

How is the theme of
"love" portrayed in
the play?



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Love serves as a crucial element in "A View from the Bridge", and is arguably the main force which drives the events of the play. Undoubtedly, the inappropriate love of Eddie towards his niece, Catherine, and his unwillingness to let her mature due to it, is what leads to his ultimate downfall and death. However, love is also prevalent between the other characters of the play, and is the main motivation behind majority of their actions. Through the theme of love, Miller creates a drama which is able to draw upon the empathy of the audience, allowing the audience to become emotionally invested with the characters of the drama.

Firstly, Miller shows incestuous love. Eddie feels a romantic attraction towards Catherine, a fact pointed out by Alfieri who says "sometimes, there is too much love for the niece". The phrase "too much", on its own, already implies the unhealthy nature of this love, and Miller effectively shows the audience that such a love is overbearing, possessive, and dangerous. This harmful form of love is the center drive of the play which causes Eddie to struggle with his own identity and beliefs. His frustration and refusal to accept his own inappropriate feelings is taken out on Rodolpho, and it is used to fuel his aggression towards Rodolpho. Eddie is in clear denial, but it is ironic how his feelings for Catherine becomes increasingly apparent as he tries more and more fervently to deny them. The audience feel an odd sense of pity as they watch Eddie become tangled in a love he feels yet does not accept nor understand, and continuously rejects his true emotions by showing aggression to those around him.

Furthermore, Miller displays the marital love, or lack thereof between Beatrice and Eddie. Their marriage is clearly deteriorating due to Eddie's

attraction towards Catherine. Eddie no longer does his duty as a husband, as seen when Beatrice asks him "when am I going to be a wife again?". As someone who highly values his masculinity, it is surprising that Eddie is not performing his duties as a husband and a man, showing the true extent of his feelings towards Catherine. Beatrice, however, still loves Eddie despite this, and defends Eddie when Catherine calls him a "rat", and even listens to him when he demands her to not attend Catherine and Rodolpho's wedding. As Beatrice is aware of his attraction towards Catherine, one would expect her to be resentful, but she still chooses to stay with him, highlighting her love for him. Thus, the audience are able to see the one sided nature of their marriage and feel pity for Beatrice. However, Miller does give their marriage a last moment of redemption when Eddie dies in Beatrice's arms, crying "My B!". In the end, Eddie realizes his mistakes and returns to his wife, but it is, unfortunately, already too late. The love between Beatrice and Eddie is undeniably tragic, and emphasizes how Eddie's actions ultimately ended up hurting not only himself, but those who love him as well.

Moreover, Miller portrays romantic love through Catherine and Rodolpho. Catherine's love for Rodolpho develops from a shallow fascination for his "blond hair", or namely, his attractive looks, to wanting to marry him. Rodolpho is also shown as loving Catherine as he encourages her to be brave and step into adulthood. He is also willing to apologize and kiss Eddie's hand to obtain his blessing for marrying Catherine as he understands how important Eddie is to Catherine. However, the love between them is also questionable, as it is revealed that Catherine had never dated anyone else before, and their marriage also seems rushed due to the need to make

Rodolpho an official American citizen as soon as possible. Some of the audience may question the strength of their love. Regardless, their relationship is sufficient to spike Eddie's frustration, and one cannot help but wonder if his opposition is what ironically brings them together. This argument can be supported by the fact that the Catherine and Rodolpho end up sleeping together as Rodolpho tries to comfort her regarding her struggle to mature and stop relying on Eddie. Miller uses the love between Rodolpho and Catherine to catalyse the latter's maturity and transition into adulthood — something which Eddie tries desperately to prevent and stop.

Besides that, Miller showcases brotherly love. Marco's love for his brother, Rodolpho, is the final cause of Eddie's death. Marco, at the end of the first act, had warned Eddie to leave Rodolpho alone, when he "raised the chair like a weapon over Eddie's head" and through this, showed his superior masculinity. The fact that Marco, as a character who had always been quiet and grateful towards Eddie for allowing them to stay in his home, does so is uncharacteristic of him. His love for his brother is what prompts him to take action after Eddie punched Rodolpho after under the guise of teaching him boxing. Through this, Miller causes Eddie to feel threatened and emasculated, leading to him becoming desperate to the extent of calling the immigration. Thus, Marco's brotherly love, though honorable, spurs him into actions which indirectly leads to the death of Eddie.

In conclusion, Miller portrays various forms of love, and showcases the impact it has in the actions of people. Love, although on its own, an emotion which is regarded as pure and good, also causes people to make rash, desperate decisions which can lead to tragedy. Thus, Miller shows the

darker, more grey side of love, leading the audience to realize that love ultimately bears the power to make people blind to both logic and reason.