

Use of astrology and names in snd



Use of Astrology and Names in SND The author's use of Blanche and Stanley's astrological signs and the meanings of their names helps to define their characters in "Streetcar Named Desire". Stanley's astrological sign is Capricorn which is the sign of the goat. Blanche's sign is Virgo, the sign of the virgin. Appropriately, both signs are sex symbols. Virgo is the only zodiacal sign represented by a female. Virgo implies and stands for virginity. Sometimes thought of as an older woman delicately lovely with refinement, a fastidious love of cleanliness and make few relationships with an aristocratic attitude of reserve. In contrast, Capricorns are independent rocklike characters who are strong willed, hardworking, unemotional and practical. Capricorn the Goat emerges as the hunter and Blanche the Virgo is the hunted. These explicit sexual symbols suggest that Stanley will physically and emotionally conquer Blanche. Blanche is a French name meaning white which stands for purity. So she wears a white dress and white gloves showing a false purity and innocence that masks her carnal desires and hides her past. Her name is ironic as she is anything but pure. Stanley is an old English name meaning stone field, so he represents a cemetery for Blanche, the end of her make believe world. Stanislaus was the name of a king of Poland and Stanley is the king of his household. As a Polish immigrant, he is the new type of American where reward is based on merit and hard work, not on birth into fortunate circumstances. Blanche is dealing with the loss of a world that meant status and class and now there is a downward spiral into the life of a blue collar ghetto. Blanche's world is illusion and Stanley's is harsh realism, coarse and crude. Blanche's French ancestry is also a symbol of civilization. She is the civilized or feminine desire of love. Stanley is the primitive or masculine desire for sex. So the civilized

and feminine versus primitive and masculine aspects of desire are symbolically portrayed. Blanche's world deteriorates under Stanley's ruthlessness. Blanche becomes a truly tragic heroine. This is why Tennessee William wanted to show and express both characters through such heavy use of symbolism.