CHAPTER 3
RADIO PLAYS OF HAROLD PINTER

In the present chapter I have selected three radio plays written by Harold Pinter including *A Slight Ache*, *Family Voices* and *Landscape*. These plays have been selected for their strong contrasts and similarities in style as well as in content. In these plays Pinter has focussed on violence, horror, mystery, menace, threat, nervous breakdown of an individual, deteriorating relationships, alienation, bizarre situations, by adopting a naturalistic style which often transcends to the level of surrealism and absurdity of human condition.

*A Slight Ache* is the exploration of the protagonist's predicament which emerges due to his circumstances which are not conducive in the unfulfilment of his psychological needs. The play is also an exploration of a few possibilities of individual's attempt to rectify their situation by strengthening attachments with other. The presentation of such complex psychological problem of maladjustment in connubial life has been effectively presented in radio medium. The dramatic presentation of the matchseller's silence in radio is highly effective and suggestive of convincing mysterious figure.
The two plays *Family Voices* and *Landscape* are similar in theme and technique.

In *Family Voices* Pinter has experimented successfully the dramatization of epistolary narratives (the technique of novel) in radio. The whole play is in form of letters dramatization of which is utter failure on traditional stage. There is no physical action at all in the play.

In *Landscape* physical action is nil. Through the monologues of the two characters, the dramatist highlights on mystery, violence as well as past and future of two dissatisfied lovers.

Thus the detailed analysis of these radio plays would provide significant understanding of presentation of such themes and techniques in radio medium.
A SLIGHT ACHE

The play was first performed on B. B. C. Third Programme on 29th July 1959. Later on it was presented by Michael Codron at the Arts Theater, London on 18 January, 1961, and subsequently at the Criterion Theater.

The play dramatizes the nervous breakdown of the protagonist, the threat of the intruder from outside as well as inside and the exploration of the dramatic potential of the matchseller's silence. There are three characters in the play ------ Flora and Edward (a middle class couple) and the matchseller.

The setting of the play is naturalistic and the plot progresses in a straight direction. To highlight the nervous breakdown of the protagonist, the dramatist focuses on formal manners in their wedded life, to highlight the tension between the couple, the dramatist introduces the wasp episode and the latter part of the play hinges at violent interrogations between Edward and the matchseller. In order to highlight the main events of the play the plot outline analysis is as follows :

So for as the setting of the play is concerned, it has been set in a country house surrounded by a large well kept garden with flower beds trimmed hedges and lush trees. The action is not confined to a single room.
A country house, with two chairs and a table laid for breakfast at the centre of the stage. These will later be removed and the action will be focused on the scullery on the right and study on the left, both indicated with a minimum of scenery and props. A large well kept garden is suggested at the back of the stage with flower beds, trimmed hedges, etc. The garden gate, which cannot be seen by the audience, is off right.

FLORA and EDWARD are discovered sitting at the breakfast table. Edward is reading the paper.¹ 

The play starts with the couple Edward and Flora's conversation regarding distinguishing various flowers blossoming in their garden such as honeysuckle, japonica as convolvulus. Flora shows her interest in sweet scented flowers but Edward maintains his attitude of disinterest and tries to avoid the discussion.

Flora : The whole garden's in flower this morning. The clematis. The convolvulus Every thing. I was out at seven. I stood by the pool.
Edward : Did you say ---that the convolvulus was in flower ?
Flora : yes.
Edward : But good God, you just denied there was any.
Flora : I was talking about the honeysuckle.
Edward : About the what ?
Flora [calmly] : Edward ----- you know that shrub outside the toolshed . . .
Edward : Yes, yes.
Flora : That's convolvulus.
Edward : That ?
Flora : Yes.
Edward : Oh.
[Pause.]
I thought it was japonica.
Flora : Oh, good Lard no.
Edward : Pass the tea pot please.²

From the exchanges of the couple at the breakfast table we get an opportunity to know about the unhealthy relationship that is there in their marriage. Throughout the play, the male counterpart maintains an attitude of hatred and cruelty whereas the wife behaves very politely and in a very sophisticated manner. From the couple's exchange regarding various blossoming flowers in their garden, we get an opportunity to know about their diverse interest in the various flowers in their garden. Throughout the long conversations, the wife expresses her keen interest in the flowers in her garden and informs her husband about them but Edward on the contrary expresses his disinterestedness and drastically reminds her that he is not expected to distinguish between the plants.

In the present conversation the husband refuses to cope with his duties in his house. The following exchange between the couple illustrates Edward's escapism from family duties.

Edward : I don't see why I should be expected to distinguish between these plants. It's not my Job.
Flora : You know perfectly well what grows in your garden.
Edward : Quite the contrary. It is clear that I don't.³
Another significant point of the setting of the play is that Edward is reading a newspaper at the breakfast table. Pinter uses the device of reading the newspaper to indicate some estrangement and distance between the husband and the wife.

Moreover, the appearance of a wasp at the breakfast table dramatically highlights the tension and violence of the play. When Flora asks Edward to put the canopy in the garden to do some work, Edward resists and finds the day very treacherous. Whenever Edward wants to face and destroy the external menace, he requires Flora's help as it is evident in the wasp episode and in his encounter with the matchseller. He gets violent but Flora remains docile and sympathetic. This happens at two places — one in the wasp episode when Edward seeks Flora's help to kill the Wasp but Flora remains graceful and repeatedly denies and condemns his attempts to kill the wasp. Secondly, Edward sends Flora to call the matchseller in but with the matchseller too she behaves in a very polite and sophisticated manner. Suddenly a wasp appears at the breakfast table. Edward's tension which was already apparent throughout his conversation with his wife regarding flower plants in their garden gets momentum in the wasp episode and further in the interrogation of the matchseller. In a state of tension Edward notices a wasp and asks Flora to cover the marmalade. He puts the paper down the table and further asks
The wasp tries to come out of the jar through the spoon hole. Edward further plans to kill it and takes Flora's help to bring it out on the spoon and squash it on a plate. Flora expresses her unwillingness and repeatedly insists that "it will bite". Edward becomes violent.

"If you don't stop saying that word I shall leave this table" and says - "Wasps do not bite - It's snakes that bite".

Flora assumes that the wasp will choke to death out of suffocation in the marmalade and suddenly Edward briskly gets impatient and reminds her about his work. He says he can't spend the whole day worrying about the wasp.

Ultimately, Flora also agrees to kill it. Edward asks her to pass him the hot water jug to scald it. He pours down the spoon hole and notices buzzing sound of the wasp and calls it". "Vicious creatures".

After repeated violent attempts of trying to kill, the wasp, Edward ultimately succeeds in doing so. After killing it he feels tension free, relaxed and finds the day beautiful and expresses his desire to work in the garden. But on the contrary the killing of the wasp is an awful experience for Flora. The image of blindness in the wasp episode and Edward's feeling of a slight ache in his eyes help to externalize the inner fear of the protagonist.

The wasp episode brings out the mental tension of Edward on
The wasp episode brings out the image of blindness and the depth of Edward's attitude of hatred, violence, cruelty, bitterness both towards his wife as well as the wasp. After killing the wasp, Edward feels fresh minded and expresses his willingness to do some work in the garden and feels the goodness and the beauty of the day in his bones and muscles.

Further Edward sees an strange man standing at the back gate and gets scared of him. In a low, murmuring voice he utters, "... He's there. Blast and damn it, he's there, he's there at the back gate."

Flora moves over to him and tells that the man standing outside the backgate is a matchseller, who does not disturb anybody. She further considers him 'a nice old man and a quite harmless fellow going about his business'.

Edward finds Flora's remark about the matchseller ridiculous. He is a threat for Edward. Edward feels suffocated in his own house. When Flora returns after putting the canopy in the garden for Edward to do his work, she finds Edward in the scullery. Edward pretends to dig notes for his essay on space and time but was writing the essay on the Belgian Congo.

The play also highlights dramatic dimensionality and continuity of time and space. In the play Edward's youth and the old matchseller's old age replace. Edward replies to his wife.
"I've been engaged on the dimensionality and continuity of space ... and time ... for years."10

At the start the matchseller appears old and Edward appears young. Towards the end of the play Edward changes into an old and helpless figure whereas the old matchseller regains his youth and vitality. Thus the play exhibits spatial replacement.

Another replacement in the play takes place in regard to food. At the start Edward and Flora are discovered at the breakfast table, but in the end it is Flora and the matchseller who go for lunch not Edward. Significant point regarding Edward's psychic fear is that whenever he feels under tension he feels suffocated and disinterested. This is evident from the wasp episode. Before killing the wasp he was full of tension but after killing the wasp he felt freshminded, vital and energetic. Again after seeing the strange matchseller Edward asks Flora to leave him alone. His mental tension is explicit from his physical symptoms such as his eyes get bloodshot. After Flora's repeatedly asking him to come out, Edward's mental tension gains momentum and he utters "Aaah my eyes". When Flora asks him to wash them, he violently rebukes her to 'keep away'.

Edward finds it hard to tolerate the matchseller's presence on his doorstep standing continuously with no purpose of selling anything, and
making no effort to sell them. He calls the matchseller a "bullock" and sends Flora to call him in his study to interrogate him about the matter. Later part of the play highlights the interrogation of the matchseller by Edward. It is full of threat and violence verbal as well as physical. Flora shows her keen interest in the matchseller. When Flora goes out to call the matchseller in, she behaves politely with him and greets him with a 'good morning' and invites him to have a cup of tea or a glass of lemon juice in her house. She also mentions before him her various florescent flowers - honeysuckle, convolvulus, clematis, japonica. Ultimately the matchseller follows her in the study. He stands on the threshold of the study. Edward asks him to be seated comfortably and offers him Sherry and Double Scotch.

In Edward’s interrogations with the matchseller, the matchseller remains silent and speechless. However, Edward interrogates him, asks him questions to elicit information about his own past. But in his attempts of asking the matchseller, Edward fails to enable him to speak and instead Edward recalls his past, his youth and his interests and vitality in front of the matchseller. The more Edward question the matchseller, the more he reveals his ownself. Edward reveals in front of the matchseller, that he was a squire, a nice old man, a great chess player, the pride of his country having three daughters Alice, Eunice and Fanny. He mentions his long voyage and his late return. But the matchseller remains silent and standing.
Edward repeatedly asks him to say something but goes on to talk about himself and tells the matchseller about his profession. From Edward's self-revelatory account we come to know his interest and past. that he writes theological and philosophical essays, and also mentions his interest in tropical phenomena, hunting in Africa, and his interest in fauna and other strange and fascinating sights in the Gobi desert. But the old man presents the extraordinary repose and remains silent. Further Edward reveals to him his own past experiences and underlines his affinities with the old man, "Yes, I . . . I was in much the same position myself then as you are now, you understand. Struggling to make my way in world. I was in commerce too".1

The later part of the play highlights physical violence. The matchseller's constant standing makes Edward restless and he asks the old man to get back into the corner. Edward repeats him the question as to why he stands at the backgate from dawn to dusk pretending to sell matches. The matchseller shivers and sags. Edward forcefully tries to get him to sit in the chair and ultimately the matchseller stumbles and sits down. At this Edward heaves a sigh of relief but he feels suffocated and needs fresh air and goes out of the door. In a state of great weariness, he asks Flora to take him into the garden. She follows him to a chair under the canopy. Edward finds peace there. Flora reminds him to look at the trees and the
singing birds, but Edward doesn't seem to enjoy or appreciate their beauty.

On Flora's asking about the matchseller Edward observes that he is a little reticent and somewhat withdrawn and asserts.

"I should be the same perhaps, in his place. Though, of course, I could not possibly find myself about him?"12

When Flora repeats in front of Edward the matchseller's being a harmless, unfortunate fellow coming without any design and his automatic departure to some other place, Edward violently calls her 'deluded'.

After a pause he reveals to Flora the old matchseller's identity that "He's like jelly. A great bullockfat of jelly. He can't see straight . . . he wears a glass eye. He's almost stone deaf . . . almost . . . not quite. He's very nearly dead on his feet . . . he possesses other faculties, cunning. The man's an imposter and he knows I know it."13

Flora's having a word with the old matchseller to get to the bottom of the matter, sounds ridiculous to Edward. She assures him to trust her judgement and have a greater insight into her capabilities and goes to the matchseller in the study leaving Edward in the garden. While speaking to the matchseller, Flora also gets lost in revealing her own past and talks about her affinities with the matchseller. When she finds the old man perspiring, she mops his brow with her chiffons.

Flora recollects her past before the matchseller,
My husband would never have guessed your name. Never. [She kneels at his feet, whispering ] "It's me you were waiting for, wasn't it? You've been standing waiting for me. You've seen me in the wood picking daisies, in my apron, my pretty daisy apron, and you came and stood, poor creature, at my gate, till death us do part. Poor Barnabas . . ." 14

After taking rest Edward comes up stage. Flora stops him from coming in and tells him about the possibility of the old man's death. At this Edward frantically and violently calls her 'a lying slut' and asks her to 'get back to her trough'. Flora goes out, Edward enters. He finds the atmosphere of the room warm inside, opens the windows, pulls the blinds and closes the curtains. In his second interrogation with the matchseller, Edward tells him to take off his togs and to strip to his buff and asks him to tell about his boyhood interests whether he liked to play- Run, Swim, kick the ball or what else?

Again, before the matchseller can say anything, Edward tells him about his own boyhood interests ——— that he liked to play country house matches, kept wicket and batted number seven. He further goads the matchseller to reveal something and about his past and charges him of drinking wine in his blasted house, eating his duck, and sitting like a mouldering heap and then stops abruptly. In disgust he finds the matchseller grinning. He charges the matchseller of corrupting his house and garden. Before his arrival his house was neat and clean, polished and everything in
his house was polished too.

Before his arrival Edward was leading an easy progress in his life an easy progress in his life, was capable of struggling against all kinds of usurpers. The whole summer he could breakfast, survey his landscape, examine his hedges with telescope and could watch the progress of the three masted schooners.

Laughingly, Edward emphasises his affinities with the match-seller and calls him his nearest and dearest, kith and kin, exchanging postcards, corresponding about 'sea and land, city and village, town and country, autumn and winter...clock towers...museums...citadels...bridges...rivers...'.

He visualizes different appearances of the matchseller every time.

He says,

Sometimes I viewed you through dark glasses, Yes, and sometimes through light glasses, and on other occasions bare eyed, and on other occasions through bars of the scullery window, or from the roof, the roof, yes in driving snow, or, from the bottom of the drive in thick fog, or from the roof again in blinding sun, so blinding, so hot, that I had to skip and jump and bounce in order to remain in one place.15

Catching his breath, Edward finds the oldman crying. He himself sneezes, feels feverish and blows his nose. Finally he gets a cold and a
germ in his eyes and expresses his mental agony and bewilderment in his utterance 'my eyes', 'my eyes' and falls down helplessly.

In a low murmur he asks the matchseller not to cry. In a state of horror he sees the old man laughing and himself gets bewildered. It reflects Edward's spatial replacement from youth and vitality to utter helplessness.

But then, the time came. I saw the wind, swilling and the dust at my back gate, lifting and the long grass, scything together . . . [Slowly, in horror.] You are laughing. You're laughing. Your face. Your body. [overwhelming nausea and horror.] Rocking . . . heaving . . . rocking . . . You're laughing at me ! Aaaaahhhh !

Finally, to Edward the matchseller appears extraordinarily youthful and himself becomes weaker. Flora takes the matchseller for lunch in the garden and calls him Barnabas and offers Edward the match tray. Thus the play ends with Flora and the matchseller going for lunch.

Thus unlike the traditional serious play, here the exclusive emphasis is on the individuals who are the couple Edward and Flora. The matchseller seems to be a surrogate of Edward, who has alienated himself, from the outside world, from nature, from his wife and from himself. His 'himself' appears in the form of a speechless-figure of the matchseller. The matchseller initially serves the purpose of projecting the decayed self of Edward. And his re-vitalization into youth only after Edward replaces his
surrogate. Edward's alienation from the outside world is presented through his habit of remaining indoors and not being interested in spending time in his garden even after his wife's insistence to do so. He is alienated from his wife. This distance has been dramatically presented through his contradictory conversation at the start of the play. The reading of the newspaper as a barrier Flora between her and himself and showing no interest in her appreciation of the invigorating effect of nature. He is frightened by his communion with nature. In the wasp episode, his eventually killing the wasp anticipates his own future state. He is not only blinded but rendered lifeless or annoyance for his occupying the place at the end of the play which the matchseller had earlier occupied. He creates a sort of mental stage in recalling his earlier life which corresponds with that of the matchseller.

Flora, significantly, named so, in her fondness of nature stands as it were inviting for the revival of vitality and meaning in life which the transformed self of Edward in the form of the matchseller eventually provides.

Thus we see that the play has a thickly textured but uninvolved thematic pattern. Though not much happens by the way of action in the play. The attention of the listener is sustained throughout by the depth, manipulation and unceasing flow of the verbal medium.
The visuals are not needed to explicate the meaning of the situation and the visual images are automatically and continuously created and keep on floating in the mind of the listener as reminiscences of the dialogue of the two characters.

Finally we can make the observations that Pinter has convincingly established that even banal and apparently insignificant details of life can be used as suitable material for dramatic treatment.

In radio medium the matchseller’s silence is highly effective. His dimensionality remains unrevealed. His speechlessness and expression of various physical movements, and the resulting sound effects can be imagined by the listener more effectively. Edward’s staring at the matchseller in the scullery and stating his interest in space and time can be imagined staring at an imaginary figure. It may be representation of his inner psychic fear. The absence of the matchseller creates ambiguity. The listeners can freely imagine his silence and absence or his imaginative presence in their own way. They can easily frame their own mental picture of the matchseller’s absence. As Donald MC Whinnie comments on the effectiveness of radio medium he expresses a very significant difference between radio and stage.

When the play was transferred to the stage he saw the inclusion of an actual figure as 'a great advantage' since it allowed the audience to visualize the focus of the couple’s concerns. The
playwright less sure, felt there was a more distinct, clear image on the radio.\textsuperscript{17}

In radio form rhythmic flow provides the clarity of the matchseller's image. Stage version fails to achieve this effect.

Sound medium is more suited to present the exact chronology of events of the play. It helps in determining sequential durations and spatial dimensionality of the play more easily which sight cannot attain. Albert Wertheim further comments in this regard:

Edward [. . . ] moves in a fluid space, a house containing rooms of unknown proportions and with unknown proximity to one another. He moves as well in fluid time, with scenes that fade in and fade out so that the listeners have little sense of what the passage of time has been Time and space . . . are largely determined by the listener\textsuperscript{18}.

Agreeing with Wertheim's comment about effectiveness of fluidity of time and space in radio. Martin' S. Regal observes "Wertheim admits that this fluid property of the play need not be entirely eliminated on stage, but he believes that very physical presence of the set extensively fixes our ideas of space and time"\textsuperscript{19}.

Martin Esslin also expresses a similar opinion:

The unidimensionality of radio, which moves in time alone, thus tends towards a much higher power of concentration, enabling the playwright or director to focus on that aspect of the total picture which he has selected for emphasis.
FAMILY VOICES AND LANDSCAPE

The two plays which I have selected under consideration *Family Voices* and *Landscape* are identical in regard to theme and technique. Pinter makes effective use of absurd technique of non-communication in which physical action does not take place at all but interspersed monologues and soliloquising help in presentation of innermost psyche or psychological drama like the technique of novel. From thematic standpoint the plays are similar as the dramatist highlights estranged wishy-washy and erotic relationships and interspersed with love, excitement, pleasant memories of the past, mystifying situations and violence.

The play *Family Voices* was first broadcast on B.B.C. Radio 3 on 22 January, 1981. It was subsequently presented in a 'platform performance' by the National Theater London, on 13th February, 1981.

The other play *Landscape* was first presented on Radio by the B.B.C. on 25th April 1968. Later on it was first presented on the stage by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Aldwych Theater on 22nd July, 1969. Originally the play was written for the stage but the Lord Chamberlain objected to the work, and because Pinter refused to remove it, the play was premiered first on the radio after abolition of theatrical censorship.
The following plot outline and analysis of the two plays would substantiate the above affinities in regard to themes and techniques and effective presentation in media form.

**FAMILY VOICES**

The play is the dramatization of antiphonal voices' epistolary but articulated narration of the trio (a young man - the son, a woman - his widowed mother and his dead father) of a disintegrated zanked nuclear family. The play is interspersed with the monologues and soliloquising of the three voices. The son's letters are long and vacillate between his excitement, pleasure interests and memories of new family, mystifying situations and sense of loss, his uncertainty and fear about his future life. His letters are full of juxtapositions and depiction of pleasure and pain. The mother's letters are much shorter and alternate between her loving concern for her separated son and an expression of her bitter reproach for him. Their letters are intermingled with juxtapositions, mystifying situations, depiction of pleasure and pain, isolation and create estrangement effects. However, no logical link and no inter communication follows and their voices merely appear to intersect different distinct never ending yearnings which
never unite their correspondence. Hence their epistolary correspondence tends to remain will-o-the-wisp.

Thematically the dramatist adopts an oft recurring theme which he has used in his earlier plays like The Birthday Party i.e. the protagonist's attempts of changing his identity, to replace the substitute family by abandoning his biological family and confer new identity and adjustment in new family. Moreover, the play poignantly mourns the individual's exile marked by his sense of loss. All the members of the family are imprisoned in the prisons of their own. The play evokes universal exile as all human beings vacillate invariably between the loss of one and choose of the other. At higher level all human beings are family exiles.

In order to grasp the in-depth meaning of the play the detailed plot outline analysis is as follows:

The play starts with the voice (in the form of a letter) of the son a young man who has abandoned his biological family and has started his new life in a rented room in an enormous city, all by himself. Through his letters he communicates his whereabouts and his relationship with the landlady and the other occupants of the house. His letters inform that he has shifted to a joint family. There are five members consisting of three female members and two male members. The three ladies include - the
landlady Mrs Withers, her daughter Miss Jane and Lady Withers, who wears "red dresses".

The two men include a big man named Mr. Riley, who admires the son and a mysterious old man known as Benjamin Withers.

Through his self contradictory letters the son reflects his innocence and deceitfulness, "I hope you're feeling well, and not as peaky, you felt perfectly well." He further writes in one of his letters, "I am dead drunk," but a little later he writes, "When I said I was drunk' I was of course making a joke. I bet you laughed mother? Did you get the joke? You know I never touch alcohol."^2

His relationship with the substitute family seems dagger designed appearing to pierce his mother's innermost feelings and heart. His relationship with the landlady resembles the relationship of Stanley and Meg in The Birthday Party. The landlady Mrs. Withers adopts him as her 'surrogate-son her solace' and showers maternal affection on him. "...you are my little pet. I've always wanted a little pet but I've never had one and now I've got one sometimes she gives me a cuddle, as if she were my mother."^3 He applauds his landlady, "It's got a lot to do with the landlady, who is Mrs. Withers, a person who turns to be an utterly charming person of impeccable credentials."^4
His adoption of the new family evokes through a number of echoes and allusion in addition to maternal affection, excitement, charm. He is prone to seductive and erotic relationships with the landlady's daughter who is a school girl and remains busy with her homework but never attends school.

Jane sipped her tea with her legs on the sofa. Her stockinged toes came to rest on my thigh... Jane, on the other hand, chewed almost dreamily at her bun and when a currant was left stranded on her upper lip she licked it off, without haste. I could not reconcile this with the fact that her toes were quite restless, even agitated. Her mouth, eating was measured, serene; her toes, not eating, were agitated, highly strung, some would say hysterical. My bun turned out to be rock solid. I bit into it, it jumped out of my mouth and bounced into my lap. Jane's feet caught it. It clamed her toes down. She juggled the bun, with some expertise... in an early exchange between us, she had told me she wanted to be an acrobat.5

The letters further reveal his bizzare and mystifying encounter with old man - Benjamin Withers. He describes the old man's uncanny and turbid, trepidation as he undergoes the most unpleasant and the most mystifying encounter with him, which is full of threat and he is unable to decode it and pleads for his mother's advice, "Will you give me your advice" ?6

The old man threatens him not to "mess about" and to "look sharp" and takes him to his room -
You’re in my room... Get me? It’s a true oasis... Are you prepared to follow me down the mountain? Look at me my name’s Withers. I’m there or thereabouts. Follow? Embargo on all duff terminology. With me? Embargo on all things redundant... You’re in a disease ridden land, boxer. Keep your weight on all the left feet you can lay your hands on. Keep dancing. The old foxtrot is the classical response but that’s not the response I’m talking about... This is a place of creatures up and down stairs. Creatures of the rhythmic splits, the rhythmic side swipes, the rums and roulettes, the macaroni tatters, the dumpling in jam mayonnaise, a catapulting ordure of gross and ramshakle shenanigans... I’m the only saviour of the grace you find yourself wanting in...7

Perhaps the old man symbolically represents his dead father, who warns him to follow the old family and a respectable life full of social recognition and warns him about awaited dangers of the strange family, the fear of underworld activities and considers it ‘a disease ridden land’ and ‘place of creatures ups and downs’ may refer to underworld people. Elsewhere the son writes his bewilderment, bafflement and astonishment of strangers in the family -

At night I hear whispering from the other rooms and do not understand it. I hear steps on the stairs but do not dare go out to investigate.8

A mysterious and remarkable thing about the son is that on the one hand he feels a sense of belonging in the family as he writes-
Lady Withers wore a necklace around her alabaster neck, a neck amazingly young. She played Schumann. She smiled at me. Mrs. Withers and Jane smiled at me. I took a seat and sat in it. I am in it. I will never leave it. Oh mother, I have found my home, my family. Little did I ever dream I could know such happiness.

But a little later he accepts that he feels alienated and a stranger in the same family. He juxtaposes his situation-

I'm not highly respected in this house. They don't give a shit for me here. Although I've always been a close relation. I'm a fine tenor but they never invite me to sing. There are too many women here, that's the trouble. I've got no one to talk to. These women treat me like a leper. Even though I am a relation. Of a sort.

The son vacillates between two kinds of lives i.e. a life of lust that he finds in the company of his landlady and her daughter. This no doubt provides him physical content and gratification of senses but it does not provide him love, social acceptability and respect. He wants to start a new life but at the same time he wishes to be respected. This difference creates inner tension in him. He is respected in his professional life, as well as in the religious sphere but he is not respected at home. He needs emotional acknowledgment. One of his letters is full of alternating juxtapositions-

If you find me bewildered, anxious, confused, uncertain and afraid, you also find me content.
He explicates his predicament -
I walk about in a constant state of spiritual, emotional, psychological and physical tension... My lust is unimaginably violent but it goes against my best interests, which are to keep on the right side of God... I like health and strength and intelligent conversation.  

His recently widowed mother's letters are interspersed with extracts from the letters of her son. The mother speaks as a second voice in the play. 

She expresses her concern of love for her son, "Darling... I think of you and wonder how you are. There are so many nice boys and girls about. But please don't get mixed up with the other sort." Later she expresses her bitter and acrimonious reproach for her son:

Perhaps I should forget all about you. Perhaps I should curse you as your father cursed you. Oh I pray, I pray your life is a torment to you. I wait for your letter begging me to come to you. I'll spit on it."

She expresses her reproach perhaps because of her blood relation, affection and love and may be because after long separation the son has not informed her. She complains -

Darling. Where are you? Why do you never write? Do you ever think of me? Have you changed your address...?... No body
knows if your are alive or dead? She expresses her reproach further, "If you are alive you are a monster."

Cryptic references in the text indicate that the correspondence remains non communicated throughout. We only hear two separate voices at different wavelength but yearnings remain separate and never get fused into one. Their letters remain voiced thoughts not written at all but if they are written they are not posted if posted not delivered if delivered not received by the person to whom they were addressed, if received not read as the mother complains.

"Darling... Did you receive my letters?"

Their monologues remain separate, unmerged, unconnected without response and without any dialogue. But we hear them at the same aural plane. The son writes to his mother, "Do you miss me? the mother writes, "I miss you." This creates estrangement effects.

The mother enquires from the son, "Have you made friends with anyone?" The son elsewhere writes, "I expect to make friends in the not too distant future."

Remembering his mother the son writes "... But I haven't forgotten that I have a mother and that you are my mother." Mother writes,
"sometimes I wonder if you remember that you have a mother."  

The later part of the play focuses on heightened estrangement effects contained in the startling intrusion of a third family voice that is the letter of his dead father written from the grave. He writes -

I am dead. As dead as the door nail. I'm writing to you from my grave. A quick word for old time's sake. Just to keep in touch. An old hullo out of the dark. A last kiss from Dad.

The letters of the mother are an expression of her consequent isolation and also focus on child parent relationship. The son is responsible for their isolation and to jeopardize his family happiness and ghostly existence of his father. Whether his father physically dies or not it is immaterial but for him his parents died a physical death as the son becomes for them elusive and opaque. The thoughts either represented by the son or by the parents remain uncommunicated. Non-Communication becomes effective medium to experience and convey the deeper meaning of absence. Father's isolation, alienation and poignant affection for his son is revealed in these jovial expressions. The remembrances of his past in the company of his son leading him etc. present unforgettable image of the dead father's letter to his son. The play highlights the death and rebirth theme. As the son's reference to the new place considering it as his home and claims that place
as one of the family. At first he does not adjust in it as it also appears mystifying and bizzare it does not provide a significant identity. He feels, bewitched, anxious, confused, afraid and uncertain. But his rebirth in the new family takes place as they have decided a name for him. 'Bobo'; "Good morning Bobo they say". He chooses a life of silence and his exile from his biological family marks his death which dramatizes both joy and pain of his both choices - choices of leaving old family and starting new life in a new family.

The death and rebirth theme is also represented by the father. His father whether had undergone physical death or not is not significant but the image of his rebirth is highlighted 'his writing a letter from his grave; his smiling and laying down in a glassy grave because he can see out of the grave. He bears absolute silence but also hears occasional barking of dogs.

After careful examination of the play a fundamental question remains unanswered. As the son makes an attempt to change his identity by escaping his past and his attempt to find a refuge in a new family which he thinks would protect him from insecurities and would confer identity. But, Does the change of name, place help in changing it fully? The fact is that one cannot deny one's roots. The inherent identity that one acquires after death remains the same. An individual cannot easily deny his
biological roots and biological parents. His replacement like other characters as Stanley in The Birthday Party, Rose's replacement with Bert remain uncertain and incomplete as an alternative to change his identity.

In the play, the mother expects her son's return to the family in a nice suit, "Or perhaps you will arrive here in a handsome new car, one day, in the not too distant future, in a nice suit, quite out of the blue, and hold me in your arms."\(^24\)

The mother uses threat to get back to her son. This threat comes to him from the claims of his past and is also made by his mother and sister. As the son has a pleasant bath in the bathroom, Rilley receives two ladies who claim the son but their claim is defused the son recounts it -

While I was lying in my bath this afternoon . . . there was apparently a knock on the front door. Two women stood on the door step. They said they were my mother and my sister, and asked for me. He denied knowledge of me . . . No, there was no one of that name resident. This was a family house no strangers admitted. No, they got on very well, thank you very much, without intruders. I suggest, he said, that you both go back to where you come from, and stop bothering innocent hardworking people with your slanders and your libels . . . piss off out of it before I call a copper.\(^25\)

His mother takes help of police and issues an ultimatum for his return but the son does not return home because of intruders. He diffuses
menace from outside and himself announces his return. In *The Birthday Party* the young man was not able to fully cast off his past and forge a new life and become a separate identity or person. But in the present play the fear is not external but is the outcome of the fact that it arises because the young man completely casts off his past life and forges a new identity and becomes a separate person.

Even after his separation, his predicament still persists. The terror of his becoming a separate person still predominates, so much so that he ultimately decides to return to his biological home.

Thus the play allows effective dramatic presentation in the radio medium. This kind of dramatization is an utter failure on stage because it involves narration and would result in artificial reading of the letters. Ambiguity, juxtaposition of three voices' inner psychic thoughts, memories and expectations etc become highly effective in media form as the three different voices can be easily presented off hand. The play takes place effectively even without any physical movement of the characters.

The presentation of soliloquies and monologues is highly effective in radio medium whereas on traditional stage it has lost its vigour. The mode of soliloquising is gripping. Pinter follows the technique of the epistolary novel for dramatization or externalization through narration which
highlights the loneliness and despair of the mother and the son. In the characteristic manner the play deals with ordinary human beings faced with existential issues in the face of hostile circumstances, which may appear quite banal on the surface. The narratives are so managed that the visual realization of a dramatic sort is most effectively achieved.

To emphasize Brechtian technique of estrangement effect the dramatist has made dexterous use of self contradictions and juxtapositions of the three voices. The play is rapt in mystery, juxtapositions and violence.

**LANDSCAPE**

The play concerns chiefly with the two characters' desires, impulses and moods in the past, present and future and highlights Beth and Duff relationship, incompatibility of the match and their attitudes and interests. Like Family Voices, the physical action is nil. Through non action and non dialogue the dramatist communicates their monologues in word sounds. Thematically the play highlights an individual's confrontation with disaster and recurrent violent reaction to it signalizing a different way of life. Despite of disasters people keep on living. Change is essential whether it leads to bad or good. Finally the change for betterment of next
stage of life after disasters charts future course of action. The dramatist effectively highlights the theme of separation. As the stage directions indicate new technique. The dim background indicates their separation from their environment. Likewise, the foreground also indicates their separation as the table is described "long". Duff sits at its right corner. While Beth sits in an arm chair, "which stands away from the table to its left."^1

The verbal note of their physical postures presents their physical as well as mental isolation as this verbal stage direction indicates-

Duff refers normally to Beth, but does not appear to hear her voices. Beth never looks at Duff, and does not appear to hear his voice. Both characters are relaxed, in no sense rigid.^2

At the surface level their behaviour and manners may appear strange but their acceptance of the situation sounds natural at a deeper level. The dramatist creates a significant gap as the two characters "do not appear to hear" each other's voices. In this regard Lahr presents appropriate conclusion that, "Duff and Beth speak but do not listen each one another".^.3

The play is full of juxtapositions, constrasts and oblique comments. The whole play is a series of juxtaposition utterances from Beth and Duff. When one character speaks, the other remains silent, and when the one
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The play is full of juxtapositions, contrasts and oblique comments. The whole play is a series of juxtaposition utterances from Beth and Duff. When one character speaks, the other remains silent, and when the one
starts talking, the other stops talking. In the romantic recollections Beth recalls a lonely beach and highlights self image, idealized lover, hope for children, and expresses her concern for recognition. Beth remains self oriented, she thinks of her own needs, she recalls beautiful natural landscapes, graceful movement, gentle loving contact. This romantic and fragile dreamy image symbolizes Beth's escape. Whereas Duff, contrary to her memorization, wishes and expectations is inclined towards the mundane and ugly aspect of things in a more violent, randomly noisy world. Duff speaks of fact about children while Duff maintains emotional attitude towards children

The play starts with Beth's recollections of her past and her wish for future for standing by the sea beach. "I'll stand on the beach. On the beach, Well it was very fresh But it was hot, in the Dunes. But it was so fresh, on the shore. I loved it very much "

She admires her lover. "His eyelids Belly button. Snoozing. How lovely ! She expresses desire for her own children, "Would you like a baby? "I said" children ? Babies ? of your own would be nice " She describes the posture of her lover, "I walked back over the sand He had turned. Toes under sand, head buried in his arms." The verbal activities of Beth in the above speech are self oriented. For her self is important Her lover is nameless. She refers to her lover as,
"my man". Other people like women looking, turning and staring at her, are not important. This refers back to her self-oriented concern. Use of tenses also change in present, past and future. She refers, "I would like to stand," I'll stand", "it was very fresh," The action further develops from recollections of the past to future and then it goes back to past. The opening speech presents the ambiguous relationship of Beth's past and present, as she recollects, "Women look at me," and "Two women looked at me," and she concludes, "I am beautiful." Namelessness and uncertainty of time alternating between past, present and future are significant. They can be referred to any number of people performing the role of her lover in any dimensionality of time.

Sequences of statements made by Beth and Duff also refer to their arbitrary relationship, contrast and oblique comments based on causality.

Beth : I walked back over the sand. He had turned. Toes under sand, head buried in his arms.
Duff : The dog's done. I didn't tell you,

Beth talks about the sea and Duff talks about fish. She talks about going to a hotel for a drink and Duff recalls his visit to a pub. Duff says, There wasn't a soul; on the beach." The connecting references of both characters are self sustaining and self generated. Their monologues are
full of contrasts as Beth "stands under a tree by a pond."^12 Beth finds the weather, 'dry', 'hot' on her way to walk. Whereas Duff goes out for a walk in wet and cold weather. Beth talks of child and parenthood whereas Duff talks of unknown youngesters, Beth addresses absent people and Duff addresses Beth as 'you'.

In this play verbal medium as a barrier is an effective medium of their contact as they are communicated to their own world.

In the next stage of Beth and Duff relationship, the dramatist focuses on their attitudes of each other which are full of conflicting individualities. Beth, "never looks at Duff". But Duff refers to Beth as 'you'. But Beth recalls her own needs - looking beautiful is her need. Duff tries to minimise the separation and tries to come closer to Beth and projects to be exclusively her lover.

Do you like me to talk to you?
Pause.
Do you like me to tell you about all the things I've been doing?
Pause.
About all the things I've been thinking?
Pause
M m m n n?
Pause
I think you do.^14

Both the characters are mutually responsible for their actions.
There is no victim and no victimizer. Duff does not express his willingness in what Beth talks about. He speaks of crudity of things which Beth does not like. Their separation may be due to their different world views and different mental sets. They are incompitable and not suitable for each other. Despite all sorts of efforts Beth ultimately appears to have lost hope for bringing any productive change in Duff's personality. She maintains an attitude of detachment and consoles herself in her private world. It appears that Duff feels rejected.

Beth's world view is positive full of beautiful sights, graceful movements whereas Duff recalls dull, negative, and violent world. In her memories Beth thinks about a day of love at the beach, moments of intimacy with companions and explicitly expresses her concern for her physical attraction. But Duff thinks of the filth of the park, their lives as servants, the crudities, of barroom relationship and expresses the need of his relationship with Beth.

This beer is piss, he said. Undrinkable . . .
The landlord picked up the mig and had a sip . . .
Pause. The landlord threw a half a crown on the bar and told him to take it . . . "15

From their recollections and fantasies the dramatist furnishes information about their social status. They are perhaps employed by Mr.
Sykes. Beth works as a housekeeper and Duff as a Chauffeur and handyman. Duff recalls an episode of confession of his being unfaithful to Beth.

When I came into this room you stopped still.  
I had to walk all the way over the floor towards you.  
Pause.  
I touched you.  

Pause  
I told you that I'd let you down. I'd been unfaithful to you.16

The first half of the play highlights elaboration, repetition and recontextualization of the park and beach episode. Both these episodes are similar as they focus on sexual infidelity to each other.

**Beth**, "He touches the back of my neck . . . I wore a white beach robe. Underneath I was naked.  
Pause.  
There wasn't soul on the beach.  
Duff, "There wasn't a soul in the park."17

Beth further reveals her interest in peaceful, desolate atmosphere of the beach taking her sketch book and drawing pencil and draw the sketch of the beach.

She further mentions about her future in which she expresses her fear of loss of her beauty, becoming older. Referring to other people she
mentions their cars, zooming by men and girls at their sides bouncing up and down squeaking like dolls.

Finally she narrates a beautiful autumn misty morning, her return from the river, her finishing domestic work in empty house wearing blue dress and sitting with her dog and seeing children in the valley and thinks about her drawing the basic principal of drawing which she always wore in her mind of shadow and light. She revealed that the objects intercepting the light cast shadow. Shadow is deprivation of light. Sometimes the space of shadow is determined by that of the object and sometimes it is only indirectly affected by it and sometimes the cause of the shadow cannot be found. She associates this principle of light and shadow to her man. When she asked him to turn and when he turned to look her she could not see his look and could not see whether he was looking at her.

Amid the silent sky, gentle sound of tide, she admired his tender support given to her and utterances for him with great love.

Duff's long narratives are concerned with his lady. Perhaps Beth's emphasis remains on events concerning last few days.

His references include his taking shelter in a downfall due to heavy rain, his desire to feel birds gathering there, his seeing a man and a woman at a distance, his desire to have the company of his lady and feed other
creatures, his search for the couple whom he saw in the dawnfall includes
his going to the pond, in the park, in the pubs and finding them in the pub
and his having a drink and criticizing it as undrinkable which makes the
landlord aggrevated. He throws his money and asserts there that he is
unmarried and childless.

Further description of Duff includes his stay at Mr. Sykes' peaceful
house as a first rate housekeeper, serious, never making fun and only going
about his work.

Duff realizes that Mr. Sykes suspected his lady and his relation.
He calls Mr Sykes a gloomy bugger leading a lonely life. Mr. Sykes liked
Beth in a blue dress to look after his guests and he was only interested in
her being attractively dressed, giving good impression to his guests.

Further Duff mentions a Party at Mr. Sykes' house, in which Mr.
Sykes complimented the lady for her delicious cooking and her hospitality.
After the Party was over Duff observed dust in his house and helped her in
polishing it out and dusting off his house.

Concentrating on present movement Duff reveals that he can walk
down to the pub and up to the pond in peace with no one nag the shit out of
him. He mentions a lady's standing by the window, rain smacking on the
glass. In the dark he stood close to her. She wore a chain around her waist
on that chain she carried keys, her thimble, note book, pencil and her
He found her standing alone in an empty hall bandaging the gong. he thought she will come to him offering him herself in front of a dog like a man, in the hall, on the stong banging the gong. The thimble will keep the dog happy he will play with it with his paws and she will plead with him like a woman.

Thus the two plays are similar in many ways, for example, in both plays the characters are kept at the most restricted number, as in *Landscape* there are two characters and in *Family Voices* we find three characters.

In both the plays the situation is identical. Dramatic issues are the same. Human predicament is identical. Dramatical strategies too are identical.

Dramatic strategies include soliloquising, this becomes quite convenient for reminiscing in the flashback technique and talking of even future desires. Thus radio is an effective medium for dramatization of non action through letters, monologues, and soliloquies which are not so effective on the traditional stage.
2. Ibid., P.P. 169-170.
4. Ibid., P. 171.
5. Ibid., P. 171.
6. Ibid., P. 172.
7. Ibid., P. 172.
8. Ibid., P. 173.
10. Ibid., P. 177.
11. Ibid., P. 184.
12. Ibid., P. 188.
13. Ibid., P. 189.
15. Ibid., P. 196.
16. Ibid., P. 199.
17. Albert Wertheim Harold Pinter's *ASlight Ache* on Radio and Stage in Gale (ed), P. 66.
18. Ibid., P. 68.
2. FAMILY VOICES

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2. Ibid., P. 282.


4. Ibid., P. 282.

5. Ibid., P.P. 286-287.

6. Ibid., P. 290.

7. Ibid., P. 291.

8. Ibid., P. 285.

9. Ibid., P. 290.

10. Ibid., P. 293.

11. Ibid., P. 293.

12. Ibid., P. 292.

13. Ibid., P. 283

14. Ibid., P.290

15. Ibid., P. 287.

16. Ibid., P.284.

17. Ibid., P.284.

18. Ibid., P.285.

19. Ibid., P.282.

20. Ibid., P.286.

21. Ibid., P.286.

22. Ibid., P.294.

23. Ibid., P.295.

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25. Ibid., P.P. 288-289
3-LANDSCAPE
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3. J. Lahr "Pinter the Spaceman" Evergreen Review No. 55, (June 1968), P. 50.


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9. Ibid., P. 180.

10. Ibid., P. 178.

11. Ibid., P. 181.

12. Ibid., P. 181.

13. Ibid., P. 175.

14. Ibid., P. 189

15. Ibid., P. 184.

16. Ibid., P. 187.

17. Ibid., P. 181.