

### A Streetcar Named Desire: Scene One Essay

New Orleans is mostly part of the New World, 'The section is poor, but unlike corresponding sections in other American cities, it has a raffish charm.' New Orleans is a cosmopolitan city where there is a warm interaction between the different races. Scene one is set around a 'peculiarly tender blue sky, almost turquoise, which invests the scene with a kind of lyricism and gracefully attenuates the atmosphere of decay', so we can tell that New Orleans isn't a clean, sophisticated city of the Old World, but of the new world with coffee and banana's, also the air is filled with the Negro music entertainers, "The Blue Piano expresses the spirit of the life which goes on here." Also, alcohol, bowling and people meeting each other at pubs is all part of the New World in New Orleans.

We find out that Blanche's character is not a trustworthy person as she has the tendency to lie about herself and her drinking problem which she covers up poorly. She is an aging Southern belle who lives in a state of panic about her fading beauty.

In scene one, Blanche is dressed in a fine white suit appropriate for an upper-class social event. She is dressed in a white suit with a fluffy bodice, necklace and earrings of pearl, white gloves and a hat. Her appearance made Blanche stand out in the environment she was in as it looked as if she was dressed to go to a cocktail party.

Blanche talks to her older sister Stella about where Stella is currently living as she seems to be disappointed that she has returned to a horrible place, 'I thought you would never come back to this horrible place!' This suggests that Blanche has been living in such a sophisticated, upper-class area for a long time, she isn't used to anything that is different to her usual environment.

Blanche reveals to her Stella that she has lost Belle Reve, the family home. She retells how she suffered through the agonizingly slow deaths of their parents and relatives, and accuses Stella for running off to New Orleans and leaving the family behind.

Blanche worries that Stanley, Stella's husband, won't like her, and she makes several critical comments about Stanley's lower-class status, focusing on his Polish background. Stella warns Blanche that Stanley is very different from the men with whom Blanche is familiar back home so Blanche won't be expecting to see anyone who will be similar to the men at her home town. Blanche and Stanley are two very different people as Blanche is still living in the old world with all the cocktail parties and the elegance, whereas Stanley is from the new world with the bowling and gambling.

During scene one, we already find out a great deal about Blanche's problems such as her drinking problem. Blanche's drinking is anti-social and she tries to hide the fact that she has a drinking problem to the others even though she secretly takes a glass of whisky and 'tosses' it down and she is aware of her problem, 'I've got to keep hold of myself!' When Stanley offers her some whisky she quickly turns it down, 'No, I – rarely touch it'.

She doesn't want anyone to know as even Blanche knows that she only drinks to escape the reality world she is living in.

Blanche always seeks attention about her looks, hoping she would receive a great deal of compliments about her beauty, but she also doesn't want people to look at her when she thinks she looks terrible due to the long hours of travelling, '...don't you look at me, Stella, no, no, no, not till later, not till I've bathed and rested!..... I won't be looked at in this merciless

glare!'

Blanche is always in a very nervous state as she doesn't know what to expect to happen next. When she is waiting for her sister we can tell she is very nervous, jumpy and uncomfortable, due to her body language, '*Blanche sits in a chair very stiffly with her shoulders slightly hunched and her legs pressed closed together and her hands tightly clutching her purse as if she were quite cold.*'

Her attitude towards death seems quite fearful as she is still haunted by the deaths of her ancestors, but when she tells Stella about the unfortunate events of all the deaths that occurred at Belle Reve, Blanche wants to seem very in control and that she was a brave person to put up with the deaths, but deep inside she has fear on what she's saying.

Blanche and Stella's relationship doesn't seem like a sibling relationship as it seems more like a mother and daughter situation. This is because Blanche always seems to have more power over Stella and telling her what to do and even talking to her like she's a child, and yet Blanche doesn't consider the fact that Stella is five years older than Blanche. 'You hear me? I said stand up!...You messy child, you've spilt something on that pretty white lace collar!' Also Blanche can be quite nasty in what she says to Stella, which you would expect from sisters when they were at a young age but not from mature adults. 'You've put on some weight, you're more plump as a little partridge!' And again Blanche talks to Stella as if she was her mother, 'You just have to watch around the hips a little'.

In this scene what we learn about Stanley is that he is a very carefree person, who won't change his personality to satisfy anyone else. Stanley is from Poland and is very much of the New World. When he speaks he also uses slang in his language and his contrast to Blanche is huge as there is a massive difference between them and the New and Old world. Blanche comes from a very sophisticated background of a variety of garden parties and cocktails, whereas Stanley appears as a lower class citizen to Blanche as Stanley lives very much in a world where alcohol, clubs, sex and bars and going on dates is acceptable in the area he is from.