life in order to provide her with hope. She always relates everything with each other spiritually. In other words, she relates her dream of Larry with the broken tree. That is to say, she mixes her illusion with reality in order to come out with her conclusion, which is Larry's return. This is shown when she describes Larry when he is unreachable for her both in distance and time. Moreover, she thinks that Larry's fall means losing him. Consequently, she blames herself for not helping her crying son.

Such lights should ignite a major theme which is moral responsibility. The mother feels responsible for her son's death. She blames herself for not helping him in real life and in her illusions. She feels that she neglects her role of being a mother. In other words, she feels guilty for leaving her son to death. She does not want to fight for saving her son's life. She does not even try to stop her husband from killing their son. It seems that she hides something deep in her heart. That is why she digs in the hidden past in her world in order to make the truth come to

light. That is to say, she believes that her responsibility towards her son is to bring the uncovered truth to life. Moreover, she does not want to believe that a father could kill his own son. As a result, she still believes in Larry's arrival.

Miller uses some important techniques to convey his message. Miller uses stage directions in a very dramatic way. The first thing Kate says "I was fast asleep", which shows that she is aware that it is a dream and not reality. In addition, Miller dramatically uses stage directions in "raising her arms to the audience", in order to turn her dream from illusion to reality. Then, "she is looking at the tree", which shows that she is aware of mixing her dream with real life. Moreover, Miller uses repetition in "crying, crying to me" in order to emphasise her feeling of guilt because she feels that he is far in distance and time. Moreover, Miller uses a dramatic technique which is the fall of the hero in order to show that Larry is left to be killed.

Miller dramatically mixes dream which represents illusion with reality through using symbols and images. The "tree" is a symbol of Larry's death and when the tree snaps, the mother believes that Larry is still alive. The fact of snapping the tree means that she is fully aware and she realises that the broken tree means something. Furthermore, Miller likens "the wind" to "the roaring of engine" in order to mix Kate's dream with reality. In addition, Kate in the dream is in the garden and when she is half asleep, she finds herself out in the garden and this is also used to mix illusion with real life. The fact of Larry's fall equals his death. The "clouds" show that Larry is unreachable and he is not going to be saved. Moreover, the clouds are symbol of going to heaven. According to Kate, Larry's fall means losing him forever. In addition, Miller uses smiles as he compares their lives as killers to a station and compares Larry to a train which will never come.

In conclusion, Miller has succeeded in showing that illusion is very important in life as it provides everybody with hope and faith. He successfully draws a real image for the dream, which made us feel as if this dreams were real.