

Blanche's death speech essay sample

[Life](#), [Death](#)



Blanche's death speech plays a vital role in the development of the play "A Streetcar named Desire". In the monologue the tension between Blanche and Stella comes to a zenith as Blanche explodes with rage as she expresses her jealousy-driven feelings to Stella. In doing so Blanche reveals much more, including her unstable mental state, her emotional reaction to the loss of Belle Reve, and most importantly her preoccupation with the theme of death.

One of the roles of this excerpt is to provide the background towards understanding Blanche, and the justifications for her mental state and actions. It is evident that in the past she belonged to a higher class where extravagance was common. But when her family in Belle Reve gradually died off, not only did she have to experience the pain of losing her loved ones, but she was also left with no money or financial aid to keep the estate and ultimately was forced to let it go. Blanche defends herself by figuratively saying that the grim reaper put up his tent right on her doorstep and that is how "it slipped through my (Blanche's) fingers". She even goes on to accuse Stella of dealing with the crisis by "ignoring" it and moving on, hence leaving Blanche to deal with an unbearable burden. This is most obvious when she rhetorically asks Stella, "I let the place go?" This quote aids in leading the audience to perceive that it was Stella that let the estate go by not trying to help the situation. To accentuate her point Blanche brings up the irony of her being "at the bed when they (her family) cried out hold me" while condemning Stella for being "In bed with your (Stella) - Polak."

During the speech there are numerous indications that prove Blanche was deeply hurt by her experience at Belle Reve. Firstly, the seemingly

unnecessary long explanation in itself demonstrates the importance of Belle Reve to Blanche. Secondly, the frustration and anger she expresses with Stella highlights the importance of their home to her. Throughout the piece Blanche repeats words and phrases many times underlining her fury. For example, at the beginning she says, " I, I, I", in the middle she utters " I saw, Saw! Saw!" and in the end cries " I let the place go!, I let the place go?" Thirdly, it seems as if Blanche is accusing Stella of blaming her for losing Belle Reve when in the book Stella simply asks about what happened. This becomes clear when Blanche reproaches Stella by telling her: " And you sit there telling me with your eyes that I let the place go" and " Yes accuse me! Sit and stare at me thinking I let the place go!" This sort of presumptuous attitude and thinking influences the reader to assume that Blanche is unable to let go. In addition when Blanche says " I took the blows in my face and body...Farther, Margret, Mother...had to be burnt like rubbish" she is also directly conveying her agony.

It is clear that Tennessee Williams carefully crafted this specific speech to introduce the theme of death, of which is recurrent in the course of the play. He makes sure to describe the devastation of having to deal with death through Blanche. " Funerals are quiet but deaths- not always", " Sometimes they even cry out to you, ' Don't let me go'", " Unless you were there at the bed when they cried out ' Hold me' you would never suspect there was a struggle for breath and breathing", and " Why the Grim Reaper set up his tent on our doorstep" are some quotes that specifically and profoundly relate to the subject of Death. After reading these quotes and knowing that

Tennessee Williams suffered from hypochondria (a cynical fear of death and diseases), one could decipher that Blanche's mindset in this case is almost an emulation of the playwright himself.

Due to the structure of the speech one could infer that the body language of Blanche goes from grief to anger to resentment and conclusively to disgust as she ends with that derogatory word - "Polak". As you can see Williams cleverly structures this one speech to portray and provide lots of valuable information about Blanche's current state and past life; this in turn foreshadows her inner and external conflicts as the book progresses.