

Throughout success  
of both falls very far



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Throughout *Death of a Salesman* the males of the Loman family cannot distinguish between the reality of the American Dream and the illusion of it. Willy cannot see who Happy and Biff actually are as individuals or himself for that matter. Therefore, Willy and his sons believe that they all know and have what it takes to be a success in life and in business. In actuality the success of both falls very far from the ideal American Dream of their time. In the entirety of this play Willy Loman fights back and forth with reality about his two sons and himself, being how he thinks they should be. He thinks that being well liked by having personal attractiveness is the key to prosperity.

Towards the beginning of the play, Willy falls back in time to a place where Biff and Happy were perfect sons. Biff is playing football like Willy wanted him too and Happy trying hard to acquire Willy's attention at all costs. Willy tends to center himself on Biff and all the potential that he thinks he has. Happy seems to just get washed out during the play by the constant focus on Biff.

In the very beginning of the play where it is set in the present Willy says, Biff is a lazy bum! (Miller 1938). Then changing his mind by saying that Biff is lost but is a hard worker and hes not lazy (1938). Willy cannot seem to hold on to the reality that Biff cannot achieve success in his life and forget the illusion that he will fulfill his dreams. Biff states the reality clearly here, Pop, Im a dime a dozen and so are you (2000). Willy cannot seem to turn his life into his dream and comes to terms in the end by taking his life. During the play Biff and Happy talk day after day about their American dream but never quite start the steps to achieve it. They both struggle all their young lives.

Biff tries to rebel against Willy in the beginning by failing math and moving out west. Happy, on the other hand tries so very hard to gain the attention of his father for example, by exclaiming, Im losing weight, you notice, Pop? (1947). Later on in the play as it shifts back into the present, Biff and Happy start to understand that having all they want in life doesnt just take dreaming. They realize this by observing their father, Willy with all of his hardships and downfalls. In an argument towards the end Biff cries out to Willy in realization, Pop, Im nothing! Im nothing, Pop. Cant you understand that? Theres no spite in it anymore.

Im just what I am, thats all (2001). Happy, Biff and Willy all have the American Dream as their goal but suffer the torment of never accomplishing all that they have foreseen for the future. They all transform from beginning to end, by first daydreaming about what could be done and then understanding the truth that it will never be. In the conclusion after Willy has committed suicide, Biff says at Willys grave, He had the wrong dreams. All, all, wrong (2003). Biff and Happy now know that for once in their lives they have to make their fathers dream of being the, number-one man happen (2004). Bibliography: Works Cited Miller, Arthur. Death of a Salesman.

The Norton Introduction to Literature. Ed. Jerome Beaty et al.

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