

CHAPTER III

COMPLETE PLAYS.

**CHRONICLING THE JOURNEY OF
EUGENE O'NEILL**

*You were born with ghosts in your eyes and you were brave enough to
go looking into your own dark. . . .*

Travis Bogard in Contour In Time.

Eugene O'Neill started writing plays at the age of twenty four. A Wife for A Life was his first work. This play was written shortly after his release from a sanatorium on June 3, 1913. More a sketch than a full fledged drama—two men talk and part in a desert – nothing else happens. The old man was searching the world over to find out and murder the lover of his unfaithful wife. His search ends when his target ultimately saves his life. He comes to know the latter's true identity at the end but then hides his own as a supreme sacrifice.

Critics have observed that the form and characters lack insight. However, one cannot fail to notice many of the O'Neillian elements in this primary work. The Arizona desert plot used in the play was probably conceived in 1912. The playwright tried to ascribe a character to the desert rather than merely using it as a backdrop. This he would do again for the Sea in future. Also notable is the use of the verse " ' . . . Greater love hath no man than this that he giveth his wife for his friend.' " ¹ He would again use the verse thirty years later in Long Day's Journey Into Night by Jamie "Greater love hath no man than this that he saveth his brother from himself."² Interestingly some critics also felt that James O'Neill could readily be thought of as the old man. A Wife For A Life suggested resolution of a relationship based on both love and hate as would be done in Long Day's Journey Into Night later. A Wife for A Life is a sketch but probably reflected O'Neill's concept about fate deciding man's destiny.

The Web which Eugene O'Neill often described as his first play, was

also written in 1913. This play shows a prostitute Rose with her tuberculous cough. In the creative world of Eugene prostitutes figure very prominently. Rose was the fore-runner of all. Being a disciple of Strindberg, Eugene symbolised the web to reveal the hopelessly trapped condition of Rose.

The pimp, Steve forces Rose to walk the street in the rain for a customer and demands that she abandons her crying child. To compound Rose's problem O'Neill makes Rose suffer from incurable tuberculosis. The initial title of the one-acter was The Cough. It meant the disease which symbolised an incorrigible social system that destroys the individual. Changing the title itself was a shift more Oneillean in character. Actually this is a reflection from Strindberg that man's struggle to come out of his misery only weaves the strand of this web more tightly. Any act is itself a path to destruction as is shown by Tim Moran, the converted ganster. He tries to save Rose and her child from the villainy of Steve. The revengeful pimp shoots Tim and Rose is arrested for the murder of Tim.

The situation and the dialogue in this one-acter were so akin to Eugene O'Neill that we get repeated applications of the same in his future works.

This is from The Long Voyage Home (1917) :—

The ROUGH,(as they are going out) : This silly bloke'll 'ave the s'prise of 'is life when 'e wakes up on board of 'er. (They laugh. The door closes behind them. Freda moves quickly for the door on the left but Joe gets in her way and stops her).

JOE. (threateningly) Guv us what yer took!

FREDA. Took? I guv yer all 'e 'ad.

JOE. Yer a liar! I seen yer a-playin' yer sneakin' tricks, but yer can't fool Joe. I'm too old a 'and. (Furiously) Guv it to me, yer bloody cow! (He grabs her by the arm.)

FREDA. Lemma alone : I ain't got no —

JOE. (hits her viciously on the side of the jaw. She crumples up on the floor) That'll learn yer!. . . .³

This is from The Iceman Cometh (1939) : —

PEARL. (turns on him — hard and bitter) Aw right, Rocky. We' are whores. You know what dat makes you, don't you?

ROCKEY. (angrily) Look out, now!

MARGIE. A Lousy little pimp, dat's what!

ROCKEY. I'll join yuh! (He gives her a slap on the side of the face).

PEARL. A dirty little Ginny pimp, dat's what!

ROCKEY. (gives her a slap, too) And dat'll loin you! (But they only stare at him with hard sneering eyes).⁴

O'Neill seemingly tried to display the social evils destroying the lives of Rose and Tim from their mutual conversation. But he achieved greater things. Rose and Tim unite in loneliness. A brief understanding blossoms in the relationship of love. Erie Smith, a small fry gambler resembling physically

Tim Moran would repeat the performance in the 1940 one-acter Hughie. Also the confessional moment to bring two isolated souls together would be used far more effectively in Long Day's Journey Into Night later. But after all these, Rose in The Web feels at the end an unseen presence in the room — the playwright yet not clear what it was.

As we move on to Thirst, three people hailing from different social strata — a West Indian Mulatto sailor, one young blond-haired dancer and a middle aged gentleman are cast away on a raft after a shipwreck. From the beginning the sun "glares down straight overhead like a great angry eye of God"⁵ and sharks circle around the raft. Dying of thirst, the young lady is mad and then dead — the two men fight and ultimately fall into the sea. Reference is made to the glaring sun and the sharks again at the end. The three characters can be looked upon as the representatives of three socio-cultural upbringing — the gentleman and the dancer are portrayed as narrow materialists compared to the mulatto sailor. Here we get an idea that the socially oppressed are in reality morally superior to the oppressor class. The mulatto sailor whose inner strength keeps him contented amidst the disaster would show himself in full blossom in All God's Chilluns Got Wings, The Dreamy Kid, A Touch of the Poet or A Moon for the Misbegotton where the Blacks or Irish would be depicted superior to the Whites or Yankees. It is worth noting that the role of the mulatto sailor in "Provincetown" play was performed by O'Neill himself. The technical accuracies of the shipwreck were probably borrowed from the tragedy of the Titanic in 1912. Thirst was

written in 1913 and produced by the Provincetown players in Aug. 1916.

In Thirst the sea also manifests its omnipresence. The tragic vision is gaining ground. The tendency to personify the sea is apparent. The sea is mysterious and angry. It gives shelter to its children. But whoever betrays it while trying to return to the land — is likely to be doomed as would be seen in Yank in Bound East for Cardiff or Olson in The Long Voyage Home.

The first three plays contain a triangular two men — one woman relationship. The woman in A Wife for A life though not seen, but functions as the central force of the play. In The Web and Thirst both the heroines are trapped by two men and also by a third and stronger one, Fate. It was Fate in the first play, whose "unseen presence" is felt in The Web. Thirst illustrates the Oneilleian death drive.

O'Neill wrote to Richard Dana Skinner — "It is undoubtedly true that an author is not always conscious of the deeper implications of the writings while he is actually at work on them, and perhaps never fully becomes aware of all he has revealed."⁶

Fog written in early 1914 bore testimony to this. This was the third one in the series of early sea-tales after Thirst and Warnings. From the very beginning of his dramatic career O'Neill tried to inject supernatural elements into the plays without being aware of their exact significance. That this supernatural consciousness was actually a masked death-wish is established

in Fog. At the closing part of the play Thirst the empty raft was seen "floating in the midst of a great silence"⁷ and the "eerie heat waves"⁷ float upward in the still air. Fog exactly starts from there "A menacing silence, like the genius of the fog, broods over everything."⁸

The initial situation in both Fog and Thirst is identical. In Thirst there was the sailor, the gentleman and the dancer. They take the shape of a businessman, a poet and a peasant-woman with a dead child in Fog. The poet, the first effort to draw a self-portrait, identifies the death-wish when he refuses to be rescued from the sinking ship. Ultimately a steamer rescues them amidst the fog guided by a miraculous cry of the dead child. The woman is also dead at the end and the poet watches the dead with "eyes full of a great longing".⁹ The setting of the play, the mood and the characterisation — all lend to exploration of death hinted by the fog. Travis Bogard remarks, "By drawing himself as the Poet in Fog, O'Neill attempted to give form to an impulse within himself, but the dark substance of the character, all that he could at first discover, was insufficient for understanding."¹⁰

The Moon of the Caribbees was a long stride forward. Among the many insignificant and inconsequential plays that O'Neill was writing at that time, this was a sudden glimpse of what would come much later. The call of the inorganic comes from a distant primitive Negro chant crooning under the lonely moon of the Caribbees. Human alienation is stripped off all pretensions. The subtlety of exposer in this one-acter needed no crude drama. The sea,

the moon and the chant did the trick. When Smitty springs up after being slapped by Pearl and then sinks back in a bitter smile of despair — the last ray of hope is wiped off. Nature has used her last resort to stir the life force; but it has failed. As sure as death, this music will gain its crescendo with time. Later Brutus Jones will plunge wildly with the throb of the tom tom in a dark bewildered night forest in **The Emperor Jones**. (This masterpiece needs further attention Hence, it will be discussed in the forthcoming chapter on the one-acters.)

Beyond the Horizon was O'Neill's first long play to reach the stage.

By common agreement it was the beginning of the new American drama. It was written in 1918 and first staged on Feb 2, 1920. "A play in three acts", it was actually three one-acters in a continuum. Each act is divided into two scenes, one in a farmhouse and the other on an open road. It tells the story of two brothers — the elder Andrew, a practical farmer while loving the earth he ploughs; and Robert, a dreamer and poet, who longs to go to the sea. A love affair between Robert and Ruth, a girl both brothers love, drives Andrew to sea and keeps Robert on the farm. A tragedy of the misfit follows — the dreamer destroys his life. Marriage is seen waning and finally ends in Robert's death. Andrew turns to gambling. The name itself is a clue for beyond life conviction of Eugene O'Neill. The Mayo family closely resembles the O'Neill family, not presented so explicitly in the earlier works. As the curtain rises, Robert Mayo, a self-portrait of the playwright is looking beyond the horizon and reciting something to himself. Then he succumbs to charms of Ruth. At

the end Robert exclaims "I've won to my trip — the right of release — beyond the horizon!"¹¹ Notably Ruth sinks back " . . . into the spent calm beyond the further troubling of any hope."¹² "This hopeless hope" would be a central theme in the plays to follow — **The Iceman Cometh** and **Long Day's Journey Into Night** among others. The two men and one woman relationship so akin to Eugene O'Neill was also tried here and would be followed in **Desire Under the Elms** in 1924. The central message, however, remains that man is trapped in life and freedom is, if any, beyond the horizon.

The Hairy Ape has been called America's first morality play in the expressionistic genre.¹³ The play was written in three weeks in December, 1921 and revision completed in 1922. But true to Oneillean nature, a long germination and many sources could be traced back. Obviously the idea was brewing in his sub-conscious mind. The term "Hairy Ape" was first used by Cocky, a seaman in **The Moon of The Caribbees**. The central character Yank directly came from **Bound East for Cardiff** and the Glencairn plays. Yank was the image of a real-life giant Driscoll, who committed suicide in spite of his tough dominance in life. "Why? It was the why of Driscoll's suicide that gave me the germs of the idea"¹³ — informed Eugene O'Neill. He first tried it in a short story in 1917. The story, however, was rejected by the publisher and destroyed by the playwright. The drama begins in the firemen's fore-castle of an ocean liner. "The effect sought after is a cramped space in the bowels of a ship, imprisoned by white steel. . . . The men themselves should resemble those pictures in which the appearance of Neanderthal Man is guessed

at."¹⁴ Yank, the strongest and fiercest among the crew declares the cramped ship space "Dis is home" and ridicules others who regret their rotten existence.

It is interesting to note that Eugene O'Neill used the word 'belong' eleven times in the scene one by Yank. But soon Yank's world is seen crumbling when Mildred Douglas, daughter of the steel and shipping magnet screams on seeing him, "Take me away! Oh, the filthy beast!"¹⁵

Yank's sense of belonging breaks apart. Uptil now he believed that his job was worthy and conveyed meaning to his life. He goes out to avenge himself on Mildred's society; and ultimately reaches the prison. This is the zoo for the hairy ape, he thinks. He escapes; and feels betrayed in his own way when his plea to ". . . Blow it often de oath – steel – all de cages. . . ." ¹⁶ arouses hostility among his supposed fellow mates – the industrial workers. He ultimately goes to the real zoo, and the real ape – the gorilla. "You belong" – Yank embraces the gorilla and is crushed to death. The word "belong" is again used in the last scene ten times. As if to strike the point home, O'Neill concludes with ". . . perhaps, the hairy ape at last belongs."¹⁷ Hence 'belonging' can only be found in death.

"No century, it would seem from this play, has ever offered man a more woeful prospect, and in no other play, before or after The Hairy Ape, did Eugene O'Neill so completely knock down, one by one, all of man's illusion."¹⁸ Louis Braussard remarks.

The Hairy Ape had seen many interpretations. The most notable of them has been to classify this as a morality play where the hero represents the modern Everyman in search of values to replace his old lost faith. That O'Neill himself meant this is apparent from the sub title "A comedy of ancient and modern life in eight scenes". But the death wish of the playwright surpassed his own intentions. Obviously, no value is reached at and the The Hairy Ape is a straight forward saga of journey to death. As we have noted earlier in The lay of the Singer's Fall (and also in an unsigned poem by Eugene called "Submarine" in 1917), the journey of rejection that Yank trod was actually a foretell about O'Neill himself. Most of the plays which followed could be taken as variations of the same inner drive.

In Dynamo, written in 1928 Reuben Light loses faith in the old God and discovers the new God in Electricity. Reuben abandones his puritan family. But neither he really loves Ada, daughter of the atheist Superintendent of the hydro-electric plant. He fancies dynamo as the divine image. His mother dies in his absence. He longs to return to the mother too. Consciously or not, Playwright O'Neill fuses mother, death and dynamo together. Reuben's yearning for return to childhood innocence is actually his death drive. Eugene O'Neill writes to George Jean Nathan, — "It is a symbolical and factual biography of what is happening in a large section of the American (and not only American) soul right now. . . . The death of the old God and the failure of science and materialism to give any satisfactory new one . . . to find a meaning for life in and to comfort its fears of death with,"¹⁹ Dynamo ultimately

fails to become the religion's substitute. Reuben throws himself upon dynamo. " . . . Reuben's voice rises in a moan that is a mingling of pain and loving consummation, and this cry dies into a sound that is like the crooning of a baby. . . ." ²⁰ Reuben is united with the dynamo and his mother in death. Actually a sequel to The Hairy Ape, Reuben in Dynamo, like Yank can belong only to death.

Then followed Days Without End. From 1927 to 1934 O' Neill struggled for it to overcome his death drive and to believe in God and life. A play in four acts, Days Without End starts with the sub-title for Act One - " Plot for a novel" in John Loving's private office. To stress the split personality, John and Loving are shown as two different persons with Loving wearing a "death mask". John believes in love, and Loving sneers. Second and third acts are "Plot for a novel (continued)". Act Four is " The end of the end". In between the third and fourth draft of this play, he quickly finished his 'comedy' on American middle-class family Ah, Wilderness!. In both the plays critics noted an unusual O' Neill, trying to conceal his grim face under a new spirituality. But while Ah, Wilderness!, conveyed just a feeling that life is not that bad after all, Days Without End desperately strived for faith and solution of man's problem in God. In Ah, wilderness!, O' Neill has introduced at least six or seven of the former O' Neill's pet tragic situations depicting misunderstood boyhood, and some other characters like a gentleman, a prostitute, a drunkard and a spinster and treated them to the very opposite of their old time terror, while giving them the benefit of a

quiet but unmistakable and contagious chuckle. Richard Dana Skinner unwisely tried to describe Days without End as the climax of Eugene's Career, the long search ending in "splendid affirmation instead of death — a play of victory through the great mystical paradox of surrender." ²¹ Richard Miller in Ah, Wilderness!, another self-portrait, returns to domestic sentiment, morality and social hygiene after his petty rebellion. John kneels in prayer at the foot of the Cross in "The End of the End" of Day's Without End, Loving vanishing with his faithlessness. The playwright proclaims, "Love loves forever! Death is dead! . . . life laughs with God's love again! Life laughs with love." ²²

The story behind this sotry started as early as in 1921 when a beautiful actress was cast in the role of Mildred Douglas in The Hairy Ape. She was Carlotta Monterey. A year latter Carlotta married Ralph Barton. She got a divorce in 1925 and met O' Neill again in 1926. In July, 1929 they were married in Paris.

Days Without End saw many drafts in the making and met many ends. it is said, the final form was Eugene's loveletter to Carlotta and it had to end with faith in love and God. It is also said that the Jesuit Priests influenced O' Neill for the Catholic ending, a fact which he regretted for the rest of his life. But he was too honest a playwright to succumb to minor external abstractions. It will be justified to say that he was truly searching something to surpass his death drive. He might have been influenced by T.S. Eliot's conversion from 'The Waste land' too. Ash Wednesday was published in

1930, two years before the first draft of Days Without End. But the lack of conviction was apparent in O'Neill. Day's Without End turned into a Sunday school debate, with Eugene O'Neill unjustly interfering with the gift of faith on one side. It was a deliberate act of filling the empty life with faith in a God whose existence he himself doubted.

Unlike Skinner, Lionel Trilling prophesied in 1936 — "the idyllic life of Ah, Wilderness! for all its warmth, is essentially ironical, almost cynical. For it is only when all magnitude has been removed for humanity by the religious answer and placed in the church and its God that life can be seen as simple and good. . . . But the annihilation of the questioning mind also annihilates the multitudinous world. Day's Without End . . . is cold and bleak;. . . . O'Neill has crept into the dark womb of Mother Church and pulled the universe with him. Perhaps the very violence of the gesture with which he has taken the position of passivity should remind us of his force and of what such force may yet do even in that static and simple dark."²³ Iceman was coming.

O'Neill started writing Mourning Becomes Electra in 1929 (though like O'Neill's other works, a long germinal period preceded it) and finished in 1931. But he struggled with Days Without End for 5 years from 1927 to 1932. This was probably because subject of the Electra Story was akin to his temperament and in Days Without End he was attempting something foreign. He used the plot of Aeschylus's Oresteia in modern New England setting appropriately adopting the Civil War as the Trojan War of the legend.

Autobiographical elements are also writ large on it. Orin is again a combination of Jamie and Eugene. In regard to the Oedipus complex, Christine Mannon is obviously the prototype of Ella. The death of the mother prompts the son to be united with her only through death. The basic story of the play parallels with the Greek trilogy. General Ezra Mannon is prisoned by his wife Christine as she wants to fly with her lover. Adam Brant. Orin Mannon, the son feels betrayed and shoots Brant. Christine commits suicide, so too Orin. Lavinia, the daughter and the brain behind the late murders, chooses isolation.

'LAVINIA. (grimly) Don't be afraid. I'm not going the way Mother and Orin went. That's escaping punishment. And there's no one left to punish me. I'm the last Mannon. I've got to punish myself! Living alone here with the dead is a worse act of justice than death or prison! I'll never go out or see anyone! I'll have the shutter's nailed closed so no sunlight can ever get in. I'll live alone with the dead, and keep their secrets, and let them hound me, until the curse is paid out and the last Mannon is let die!. . . .²⁴

Eugene O'Neill wanted to make Mourning Becomes Electra a modern psychological play. He made extensive uses of Freudian psychoanalysis with a view to exploring the principal characters. But modern psychoanalysis is not an end in itself, it provides a principal mode of therapy by allowing purgation of hidden inner conflicts. Not that O'Neill was unacquainted with this aspect of psychoanalysis, he deliberately avoided it. He was essentially

following the Greek sense of fate — a relentless course to death. Actually he went further than that, as Lionel Trilling observes: "the contempt for humanity which pervades Dynamo continues in Mourning Becomes Electra, creating, in a sense, the utter hopelessness of that tragedy. Aeschylus has ended his Atreus trilogy on a note of social reconciliation. . . . but O'Neill's version has no touch of this resolution. There is no forgiveness in Mourning Becomes Electra"25

The therapeutic role of psychoanalysis has also been used in literature. Psychoanalysts opine that free association with the patient may ultimately help him to recognise his suppressed desires and complexes. Even one can face one's own death-drive stripped off all guises and may be able to consciously overcome it. But Eugene was in ". . . Love with death".26 Neither he nor his characters wished to live. When Orin bends over the dead Brant, he cries, ". . . He looks like me, too! May be I've committed suicide!"27 Eugene was playing suicide, again and again. Even when Lavinia, with departure from the classic legend, opts for a sole living death, shuts the door against life — "Always the dead between! It's no good trying any more!"28

Orin Mannon expressed to Hazel, "The only love I can know now is the love for guilt which breeds more guilt — until you get so deep at the bottom of hell there is no lower you can sink and you rest there in peace!"29 Previously in Strange Interlude too Nina Leeds would ". . . dive for the gutter just to get the security that comes from knowing she's touched bottom

and there's no further to go!"³⁰ And in Harry Hope's Saloon in The Iceman Cometh Eugene as Larry Slade declares, "It's the no chance Saloon. It's Bedrock Bar, The End of the Line Cafe. The Bottom of the Sea Rathskeller! Don't you notice the beautiful calm in the atmosphere? That's because it's the last harbor. No one here has to worry about where they're going next, because there is no farther they can go. It's a great comfort to them. . . ." ³¹ Days Without End was actually a strange interlude in the journey. And Iceman was coming.

"But at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh." (Mathew 25 : 6). So comes the Iceman Hickey as a messiah of death to Harry Hope's Saloon. The derelicts there in their 'Last Harbour' indulge themselves in pip-dreams of former and future glory. Only Larry Slade (O'Neill himself), the former anarchist knows the truth —

"Lo, sleep is good; better is death; in sooth,

The best of all were never to be born"³² but he also knows " . . . To hell with the truth! As the history of the world proves, the truth has no bearing on anything. . . . The lie of a pipe dream is what gives life to the whole misbegotten mad lot of us, drunk or sober. . . ." ³³ It is this last refuge, the pipe dreams of "Tomorrow" that Hicky comes to shatter. All the inhabitants waiting for a generous and entertaining Hicky and get a sermonizing Hicky instead. He wants all to face themselves; and persuades them, individually, to go out the next day for doing what they have always dreamed of doing. Larry

rightly gets suspicious " . . . it's a second feast of Belshazzar, with Hicky to do the writing on the wall!"³⁴ But Hicky's reform actually sends others out next morning for materialising their dreams. Hicky himself predicts "By tonight they'll all be here again. . . . that's the whole point."³⁵ Now his message becomes clear, " . . . You've faced the truth about yourself. You've done what you had to do to kill your nagging pipe dreams. Oh, I know it knocks you cold. But only for a minute. Then you see it was the only possible way to peace. And you feel happy."³⁶ Hicky himself has murdered his wife for eternally forgiving his debauchery. At the end, all discover their new illusion to hide from life — that they were deliberately toeing the lines of an insane Hickey. Larry again is left out, — ". . . I'm the only real convert to death Hicky made here. . . ." ³⁷ One can consider this with Gorky in The Lower Depths , " it isn't always truth that's what ails a man — you can't always cure the soul with truth,"³⁸ and "everybody lives for something better to come."³⁹

The sub-plot of Don Parritt adds dimension to the death message. Rosa Parritt, Don Parritt's mother and Larry Slade's former paramour has been sent to jail for her radical movement. Don himself has betrayed his mother to the police and Larry shows him the way to suicide to end his torment. Larry accepts the sort of living punishment that Lavinia Mannon accepted in Mourning Becomes Electra. The death of the human spirit thus becomes the ultimate attainment of The Iceman Cometh.

In 1930 Eugene O'Neill stated, "All the most dramatic episodes of my

life I have so far kept out of my plays. . . . "40 In Long Day's Journey Into Night written shortly after the completion of The Iceman Cometh, he ultimately gathered courage (and vision) to trace back the origin of his death-drive in his own family seeding. The Iceman's saloon concentrated further on the ghosts within the family. All the four Tyrone's are gradually stripped off their pretensions.

The play starts and ends in the "Living room of the Tyrone's summer home".41 Act one starts at 8.30 A.M., Act two at 12.45 noon, Act three "around 6.30 that evening" and Act four "around midnight". In the beginning, "Sunshine comes through the windows . . . ",42 and there are laughs and smiles. As the time progresses, the sunshine disappears, fog returns, fog-horn sounds like the distant Negro chant in The Moon of the Caribbees. The effective space diminishes to the area lighted by a single bulb over the central table in the room. The males become more and more drunk to hide their sufferings. Mary drowns more and more under the spell of morphine. They start as a family, end as haunted individuals acutely aware of their alienation. The inward journey of isolation continues till Mary under her dope spell enters in a dream like stance.

"(. . . . They stare at her. She seems aware of them merely as she is aware of other objects in the room, the furniture, the windows, familiar things she accepts automatically as naturally belonging their but which she is too preoccupied to notice.)

JAMIE — (breaks the cracking silence — bitterly, self – defensively sardonic). The Mad Scene. Enter Ophelia! (His father and brother both turn on him fiercely. Edmund is quicker. He slaps Jamie across the mouth with the back of his hand.)

TYRONE — (his voice trembling with suppressed fury) Good boy, Edmund. The dirty blackguard! His own mother!

JAMIE — (mumbles guiltily, without resentment) All right, kid. Had it coming. But I told you how much I'd hopped — (He puts his hands over his face and begins to sob.)

MARY — I play so badly now. I'm all out of practice. Sister Theresa will give me a dreadful scolding. . . . what is it I'm looking for? I know it's something I lost. . . . Something I miss terribly. It can't be altogether lost. . . . I can't have lost it forever, I would die if I thought that. . . . something happened to me. Yes, I remember. I fell in love with James Tyrone and was so happy for a time."⁴³ Home, happiness, love all end in total death. It was " . . . to face my dead at last. . . ." declared Eugene O'Neill in the play's dedication to Carlotta. It was a play which had it's creator to "come out of his study at the end of a day gaunt and sometimes weeping. His eyes would be all red and he looked ten years older than when he went in in the morning."⁴⁴

Long before, in 1907, he had discovered Nietzsche in Tucker's book shop. It immediately proved prophetic for him. The author of Thus Spake Zarathustra (Nietzsche too, suffered from recurrent psychosomatic illness) echoed the story of his own heart: "God is dead; of his pity for man hath

God died."⁴⁵ — "There is no devil and no hell. Thy soul will be dead even sooner than thy body. Fear, therefore, nothing anymore!"⁴⁶

Travis Bogard agrees, "After the long, poetically oriented quest which he had conducted through the plays of the 1920's, seeking a God to which men could belong, O'Neill at last has come to agree with Nietzsche that men live in a Godless world. . . . in all the outer world there is no where to go, nothing worth having, nothing to which man may make offering as to a God."⁴⁷ But the degree of detachment is notable. O'Neill no longer screams at this thought, shrieks or even mourns. O'Neill has learnt to remain impersonal to these all. "Life is a tragedy, hurry!"⁴⁸ exclaims Jamie in Part of a Long Story.

Kublai Kaan cried in 1923 (Marco Millions) — ". . . . My hideous suspicion is that God is only an infinite, insane energy which creates and destroys without other purpose than to pass eternity in avoiding thought. . . ."⁴⁹ "Life is an illusion, death is an awakening. Men call life death and fear it. . . ."⁵⁰

Lazarus's message for salvation is to laugh away the life which is just a strange interlude between two awakenings; death is the life. Peace or Nirvana is not seeking anything from life. Hicky is the last messiah who has come to unshackle the last link with life. Nobody must even dream; no dream can ever be fulfilled; all one can do is to wait for the ultimate peace, joy or laughter in death alone.

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