

Plot

Act 1 Alfieri, the lawyer, introduces himself and his role as narrator of the play's events. Eddie Carbone comes home from work. He says his niece, Catherine, is walking 'wavy' and receiving too much attention from boys. Catherine and Beatrice try to persuade Eddie to let her take a job as stenographer. Marco and Rodolph, B's cousins from Italy, are arriving to work in the US illegally and they will stay with Eddie and B. The cousins are polite when they arrive. Rodolpho is younger, has no wife or family and wants to stay in the US. He sings 'Paper Doll'. Rodolpho and Catherine start to develop feelings for each other and Eddie becomes jealous because he has unacknowledged feelings for his niece. Eddie says Rodolpho only wants to marry Catherine to become a US citizen. Eddie visits Alfieri for advice on how he can get rid of Rodolpho. Eddie threatens Rodolpho in a pretend boxing match but Marco defends his brother.

Act 2 Time has moved on. Alone in the house, Rodolpho and Catherine have sex and Eddie comes home drunk. Eddie kisses Catherine and pins Rodolpho down and also kisses him. He visits Alfieri again and he tells him to give thoughts of Catherine up and let her go. Eddie calls the Immigration Bureau and reports Marco and Rodolpho as illegal immigrants. Marco and Rodolpho are arrested. Marco spits in Eddie's face. Alfieri pays for them to be released on bail and Catherine and Rodolpho prepare to marry. On the wedding day, Marco returns to Eddie's house for revenge. Eddie runs at Marco with a knife but Marco kills Eddie with his own knife. Eddie dies in 'B's' arms/

Themes

Loyalty	Justice and the Law	Truth
Love and desire	Honour	Integrity
Family relationships	Reputation	Pride
Independence	Respect	Jealousy

Assessment Objectives

- AO1** Respond to texts critically and imaginatively; select and evaluate relevant textual detail to illustrate and support interpretations.
- AO2** Explain how language, structure and form contribute to writers' presentation of ideas, themes and settings.

Vocabulary

Omniscient narrator	Prologue	Tragic hero	Imagery
Perspective	Act	Colloquial	Symbols
Monologue	Dramatic tension	Tragedy	Metaphor
Aside	Moral	Hamartia	Protagonist
Stage directions	Genre	Dialogue	

Background

Set in Red Hook, Brooklyn, a district of New York in the 1950s when there was a high immigration population, especially from Italy.

After WW2, Italy struggled with employment and the rates of poverty soared. This led to large numbers of Italian immigrants coming to America.

The USA had a strict immigration policy at the time.

Arthur Miller was called to answer questions in front of the House of Un-American Activities Committee to reveal the names of communists in America. He refused to give any names. This might be why there is a strong focus on 'integrity' and the effect of 'snitching' in the play.

When carrying out research for another project, Miller was told the story of a longshoreman who 'snitched' to the Immigration Bureau on his own relatives. Miller also foreshadows Eddie's fate by including the story of Vinnie Bolzano who 'ratted' to the authorities.

Form

The play follows the format of a Greek tragedy with Miller using Alfieri as the Chorus commentating on the characters' actions. The tragic ending is inevitable, given Eddie's fatal flaws of pride and impulsiveness. In keeping with the tragic convention, the **climax** ends in a tremendous catastrophe involving the death of the main character; the character has something the audience can identify with which outweighs their flaws, so we care about them.

The play is organised into two Acts and the framework is held together by Alfieri's narration. Each time Alfieri comes on stage, he charts a further step in Eddie's downward spiral to destruction.

Character

Eddie Carbone

A longshoreman, married to Beatrice. Lives with Beatrice and Catherine, his orphaned niece. He has a secret desire for Catherine, which leads to jealousy and eventually his own destruction. Can be viewed as a tragic hero.

Catherine

Niece of Beatrice and Eddie. Beautiful and intelligent and unaware of the feelings she has stirred in Eddie. Always wants approval from Eddie and is hurt when he doesn't approve of Rodolpho, whom she intends to marry.

Beatrice 'B'

A warm and caring woman. Aware of Eddie's feelings for Catherine and 'wants to be a wife' to him again. She remains with Eddie throughout and he dies in her arms.

Marco

Beatrice's Italian cousin. Comes to America to work and make money to feed his family back home in Italy. Eddie sees him as a rival when he defends Rodolpho.

Rodolpho

Beatrice's young, handsome, blonde cousin from Italy. Eddie and the other Red Hook men see him as effeminate as he loves to sing, dance and sew. Wants to marry Catherine and enjoy the American lifestyle.

Alfieri

An Italian-American lawyer who narrates the events. He advises Eddie about the consequences of his actions and has to watch as the tragedy develops. He reminds the audience of the moral implications of the play.

Minor characters

Mike and Louis are longshoremen friends of Eddie. Immigration Officers come to look for Marco and Rodolpho after Eddie's tip off.

Tips

- Remember that this is a play, so refer to the 'audience' rather than the 'reader'.
- When writing about an extract, remember to consider the importance of the stage directions, they are as important as the words spoken by the characters.

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on this question.

What do you think of the way the characters speak and behave here? Give reasons for what you say and remember to support your answer with words and phrases from the extract. (10)

Beatrice: (weakened with fear) Oh, Jesus, Eddie.

Eddie: What's the matter with you?

Beatrice: (pressing her palms against her face) Oh, my God, my God.

Eddie: What're you, accusin' me?

Beatrice: (her final thrust is to turn toward him instead of running from him) My God, what did you do?

Many steps on the outer stair draw his attention. We see the First Officer descending, with Marco, behind him Rodolfo, and Catherine and the two strange immigrants, followed by Second Officer. Beatrice hurries to door.

Catherine: (backing down stairs, fighting with First Officer; as they appear on the stairs) What do yiz want from them? They work, that's all. They're boarders upstairs, they work on the piers.

Beatrice: (to First Officer) Ah, Mister, what do you want from them, who do they hurt?

Catherine: (pointing to Rodolfo) They ain't no submarines, he was born in Philadelphia.

First Officer: Step aside, lady.

Catherine: What do you mean? You can't just come in a house and –

First Officer: All right, take it easy. (To Rodolfo) What street were you born in Philadelphia?

Catherine: What do you mean, what street? Could you tell me what street you were born?

First Officer: Sure. Four blocks away, One-eleven Union Street. Let's go fellas.

Catherine: (fending him off Rodolfo) No, you can't! Now, get outa here!

First Officer: Look, girlie, if they're all right they'll be out tomorrow. If they're illegal they go back where they came from. If you want, get yourself a lawyer, although I'm tellin' you now you're wasting your money. Let's get them in the car, Dom. (To the men) Andiamo, andiamo, let's go.

The men start, but Marco hangs back.

Beatrice: (from doorway) Who're they hurtin', for God's sake, what do you want from them? They're starvin' over there, what do you want! Marco!

Marco suddenly breaks from the group and dashes into the room and faces Eddie; Beatrice and First Officer rush in as Marco spits into Eddie's face. Catherine runs into hallway and throws herself into Rodolfo's arms. Eddie, with an enraged cry, lunges for Marco.

Eddie: Oh, you mother's – !

First Officer quickly intercedes and pushes Eddie from Marco, who stands there accusingly.

First Officer: (between them, pushing Eddie from Marco) Cut it out!

Eddie: (over the First Officer's shoulder, to Marco) I'll kill you for that, you son of a bitch!

This extract is about when Eddie has called the Immigration Bureau about Marco and Rodolpho being illegal immigrants and it suggests that jealousy has taken over his reasoning and sense of honour. Perhaps it is this 'hamartia' that makes Eddie such a tragic hero. Miller cleverly shows here that the Red Hook community are very close, they look out for one another and Eddie has now betrayed that trust because he has 'snitched' and broken the moral code of Red Hook.

Beatrice is disgusted with him as he has betrayed his own kin and has caused his family to become outsiders. Beatrice repeats 'Oh my God, my God' to show how shocked and horrified she is with her husband and prays that God will help them get through this. Despite being furious with him, and ashamed of him, Beatrice doesn't act aggressively with Eddie. Instead she repeats herself to make Eddie feel guilty.

Within the extract itself, Eddie says very little as I believe the guilt is starting to sink in and he really begins to see the consequences of what he has done. He knows he has done wrong and will never be forgiven. Catherine is very protective and defensive over Rodolpho, saying, 'They ain't no submarines, he was born in Philadelphia' showing herself willing to lie to the authorities for the man she loves whilst desperately trying to convince them that he is not an illegal immigrant. Catherine starts to panic as she is unable to finish her sentences and she asks a series of questions trying to waste time, 'What do you mean? You can't just come in the house and – '. This increases the feeling of tension and suspense even though we feel her attempts are in vain. In contrast, Beatrice doesn't say too much as she knows who has 'snitched' and she knows there is no point arguing with the 'officers' as they have broken the rules according to American Law.

However, Marco is livid with Eddie as he realises that he has done this to them because of his jealousy over the relationship between Catherine and Rodolpho. The stage directions (*Marco spits into Eddie's face*) suggest that Marco wants justice as Eddie has broken Sicilian Law and the code of honour. By spitting, Marco is publicly showing his contempt, disgust and lack of respect for Eddie. It also suggests that Marco will make sure some kind of justice will be done.

Eddie's manliness is questioned here as, since he was unable to get rid of Marco and Rodolpho himself, he has taken the easy way out by calling the Immigration Bureau. As soon as *Catherine runs into the hallway and throws herself into Rodolpho's arms*, Eddie becomes distraught and furious as his jealousy takes over and with an 'enraged cry [he] lunges at Marco'. The verb 'lunges' suggests that his jealousy has made him violent and uncontrollable.

Commentary

The response is well sustained with thoughtful and thorough discussion of the key issues. Language is selected and analysed effectively and the response deals with the effect of stage directions in some detail.

You are advised to spend about 40 minutes on this question.

'A View from the Bridge' is about love and betrayal. Write about either love or betrayal in the play.(20)

There are many types of love in the play 'A View from the Bridge', such as family love shown by Beatrice to Catherine and Marco to Rodolpho and the , romantic love between Catherine and Rodolpho. However, perhaps it is the inappropriate love that Eddie feels for his niece, Catherine, that is the most problematic and with the most far reaching consequences.

At the start of the play, Catherine is a naïve and sweet 17 year old, an orphan who has been brought up by her aunt Beatrice and her husband, Eddie Carbone. She has never left Brooklyn and knows little of love and the outside world. At the start of the play, Catherine is eager to please Eddie and this is shown in the stage directions *she turns to him and she gets a cigar for him*. She wants to take the job as a stenographer in a plumbing company, and although 'B' approves, Eddie is against it as she might receive attention from men. Catherine is desperate for approval from Eddie and she ends up 'almost in tears as he disapproves'. Eddie is clearly protective over her, when he says 'you ain't all the girls', however, the unnatural feelings he is developing for her are suggested in the way he comments on her 'walking wavy'. He frequently refers to her as 'the Madonna' which emphasises how he views her as something holy and pure, maybe even to the point of adoration, and highlights why he doesn't want her going into the big wide world. He doesn't want her to lose her innocence and he doesn't want anyone else to take her from him. Eddie tries to 'guilt trip' Catherine and explain his refusal when he says, 'Katie, I promised your mother on her deathbed. I'm responsible for you'. Eddie as refers to her as 'Katie', not 'Catherine' and his affectionate term could also make her seem childlike and suggests his refusal to let her grow up.

Catherine's innocence and child like nature can be suggested by how she 'sits on her heels' and the way she 'grasps his arm' when trying to please him.

Eddie's feelings of over protectiveness for Catherine can again be seen when he notices how other men react to her with their 'heads [are] turning like windmills' and saying, 'I don't like the looks they're giving you.' It is when Rodolpho arrives that Eddie's over protectiveness turns into jealousy.

Rodolpho is the first male threat that Eddie has faced for Catherine's attentions and when Catherine asks the Italian to sing, Eddie cannot hide his jealousy and 'rises and moves upstage'. He deliberately embarrasses Catherine by asking her 'what's the high heels for'.

Beatrice has been aware of Eddie's feelings for her niece as she asked him 'when will I be a wife to you again, Eddie?' She also warns Catherine about walking around in her petticoat. Other characters, such as Alfieri, can see what is happening to Eddie as he warns him, 'there is too much love for the niece'.

The tension in the relationship between Eddie and Catherine is shown as she seems more upset at being embarrassed in front of Rodolpho than annoying Eddie. His jealousy increases when Catherine pours sugar for Rodolpho while Eddie sits with 'his face puffed with trouble'. He even waits up for them when they return from a date to the cinema. Eddie tries to halt the relationship by telling Catherine that Rodolpho only wants her for his green card so he can become a US citizen.

As his jealousy develops, Catherine becomes afraid of Eddie. When he returns home drunk and catches Catherine and Rodolpho coming out of the bedroom after having sex, he kisses Catherine and then forcibly kisses Rodolpho to establish his authority. She 'tears at Eddie's face' to show her disgust and is filled with 'horror' for him. She realises that she 'can't stay here no more'. The line describing her 'sobs of pity and love' sum up her complex feelings for Eddie, she is scared of him but at the same time she remembers how he brought her up and cared for her.

Eddie's irrational jealousy clouds his judgement to the extent that he is willing to break the code of honour and 'snitch' to the Immigration Bureau about Marco and Rodolpho in an attempt to stop the marriage. When Eddie tries to stop 'B' from going to the wedding, Catherine hurls insults at him, calling him 'rat' from 'the sewer' and in retaliation Eddie almost becomes violent 'about to pick up the table and fling it at her'. This illustrates how the relationship has disintegrated. However, Catherine still has feelings for him by saying 'Eddie, I never meant to do nothing bad to you'.

At the end, Eddie wants 'B', referring to her as 'my B' and dies in her arms.

Commentary

This response focuses on the main relationship and how Eddie is destroyed by it. The references to the text are neatly interwoven and integrated quotations are used effectively. Secure coverage of the play is evident.