CHAPTER - 2

ARTHUR MILLER AND THE TRADITION OF SOCIAL/FAMILY DRAMA WITH REFERENCE TO CLIFFORD ODETS AND HENRIK IBSEN

(i) ARTHUR MILLER AND THE TRADITION OF SOCIAL/FAMILY DRAMA

(ii) ARTHUR MILLER'S LIFE

(iii) ARTHUR MILLER'S WORKS
Arthur Miller's first play is rather based on his father's family and its business. The initial typescript of the play is shorter and simpler than the various versions that followed. Abe Simon, a coat manufacturer, is faced with ruin when a strike of shipping clerks prevents him delivering his goods. The bank is about to call in his credit note. One son, Ben, who has grudgingly gone into business, supports him, despite his own left-wing convictions. Another son, Arnold, back from college and imbued with Communist theory, will not. There are hints of a possible solution if Ben will marry the daughter of a rich manufacturer but this is a sub-plot which is dealt with in a perfunctory way. The conflict, in essence, is that between private interest and the general well-being, but there are, as the title suggests, no villains; the characters are all victims of a system which alone is evil. This is a critique of American family which is torn of ideology. This sets man against man and places material rather than human values at the centre of affairs. Thus, Abe insists, much as Isidore Miller had done, that "If you don't get them they'll get you. You gotta be on one side or the other in this business. In any business... It's dog eat dog." His son, Arnold, sees things differently: "You've got to get out and on top and look down and see, see what one thing is worth against another. The world is different now than
when you were young. It's not there to be made now. Now we've got to change the world!'\textsuperscript{1}

The play is known for its abstract quality. It is, of course, a piece of rhetoric whose very vagueness is both its strength and its weakness. For all the fact that both brothers have read Marx, and the play has an epigraph from Engels. No clear model for this new world emerges, any more than it does in most 1930s literature in America. In large part this is because Marxism seems to be accommodated to an older and more specifically American ideology. There is a whiff of Jefferson as there is, for that matter, in the work of John Steinbeck. If change is necessary then life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are liable to determine the parameters of the new every bit as much as an awakened working class who make as little appearance in this play (the play has sixteen workers) as they do in that work which so startled America the previous year, Clifford Odets's \textit{Awake and Sing} (a play, incidentally, which also features a grandfather who, like the one in Miller's play, feels like a boarder and dies in the course of the play). The concluding speech of Odets's play, indeed, is very close in spirit to Ben's call for a new life:

My days won't be for nothing... I's twenty-two and kickin'. I'll get along. Did Jake [the, grandfather] die for us to fight about nickels? No! "Awake and sing," he said. Right here he stood and said it. The night he died, I saw it like a thunderbolt! I saw he was dead and I was born! I swear to God, I'm one week old! I want the whole city to hear it - fresh blood, arms. We got 'em. We're glad we're living.'\textsuperscript{2}
Again, no definite model of the new world in process of being born but a call for a new generation to escape from the sterile and destructive materialism which had corrupted the 1920s, a spirit embodied in the titles which Miller chose to give to two subsequent revisions of the play: *They Too Arise* and *The Grass Still Grows*.

Miller was a moralist. A moralist is a man who believes he possesses the truth and aims to convince others of it. In Miller this moralistic trait stems from a strong family feeling. In this context the father as prime authority and guide is central. From *The Man Who Had All the Luck* through *Death of a Salesman* the father stands for virtue and value; to his sons he is the personification of Right and Truth. In *All My Sons* Chris cries out against his father's (Joe Keller's) delinquency. "I know you're no worse than other men but I thought you were better. I never saw you as a man; I saw you as my father." Joe Keller expresses Miller's idealization of the father-son relationship when he exclaims, "I'm his father and he's my son. Nothing's bigger than that." As S. C. Mathur observes, "Joe's Keller's myopic vision does not allow him to look beyond the four walls of his home and immediate family. He is unable to comprehend the fact that there is a world beyond his immediate neighborhood to which he is also responsible."

The shock which shatters Miller's dramatic cosmos always begins with the father's inability to enact the role of moral authority the son assigns to him and which the father willy-nilly assumes. The son never altogether absolves the father for his defection nor is the father ever able to forgive himself for it. Each bears a heavy burden of responsibility to the other. Both may be innocent, but both suffer guilt. The mother, beloved of father and son, supports the paternal legend of kingship. She is fealty itself. She is unalterably loyal to the family and the ideal of its necessary cohesion as the
basis for the good life, a moral world. The mother's devotion to this ideal constitutes a force which is passive in appearance only. Her influence may be constricting, even injurious, though it is never faulted in Miller's plays. Mrs. Keller in *All My Sons* is indirectly the source of much trouble—she preserves the superstitions of the family and of a blemished society—but while Chris rails at his father he barely challenges his mother. Woman in Miller's plays is usually the prop of the male principle without whom man falters, loses his way.

There is something more personal than such general considerations in Miller's view of the family as the symbolic cell of the social structure, the dissolution of which is a threat to life itself. It is simply and passionately articulated in *After the Fall* when its central character, Quentin, blurts out, "I can't bear to be a separate person." But ultimately the family gets separated. In S. C. Mathur's view "The play deals with the theme of separateness, breaking of faith and betrayal."

What in Miller's experience and thought seems the chief cause for the family's crack-up? Where does social fission originate? The Depression of the Thirties was the crucial factor of Miller's formative years; it not only brought hardship to his parents and consequently to their children but it made him realize something else. It was not financial stress alone that shook the foundations of American life at that time but a false ideal which the preceding era. The Twenties, had raised to the level of a religious creed: the ideal of success. The unsuccessful man, the one who failed in business, was a flawed man. Such failure was considered something more than a misfortune; it was the sign of a moral defect.
Miller has often said that as a college student he was very much affected by a performance of Odets' *Awake and Sing*! he saw in Chicago. That play contained a line which struck the keynote of the period: "Go out and fight so life shouldn't be printed on dollar bills," followed by the even more homely precept: "Life should have some dignity." In *All My Sons* a small town doctor, disappointed in the inspirational meagreness of his practice murmurs, "Money, money, money, money, money. You say it long enough it doesn't mean anything. How I'd love to be around when that happens!" (Mrs. Keller responds with, "You're so childish, Jim"). In *Death of a Salesman*. Charley, Loman's neighbor, says apropos of Loman, "No man needs only a little salary." And when outraged at Loman's muddleheadedness and feeble sense of reality, his son's basic accusation is that Loman has blown him "full of hot air." It is the hot air of the corrupted American dream, the dream of success, affluence and status as the ultimate goals of human endeavor.

Harold Clurman says, "Willy Loman's worth lies in his natural bent for manual work: he is a craftsman. If he had cultivated that side of himself he might have retained his dignity. But Willy has been seduced by the bitch goddess, Success, by Salesmanship. So he lives in a vacuum, a vapor of meaning less commercial slogans. The irony of Willy's death--his suicide is a distortion of the responsibility he feels toward his son--is embodied in the conviction that only by leaving Biff his insurance money can he fulfill his paternal duty! Willy's hollow religion has crippled his faculties, corroded his moral fibre."

Sweet, dumb, nobly ignoble Willy never learns anything. S. C. Mathur writes, "Willy Loman, like Joe Keller is completely oblivious of the needs of the society and is primarily interested in the welfare of his
own immediate family members--his sons, Happy and Biff." But Miller, and the men of his generation, had begun to. Miller became a 'radical.' The root of evil was the false ideal. The heart of Miller's radicalism is conservative. It seeks the maintenance of individual dignity within the context of the family which broadens to the concept of society as a whole.

The son becomes the father. He desires to take over authority. The radical becomes the leader, the prophet. Armed with a new insight arrived at through the father's fall, the son now carries the banner of righteousness and justice. He is no longer simply moral; he is a moraliser, a preacher. Thus he may fall from grace into the pit of self-righteousness.

In *All My Sons* Chris says, "Every man follows a star. The star of his honesty. Once it is out it never lights again." It burns so intensely that Chris virtually wills his father's punishment for having knowingly sent out defective airplane motors to the army. The severity of such righteousness often boomerangs. The reforms of the Thirties and early Forties were followed by the repressions of the Fifties. Miller spoke out courageously against the forces of repression. *The Crucible*, written in 1953, is still a virile protest against the aberrations of McCarthyism. That the witch-hunt of Salem cannot be equated with the fear of Communism is not valid as a criticism of the play. What *The Crucible* does is to show us a community terrorized into a savagely hysterical fury that is reprehensible whether it is based on fact or on falsehood. The play asks, "Is the accuser always, holy now?"

The hindsight afforded by *After the Fall* renders perceptible certain secondary aspects of *The Crucible* which passed unnoticed at the time of its production in 1953. Neither John Proctor nor his wife Elizabeth is guilty of
witchcraft. Both act in the upright manner one expects of them. But other
guilts are confessed by the Proctors, man and wife, in *The Crucible.*
Elizabeth has been guilty of coldness to her husband; John of lechery. He
has been unfaithful. Both suspect that part of their misfortune, the
accusation of conspiring with the Devil, and their inability to clear
themselves are somehow due to their private failings.

One of the most unmistakable features of Miller's work, as we have
noted, is what might be called its moralism, or it's Puritanism. There is a
traditional sort of tenderness, even a trace of sentimentality, in the early
Miller plays. The woman is sweetly yearned for and serves as mate and
mainstay to keep her man confident. There is little or so hint of any sensual
appreciation of women. In *Death of a Salesman* Biff feels nothing but horror
at Willy's pathetic fling on the road. Desire plays little part in the
configuration of dramatic elements in any of Miller's plays before
*The Crucible* and enters the scene obliquely and, as it were, shamefacedly as
a prop to the plot in *A View from the Bridge.* The Puritan conscience is a
complex phenomenon. Even while it holds fast to its conviction of rightness,
it is haunted by a need for the expiation of its own sins. There is nothing for
which it feels itself entirely blameless. Man must pay for everything. The
ever fortunate youth in *The Man Who Had All the Luck* does not consider
himself safe until he suffers a most damaging defeat. His partial but painful
setback is a warrant to him that he may go forward in his life with some
degree of assurance that no greater disaster will befall him. What the Puritan
hankers for is total innocence, and it torments him to understand that it
cannot possibly be achieved.

Even the pursuit of righteousness and truth seems to the
thoroughgoing Puritan a virtuous aggressiveness which is itself not wholly
innocent. It may mask a drive for power. Thus Biff in *Salesman*, as later Quentin in *After the Fall*, questions his own good faith. Sue Bayliss, the down-to-earth doctor's wife in *All My Sons*, wants Chris, avenging angel or conscience of the play, to move away from the neighborhood. "Chris," she says, "makes people want to be better than it is possible to be . . . I resent being next door to the Holy Family."13

To speak of this aspect of Miller's artistic physiognomy as a Haw would be to miss the tension which gives Miller's work its peculiar fascination. The wish to expiate sins of pride, bad faith or moral arrogance are related to a sense of responsibility which lends stature to Miller's work and makes it intimately moving. We are not, we must not be, separate one from the other. Our refusal to acknowledge this and to act upon it is the sin which secretly torments us and causes us profound grief.

Miller harbors an abiding affection for his least striking play, *A Memory of Two Mondays*. This is understandable because in this play he seems at rest, relaxed from the strictures of his central theme. In this play he recalls without blame or debate the simple, undemanding, unselfconsciously oppressed folk with whom he worked at the Tenth Avenue warehouse before he entered the world of assertion and moral combat. Here he dwelled without the exposing glare of critical self-examination. The warehouse was his paradise; like infancy, it was free from the burden of ethical choice.

The repose of this short play is followed immediately by the travail of *A View from the Bridge*, the last of Miller's plays before the silent years. In a sense this play is an adjunct to *The Crucible*. While the blemish on Proctor's purity is a contributing factor to his Calvary, the personal motivation in *A View from the Bridge* obscures its theme almost as much as it reveals it.
For this play dramatizes the passion of betrayal. A decent man is led to squealing on his kin because of jealousy.

Eddie Carbone does not recognize his motivation as this would mortify him. He must rationalize his act on moral grounds. So much is made of Carbone's adulterous and semi-incestuous drive towards his niece that we are apt to miss the fact that what is at stake is not the psychology of sexual turmoil but of duplicity, the man's inability to live up to the obligations of comradeship. We must not force others to pay for the agony of our own weakness. Miller is compassionate with Carbone; yet he is angry with him. He is compassionate because he feels in him the bewilderment involved in the sexual impulse, particularly when repressed; he is angry because Carbone is a liar as all men are who conceal their confusion or corruption in an honorable cloak. Miller not only implies that Carbone craves punishment for his delation; he also believes Carbone deserves death. Still Miller, as a humane Puritan, shrinks from so full a measure of condemnation—"an eye for an eye"—and he has his "chorus," in the person of Alfieri, the lawyer-narrator, say, "Most of the time now we settle for half And I like it better." One suspects that Alfieri says this with a certain trembling as if he were not certain that he does "like it better," that Alfieri feels that the terrible justice which slays Carbone is noble.

We must resume a listing of further biographical data. Miller was married to Mary Slattery, a fellow student at the University of Michigan, in 1942. She bore him two children: a girl and a boy. He divorced Mary Miller in 1956. He then married Marilyn Monroe. He wrote *The Misfits* for her, a film about the lone worker in a society of industrial mass production. It is a film, he admits, marred by too many cross-purposes. After his divorce from

Two features of After the Fall are immediately noticeable. It is the first of Miller's plays where the main emphasis is almost entirely personal. It is also the first Miller play where the largest part of the action concerns itself with marital relationships. Still After the Fall is not only an extension of the themes to be found in Miller's previous plays; it is a reaffirmation through a reversal. The strenuous moralist, the man whose family—the mother in particular dedicated him to great accomplishments, has come to the middle point of his life and brings himself to trial. He not only confesses, he accuses himself. The jury is his alter ego—in the audience; the evidence is provided by the testimony of his memory. His self-assurance has gone. As many in our time, he is "hung up"; he despairs. He now finds the continuous "litigation of existence" pointless because the judge's seat is empty. There is no "father," no supreme arbiter. He will have to allow us, the audience, to judge him: Why is the trial held? Not so that he may be condemned or that the charges brought be dismissed but so that he regain his capacity to "move on." He is seeking the hope which lies beyond despair, the life which renews itself after the fall, with the death of the old self. He wants to bury himself as an idea and find himself as a person.

The lawyer, Quentin, who was-sent forth in his youth with a mission to fulfill a destiny in the light of some "star," now begins to recollect the specific circumstances of his past-people and events-instead of patterning them on a principle. "To see endangers principle," he says. The examination of conscience through a review of the precise detail in the crisis of his life exposes his self-delusions, hypocrisies, insufficiencies, falterings and confusions. He is now skeptical of abstracts, even the abstract of Despair.
Thus Quentin may survive after the fall through a recognition of his own place among the accused, a realization of his role as an accomplice in the misdeeds he has denounced. The judge's bench is not on high; it is in the common court of our lives together. We are all both the jailers and prisoners of the concentration camps. The acceptance of the defeat in this realization may liberate the man dogged by having had "all the luck"-and answers. There are no guarantees for any choice we make, but one is never absolved from the necessity of making choices and of paying for them.

The struggle represented in all of Miller's work, of which *After the Fall* is a central turning point, achieves a special eloquence for us in the American particularity of its tone and speech. There is plainness, a kind of neighborhood friendliness and good humor; one might say a saving ordinariness, which gives Miller's dialogue a special appeal. The literary purist who deplores this element of Miller's talent is as remote from our reality as those who once found nothing more in *Huckleberry Finn* than a story for kids.

Harold Clurman says, "Miller was a popular writer. This may be a limitation but it is more probably strength. Those who wept over Willy Loman, whether his story exemplifies true tragedy or not, are closer to the truth of our day than those who want it told to them in monumental symbols for all time."15 There is besides the comforting familiarity of Miller's expression an enthusiasm which mingles a deep-rooted American idealism with an old Hebraic fervor, a quality which mounts from hearth and home to the elevation of an altar. Miller's dialogue coined from the energetic and flavorsome palaver of the streets is finally wrought into something close to prophetic incantation. *After the Fall* is a signal step in the evolution of
Arthur Miller as man and artist. The play's auto-criticism exposes him to us. Had he not written this play he might never have been able to write another.

Miller loved drama for its reality and he loved classical tradition of drama. "When I began to write," He has said in an interview, "one assumed inevitably that one was in the mainstream that began with Aeschylus and went through about twenty-five hundred years of playwriting." \(^{16}\) Asked in 1966 which playwrights he admired most he replied, "first the Greeks, for their magnificent form, the symmetry." He has written in his autobiography *Timebend* that, once he began to write plays and "confront dramatic problems" himself, he "read differently than [he] had before, in every period of Western drama"\(^{17}\) Over the years, Miller has come to see that it was not only form that he learned from the classical Greeks, but a sense of the nature and function of drama itself. A major focus of his thought has been the social and ritual function that Greek drama exerted within the culture of the Greek polis. In a 1985 interview he noted that "the great Greek plays taught the western mind the law. They taught the western mind how to settle tribal conflicts without murdering each other."\(^{18}\)

In 1955, Miller published a rather lengthy essay as an introduction to the volume *A View from the Bridge*, which contains the original one-act version of that play as well as the one-act play *A Memory of Two Mondays*. This essay, entitled "On Social Plays," is his most extended treatment of the classical Greek playwrights and their contribution to the tradition of Western drama. In 1955, Miller was writing in the context of a theatre that was preoccupied, in the United States particularly, with the individual, and with psychological analysis divorced from the social context beyond the domestic confines of the family. In a theatre where the works of Tennessee Williams and William Inge held sway, Miller was trying to define a
tradition that would encompass both the psychological and the social. That is, the relations of man as a social animal, rather than his definition as a separated entity, was the dramatic goal. The great achievement of the classical Greeks, as Miller saw it, was the integration of the psychological and the social.

As the play written with the classical Greek drama most consciously in mind, *A View from the Bridge* provides the clearest sense of the dramatic agenda Miller derived from this tradition. The elements of the tale - the man who harbors an illicit passion for a young woman who has been placed in his protection; the breaking of a community taboo because of this passion; the rejection of the man by the community; the forming of a vendetta against him; his destruction by those he has wronged - proved to be well known.

The mythic resonance of the story came as something of a surprise to Miller, the play's form was an intentional allusion to Greek dramatic architectonics. The form was influenced by his curiosity "as to whether we could in a contemporary theater deal with life in some way like the Greeks did. They thought art is form; a conscious but at the same time an inspired act." Miller wrote the original one-act version of the play "with the feeling that [he] would make one single constantly rising trajectory, until its fall, rather like an arrow shot from a bow; and this form would declare rather than conceal itself." For Miller, writing for an American theatre dominated by psychological realism, the play represented an experiment: "I wanted to see whether I could write a play with one single act instead of three acts in which it rises to some kind of a crescendo before the curtain comes down, then another crescendo before the curtain comes down again, then finally an explosion before the curtain comes down for good. I wanted to have one
long line with one explosion, which is rather the Greek way. We have all forgotten that the Greek plays were all one act plays, a continuous action.”

Miller made use of the classical Greek convention of the chorus to provide a contemporary point of view on the mythic tale as it unfolds. Alfieri, the narrator, is a minor character. He's a kind of chorus in that he represents common sense in the way that Greek choruses did. That is, common sense in relation to excess. Disaster comes from excess, and he is trying to keep Eddie Carbone in the middle of the road and not let his truth - that is to say, his real nature - come out. Miller uses his choral character as an intermediary between the mythic world he creates in the play and the world of the audience. A Cassandra-like prophet, Alfieri has the ability to see the course of destruction down which Eddie is heading, and to articulate it for the audience, but he is unable to stop it. Having left the culture of Red Hook, the Brooklyn waterfront, to make his career as a lawyer, Alfieri is seminal figure in both cultures, explaining Red Hook to mainstream America and mainstream America to Red Hook, but unable to act in any consequential way or to influence the actions of others. This reminds us the real Cassandra in Sophocles' *Agamemnon*.

To establish Eddie as the victim of a passion over which he has no control, Miller has Alfieri describe him in the familiar terms that describe the traditional Aristotelian tragic hero. Eddie is "as good a man as he had to be / In a life that was hard and even" His visitation by sexual passion is represented as a catastrophe over which he has no control, the kind of tragic accident that causes Oedipus to kill his father and marry his mother, "a passion / That had moved into his body, like a stranger" Like that of a classical Greek protagonist, Eddie's fate is inexorable, easily predictable both by characters in the play and by the audience, but impossible to alter.
Playing his combined role of prophet chorus-intermediary, Alfieri explains: "I could see every step coming, step after step, / And I sat here many afternoons, / Asking myself why, being an intelligent man, / I was so powerless to stop it." The overwhelming force in *A View from the Bridge* is nature, a force that Miller implies, works equally on the individual and the community. Wanting to believe that Catherine's fiancé Rodolpho is homosexual, and that he only wants to marry her in order to become a citizen, Eddie insists to Alfieri that there must be some law that will stop the marriage. Alfieri tells him that he has no legal rights over Catherine: "The law is nature. The law is only a word for what has a right to happen." Alfieri's position that the law of the community follows from the laws of nature is brought into question by the events of the play, however. Desperate, and acting blindly on his passion when he gets no support from the law, Eddie violates a deeper taboo of his community when he informs on Rodolpho and his brother Marco, cousins of Eddie's wife Beatrice, who are in the United States illegally, and thus subject to deportation. Not only is Marco Beatrice's blood kin, but the play amply establishes that sending him back to Italy will mean dire poverty for his wife and children. In turning Marco and Rodolpho into the immigration authorities, Eddie obeys the laws of the United States, but, Miller implies, violates the more fundamental law of kinship, the preservation of the family. Obeying another fundamental law, Marco now feels he must avenge Eddie's wrong to him and his family. When Alfieri tries to dissuade him from killing Eddie in revenge, Marco asks, "then what is done with such a man?" Alfieri replies, "nothing. If he obeys the law, he lives. That's all" (p. 153). When Marco stabs Eddie, the implication is that the law of nature has spoken, that Eddie, who is guilty of an illicit passion and a violation of the laws of kinship, must be purged from the community. The events of the play clearly demonstrate that, as Marco
thinks all the law is not in a book. Alfieri is wrong when he says that the law is nature.

Miller thinks "the great Greek plays taught the western mind the law. They taught the western mind how to settle tribal conflicts without murdering each other." The law in this play, the force that sends Marco back to Italy, is itself unnatural, and is responsible for part of the chain of events that leads to Marco's stabbing of Eddie. The law is in fact the antithesis of nature in the play. In the person of Alfieri, civilization wages a constant battle throughout the play to defeat nature. By allying the audience with Alfieri through the play's structure, Miller places us on the side of civilization and against the forces of nature which, the events of the play suggest, are ultimately destructive. Imperfect though it may be, Miller implies, civilization is what keeps us from the fate of an Eddie Carbone. He thinks, in the contest between law and nature, the civilized citizen must choose law. As Thomas Hardy thinks human company is always better.

Miller studied Henrik Ibsen at about the same time that he discovered the classical Greek playwrights. He told Christopher Bigsby: "I assumed then that everyone was aware that [Ibsen] was carrying the Greeks into nineteenth century Europe, principally because they were both obsessed with the birds coming home to roost... there's something in me that understood that very well." Miller's affinity with Ibsen is much deeper. The first play he remembers seeing was *Ghosts*. Miller has written several times about Ibsen, most significantly in the Introduction to his *Collected Plays* (1957) and in a New York Times article entitled "Ibsen's Message for Today's World," which was later published as the Preface to his adaptation of *An Enemy of the People*. In the *Collected Plays* essay, Miller carefully laid out the elements of Ibsen's dramatic technique which he
thought had influenced him in the writing of *All My Sons* (1947). This is the most consciously Ibsenesque play. They include what is commonly called bringing the past into the present.

Miller was influenced by Ibsen, but not carried away. He complained in a 1966 interview that he had become "known really by virtue of the single play [he] had ever tried to do in completely realistic Ibsen-like form, which was *All My Sons." In 1970 he said Ibsen "was a strong influence on my early youth but I have no debt to him in the sense that one is insisting upon re-creating him all the time. Critics have recognized from the beginning the traces of Ibsen's *Pillars of Society* in *All My Sons*. Useful as they are in pointing out Miller's direct debt to Ibsen, however, these studies only begin to indicate the extent to which Ibsen's ideas and images permeated Miller's creative imagination at the beginning of his career. *The Man Who Had All the Luck* (1944), Miller's first play to reach Broadway, has such a close affinity to Ibsen's *Master Builder* that it might be seen as an adaptation if it were not for the fundamental thematic divergence in Miller's play. Miller has told in *Timebends* the stories related to his first wife's Aunt Helen and his own cousin Jean that planted the idea for the play and the germ for its plot. Missing from this account is the equally important presence of Ibsen's *Master Builder* in Miller's creative imagination as he composed *The Man Who Had All the Luck*.

The character Halvard Solness, the master builder of Ibsen's play, believes that he has a special power of will that can turn people into his willing and abject servants and force events to happen. This power, he believes, is what makes him appear lucky to others. When congratulated for having "had luck on [his] side," however, Solness replies, "yes, but that's exactly why I've got this horrible fear... it racks me, morning and night.
Because someday things have to change, you'll see. Solness believes that he has no right to his luck, and that his own destruction is inevitable. And beyond the natural justice of the universe, Solness believes in a divine retribution as well. Ibsen suggests that Solness is right about his guilt, the inevitability of his destruction, and even its source, although he does not understand it imperfectly. His representation of Solness is deeply tragic. As the recipient of luck, he is doomed to destruction, caused in part by the frailties of his own nature. In Ibsen's play, the assertion of individual will is an evil and destructive thing, associated with hidden and uncontrollable forces referred to as devils. As a tragic hero, Solness is both guilty and ruined.

In *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, Miller complicates Ibsen's tragic statement by opening it up to contemporary interpretation. David Frieber is confronted with the same fundamental dilemma as Solness. Like Solness, he is blessed with the smell of luck; it hangs on him like a coat. Also like Solness, however, David thinks that his good fortune is undeserved: "Does a thing really belong to you because your name is on it? Don't you have to feel you're smart enough, or strong enough, or good enough, or something enough to have won it before it's really yours?" Like Solness, David fears the disaster that will compensate for his luck: "I mean you begin to wonder when something's going to come along for you... a big unhappiness of some kind; a loss." Since David has come by his prosperity unjustly, by taking credit for another man's work, he believes that his downfall is inevitable. Like Solness, he lives in fear of the force that will destroy him. Miller sets up an existential alternative to the tragic universe that Ibsen represents. While Solness does indeed bring about a form of divine retribution through his own self-destruction, David's friends Gus and J. B. suggest that there is
no need either to fear or to hope, for his world is not ordered by divine justice; it proceeds by random chance. When David's test comes, however, Miller presents a third alternative in the view of his wife Hester. In the climactic third-act discussion scene, Hester explains that she has come to understand David's fears. Expecting what he called "a great smash down" to pay for his luck, he had believed that their baby would be born dead: "The baby would die, it had to because he wanted it so much - and once it was dead everything else would be safe. This was his curse; he would finally pay for his happiness. And then we'd be safe" When the baby was born healthy, Hester explains, David no longer felt safe, "again he'd got what he wanted. Now he had everything, now he really had it all. And the God or the devil he lives by hadn't been paid" (p. 545).

Like Sartre and Camus, Miller was a true existentialist. In his appropriation of *The Master Builder*, Miller was attempting to counter both the dark romanticism of Ibsen's later plays and the existential angst of the 1940s. Miller rejected Ibsen's belief in supernatural forces represented by trolls and devils as well as his belief in a just universe. But he also rejected the view of some of his contemporaries that the lack of a demonstrable divine justice implied a futility of human action and an absence of human responsibility for one's actions. In the face of a universe where luck is a matter of random chance, Miller placed his faith in the efficacy of praxis - willed-action. Miller believed in right choice, action and responsibility.
**ii. Arthur Miller's Life:**

However there is a popular conception that most great writers come from great families or at least with much struggle, Arthur Miller's background is much simple. He bloomed late. He was born in a happy Jewish family on 112th Street, on October 17, 1915. Most of his struggles stemmed from his emulation of his elder brother Kermit who set an example for the younger brothers in the Miller family. Kermit, who as an adult became a salesman, surely influenced his brother's writing and, most probably, was the primary model for Biff Loman, the oldest son in *Death of a Salesman*.

Arthur's parents, Augusta and Isadore, had both grown up in hard-working immigrant families that were driven to succeed in America at any cost. His mother, Augusta, had been born on Broome Street on the lower east side of New York City, the daughter of a Polish immigrant from Radomizl named Louis Barnett. Mr. Barnett ran a fairly successful clothing business in Manhattan and was busily expanding his enterprise when his daughter was born. Miller's father, Isadore, was born in Radomizl, Poland and had been left there with family friends at the age of six by his parents when they sailed to America in order to find a better life for themselves. A few months later they wired the young boy a ticket and had him sent to New York to join them. When Isadore finally arrived, after three weeks in steerage, his teeth were loose and he had scabs on his head. His ten-year-old-brother Abe picked him up at Castle Garden and brought him to the family on Stanton Street. His father, Samuel Miller, was now in the clothing business and too busy at his factory to pick up his son.
As a father, Isadore Miller continued family tradition of providing for his wife and children through hard work, faith in the opportunity of America, and by maintaining a strong moral character. As a religious Jew, Isadore taught his children about the importance of ethical behavior and the duty of all people to become politically involved in the world. This tradition had a lasting effect on Arthur, on how he thought about writing and how he saw men--such as his father -- who worked all their lives to become something while they tried to keep a grasp on the traditions and virtues they felt were most important. His father’s (and his grandfather’s) emotional convictions and blunt ways of expressing their ideals would provide a basis for many of Miller's father-characters in plays to come, including *No Villain*, *The Price*, and *Death of a Salesman*.

In 1921 the year in which his younger sister Joan was born), at the age of six, young Arthur started school. It was at this time, that Arthur saw his first movie, an event he recalls as a haunting experience. It took place on a rooftop in Harlem, and the film was projected on a bed sheet instead of a screen. The images and the experience of that night stayed with him forever. Later, when his mother took him to the Shubert Theater to see his first stage play (Augusta was a regular theatergoer), Arthur realized the difference between films and stage plays. At the age of eight, he perceived that they represented “two kinds of reality.” He decided then that “the stage was far more real.” His teenage years were uneventful, plagued with the usual awkwardness of teenage sexuality and a new awareness of the opposite sex. Miller, at this time, tried to be more an athlete than an academic, and he and his brother were quite similar to the young Biff and Happy of *Death of a Salesman*. The most significant event during Arthur’s
years at James Madison High School was the stock market crash of October 1929 and the subsequent onset of the Great Depression.

In his attempt to help the family financially, Arthur held various jobs at a coat factory. It was his difficult experiences with the arrogant, brusque buyers at the coat company that first exposed Miller to the unfair ways in which the company's salesmen were being treated. Upon leaving his father's firm, Miller wrote an unpublished short story, entitled "In Memoriam," about the plight of a salesman. This early work was the first to explore the themes and ideas that would eventually become *Death of a Salesman*.

Miller joined the City College in 1932 and entered the University of Michigan in 1934. He found a fine atmosphere there. *No Villain*, a play written in 1935, was Arthur Miller's first dramatic work. Using members of his family as models, he constructed a story of a garment factory strike that pitted a father against his college educated, socialist son. Miller later described the characters as "the most autobiographical" he had ever created. He got the University's of Michigan's Hopewood Award for it. The playwriting gave him joy and freedom. He writes in his autobiography *Timebends*: "From the beginning the idea of writing a play was entwined with my very conception of myself. Playwriting was an act of self-discovery from the start and would always be; it was a kind of license to say the unspeakable, and I would never write anything good that did not somehow make me blush. From the beginning, writing meant freedom....It was a sort of blessing I invented for myself."34

After *No Villain* came another work entitled *Honors at Dawn*. It was the story of a prison psychiatrist who struggles to keep the sane from
moving over into madness. In this play, which also won the Hopwood Award, the central conflict is between two brothers. This work seemed to foreshadow his next serious piece, which also took place in a prison.

In Miller's senior year he wrote *The Great Disobedience*, based on firsthand research at the Jackson State Penitentiary. It was the first play he had ever researched, and it was this idea of exploring unknown worlds that showed the young writer that not every subject needs to spring entirely from one's personal history. *The Great Disobedience* stirred in him a new conviction that somehow his art should help to change society. This sense came partly from his realization that drama can both speak of social and human conditions and comment on them in powerful ways.

Miller graduated from the University of Michigan in 1938 and began living with his college girlfriend, Mary Grace Slattery. The two years after graduation were spent working on various plays, one of which was a grand scale tragedy about Montezuma’s destruction at the hands of Cortez. Though the play was never completed, it did provide the foundation for a later work entitled *The Man Who Had All the Luck*.

In his first two years out of school, Miller got a job with the Federal Theater Project in New York for $23 a week. He was offered a job as a writer for Twentieth Century-Fox, which paid $250 a week, but he turned it down fearing that Hollywood would destroy both his will to write about important subjects and his desire to make his work more important than mere entertainment. He knew of Hollywood’s reputation for using people up and then discarding them. And the whole movie industry seemed to him a vast collection of talented people who were more concerned with money and power than with being artists.
Soon Arthur Miller married his girl-friend Mary Slater. He was twenty-five. There was some conflict involved in their marrying; she was Catholic and he Jewish and intermarriage in 1940 was frowned upon. As Mrs. Miller, Mary began work as a waitress and then as an editor at Harper and Bros in an effort to support her husband's pursuit of writing. A week after the wedding, the young bridegroom was already off by himself on a freighter, researching life at sea for a new play. The fact that many other great American writers - Jack London and Eugene O'Neill in particular had spent a good deal of time at sea probably did not go unnoticed by the aspiring writer.

Just before the wedding, Miller had sold his first radio play to the Columbia Workshop, an experimental series under the direction of Norman Corwin. The play, a political satire, was called *The Pussycat and the Expert Plumber Who Was a Man*. Soon after that premiere, Miller began to write patriotic plays for the radio. Besides, each play brought in $500, not a bad fee for a young writer in 1941. During this time, Miller did extensive research for a screenplay he wanted to write entitled *The Story of G.I. Joe*. His first screen play writing turned into a book about army training entitled *Situation Normal*. For Miller, this was a time of new thoughts and new inspirations about the nature of society and the cruelty of human fate - new thoughts that would soon be expressed in works for the stage.

Miller's next project started as a novel, entitled *The Man Who Had All the Luck*. The plot concerns the values of Middle America, but it also raises many questions about American society. Inspired in part by the story of Mary Miller's aunt Helen, whose husband had recently committed suicide, *The Man Who Had All the Luck* deals with the question of the
justice of fate and the reality of success and power. The plot involves two men, seeming equals, who wind up with very different fates; one man succeeds in his life and the other fails miserably. After months of trying to find a publisher, Miller adapted *The Man Who Had All the Luck* for the stage and spent three years looking for a producer. Finally, the play was picked up and, in 1944, provided the young playwright with his Broadway debut. That year also provided Miller with his debut as a father. His first child, Jane, was born on September 7. Unfortunately, *The Man Who Had All the Luck* had only four sad performances and then disappeared for ever. Miller attributes some of the play's failure to the nature of the Broadway Theater at the time. *The Man Who Had All the Luck* also proved to be a precursor to *Death of A Salesman*, Miller's masterpiece, which was written only five years later. Both plays explored the lack of justice in the failure of a common man as well as the intricate workings of family conflicts. And so it was through the frustrating experience of failing at his Broadway debut that Arthur Miller realized how much can be learned from failure as well as success.

As a result, he again turned his efforts to writing a novel—the only one he ever completed—entitled *Focus*. The novel, which deals with the destructive power of anti-Semitism, was not received with great enthusiasm.

Now drama critic Joe Keller guided Miller for better and suitable plays. It was with a resolve that he began work on *All My Sons*, a play about a man who makes airplane parts for the military during the war and is forced to ship what he knows to be inferior parts to the army for use. The consequences of his actions turn out to be far graver than he ever anticipated; the defective parts cause the death of many soldiers including his own son who commits suicide. The play illustrates the tragic nature of a
man who is forced to compromise his morals in order to keep both his livelihood and his respectable place in society intact. Miller revised the play *All My Sons*. Both Group Theatre and Theatre Guild accepted it. Miller said Group Theater would do the play and that Kazan would direct rather than Clurman. The playwright particularly respected Kazan’s endless energy and constant enthusiasm for new directions in the theater. In the coming years, many other great playwrights, including Tennessee Williams, would share Miller’s feeling about Kazan’s talent. Kazan would bring his unique vision and genius to many landmark productions, including the original staging of Tennessee Williams’ *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*. Both Miller and Kazan worked out the presentation details.

The play opened in New Have, Connecticut, in 1947 and was fairly well received. By the time *All My Sons* reached New York and Boston, it was, in the author’s words, “Like a bullet on a straight clean trajectory that rammed the audience back into its seats.” The production did quite well in New York opening in January at the Coronet Theater, despite the fact that its tragic message and moral meaning baffled many critics. Nonetheless, the play established Miller as an important writer and launched him into a new world of fame. The arrival and success of *All My Sons* in 1947 coincided with the birth of Miller’s son, Robert, who was born on May 31 of that same year.

Brooks Atkinson was one of the few critics who saw the power of *All My Sons* and defended it in the press. He was a strong supporter of theater that was socially vital as well as entertaining. Miller in his autobiography *Timebends* recalls it: "It was an audience impatient with long speeches, ignorant of any literary allusions whatever, as merciless to losers as the prizefight crowed and as craven to winners, an audience that heard
the word culture and reached for its hat. Of course, there were people of
great sensibility among them, but a play had to be fundamental enough to
grab anybody, regardless. n36

The spring after its opening, *All My Sons* won a number of critical
awards, among them the Drama Critics Circle Award. Thirty years later a
Jerusalem production of play would be the longest running dramatic play in
the history of Israel and would capture the souls of the Israeli audiences,
aware of the play’s parallels to their own war-torn world.

In 1947 when Miller’s *All My Sons* was well received, he was the
father of two small children and had bought a new house at Grace Court in
Brooklyn Heights, near the East River. It was around this time that he
purchased a small home in Roxbury, Connecticut, a quiet town where he
hoped to do some of his writing. He received huge royalty. These royalties
offered the writer a new economic freedom and a new outlook on his
situation: “I was growing rich and attempting to think poor,”37 he once said.
In some ways, Miller began to feel that his celebrity was causing him to
become more distant from his wife and children. He also became guilty of
fame. Preoccupied with the fear of losing his “artistic self” through fame,
the writer felt a need to isolate himself from the world.

As he struggled to maintain his perspective, Miller began to walk
endlessly, frequently winding his way over the Brooklyn Bridge and into
lower Manhattan. His long walks gave him the time to think about his
writing. These thoughts were the seeds of *Death of a Salesman*. It was
during one of these walks over the bridge that Miller first noticed some
graffiti that read “Dove Pete Panto?” which means “Where is Pete Panto,”
in Italian. He gradually noticed that, near the Brooklyn piers, the same
question was written everywhere. A few days later, he read in a local newspaper that Panto was a longshoreman who had attempted to organize workers against the corrupt union leadership of the International Longshoreman’s Association, run by Joseph Ryans and his alleged Mafia colleagues. He depicted this in *A View from the Bridge*.

It was only after his initial adventures on the Red Hook pier that a play about a salesman began crowding out all other thoughts in the writer's head. He had known from the beginning that this play could not be written in a conventionally realistic setting. This idea would involve a fluid form that would allow moving back and forth from past to present by verbal transitions. The transitions would be punctuated by the music of a lone flute.

Miller was seized with the need for a studio in which to write the play. He also felt the studio needed to be built entirely with his own hands. So, before work on *Death of a Salesman* ever began, Miller’s ten-by-twelve studio was first completed. Miller worked on his studio. He borrowed a hammer from his neighbor Manny Newman, a salesman and a man who took manual labor very seriously. The character of Willy Loman is based partially on Newman, who was a small, hardworking person who cared a great deal about what others thought of him. When Manny died, Miller found out that the salesman’s only dream was to own a hardware business with his two sons. This sad remembrance of unfulfilled success and love triggered many ideas for Miller while he wrote his play in 1948. That homely, ridiculous little man had after all never ceased to struggle for a certain victory selling to achieve his lost self as a man with his name and his sons’ names on a business of his own.
Miller sat down in his unpainted, sawdust-filled studio that morning in 1948. He launched headlong into the work and wrote the entire first half of the play - the first act - in twenty-four straight hours. When Miller went to sleep that night, his eyes still burned as he wrote and his voice was hoarse from laughing and shouting out the lines as he heard them spoken by his characters. He awoke the next day stiff, and started Act Two, which would take six weeks to finish.

Bruce Glassman observes, "The play Miller created is not simply the story of a salesman who commits suicide in order to give his family the money from a life insurance policy. On one level, the work explores the nature of the American family, with the father as the power figure, provider, and example-setter. On another level, the play shows the toll that business takes on a person in America and the lack of gratitude given to people who devote their entire lives to service in a company. On still another level, *Death of a Salesman* questions the value of success, which we base our lives on in this country. Kazan thought it a great play. Cobb was cast as Willy, with Mildred Dunnock as his wife Linda, Arthur Kennedy as their son Biff, and Cameron Mitchell as their son Happy. The audiences were overwhelmed by the power of the play. The New York premiere of the play, on February 10, 1949, at the Morosco Theater, was a testament to Arthur Miller's new status in the theater world. The play was a masterful work.

Though Miller had developed a new "form" for his writing, he did not abandon his conviction that drama should have an important social or political message. The story of Willy Loman, an old salesman who has tragically devoted his life to one company in hopes of attaining the success and respect embodied in the "American Dream," is also the story of failed
capitalism. Critics called the play a time bomb under American capitalism. He wrote in his autobiography, "I hoped it was a time bomb under American Capitalism at least under the bull of capitalism, this pseudo life that thought to touch the clouds by standing on top of the refrigerator, waving a paid-up mortgage at the moon, victorious at last." Critic Richard Watts, Jr. wrote that "Death of a Salesman ... is one of the most important plays ever written in this country; the essential tragedy of the central figure was not his failure in business or his discovery of the arrival of old age, but his surrender to the false ideals of success." 

In 1949, the play won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and would later claim the Critics Circle Award, the Tony Award, the Theater Club Award, the "Page One" Award, and many others.

After winning a Pulitzer Prize and the recognition of much of the world by 1950, the playwright, now aged thirty-five, took a trip to Hollywood with his artistic collaborator Elia Kazan. Bruce Glassman says, "The two men went to California to explore the possibility of making a movie about longshoremen. But Miller was never comfortable in Hollywood, nor was he comfortable with the nature of film and the life of a screenwriter. As it turned out, Hollywood was not too interested in Arthur Miller either, not because his work was lacking but because of his alleged political associations with the Communist Party." This era in America, known as the "Red Scare," was fueled by Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy, who led Congressional investigations into the private lives and politics of hundred of American citizens. In 1950 there was a great deal of risk involved for a Hollywood studio to make moves using "communist sympathizers" or "alleged communists." Both Miller and Kazan were fairly well known as "leftists" or liberal communists. The actual degree to which
this was true varied at different points in their lives. However, their politics was undeniably liberal. It was due largely to this political stand that they received a rather lukewarm reception in Hollywood when they arrived to explore the possibility of the longshoreman’s movie. Even the story they described the tale of a young man who goes against an evil mob that controls the unions had anti-democratic overtones that made most studios uncomfortable. In the end, one man Harry Cohn of Columbia Pictures made a deal with Miller and Kazan for the film.

It was at this time in 1950 that Kazan first introduced Miller to a young actress who had caused quite a stir in several movies and at the many nightly parties that were held around Hollywood. Her name was Marilyn Monroe. Miller was very taken with her, and after a few weeks, the actress and the playwright began to see each other frequently. Miller’s long absences from his wife and two children, in addition to his need for isolation while writing at home, had already started to take a more serious toll on the Miller family. The playwright, preoccupied with pursuing his ideas as an artist, became less able to find fulfillment in the role of husband and father. His wife, too, was finding it harder and harder to tolerate the lack of a constant companion and father for her children.

Harry Cohn then asked Miller to revise his screenplay *The Hook* and Miller refused it. He wanted his play to be leftist in taste and ideology. That year (1950) he had also worked on an adaptation of *An Enemy of the People*, a play by Henrik Ibsen. It had failed, and this once again left him dejected and unsure of his abilities as a playwright. He tried to regain his momentum by working on a new piece called *An Italian Tragedy*, but after several months he set that aside too, realizing the piece was simply not working. By 1951, the Red Scare had an even firmer hold on the minds of most
Americans. Senator McCarthy began orchestrating Senate hearings - sponsored by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in which American citizens were questioned unrelentingly about their knowledge of and involvement in communist activities in the United States. As this hysteria spread, Miller began to feel the need to react through his writing. As he once wrote, he sought a metaphor with which he could shed light on the insanity of the proceedings taking place not only in Washington, D.C., but all across the land. It was during this period that he thought about the famous witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692. He studied Marion Starkey’s *The Devil in Massachusetts*. In 1952, the playwright took a trip to the Salem courthouse to begin his search for the information that would provide him with the core of his drama. He decided that his play would focus on a sexual infidelity by the main character and would reveal the nature of society and its individuals by dramatizing the community overreaction to the crime. The play tells the story of a group of young women accused of conjuring up the devil. The town’s hysteria soon leads to accusations of witchcraft against many innocent women. John Proctor and his wife are among these and in his attempt to clear her name he is subsequently accused of cavorting with Satan. The play ends with Proctor, who is faced with the ethical choice of either publicly admitting he was possessed by the devil (a lie) in order to be set free, or remaining silent and going to his death. Once the play was completed, Miller handed it over to Jed Harris who, as director, shaped the work for its world premiere.

*The Crucible’s* first public showing was greeted fairly enthusiastically in Wilmington, Delaware, but that did little to dissuade Miller from feeling he had something dead on one stage. Since the year of its premiere, the
popularity of the play has, in fact, grown steadily. Today, it is Arthur Miller's most frequently produced play.

Critics say, “The years spent writing and producing *The Crucible* proved to be important ones for Miller’s artistic growth. The play, with its pointedly political message, made Arthur Miller a spokesman for the leftist cause, for those people who were being persecuted by the political witch-hunt of the 1950s.”

Miller wrote a one-acter *A Memory of Two Mondays* in 1953. Then he took up to finish *An Italian Tragedy* now, *A View from the Bridge*. The two one-act plays had their world debut in New York. Their production prompted Miller to scrap *A Memory of Two Mondays* and to revise *A View from the Bridge* into a full-length drama. The new full-length play which focused on an Italian longshoreman's struggle to keep his family and his pride together even as he turned over two family members to the department of immigration was also produced with great success in London by Peter Brook.

By 1955, Miller and Monroe had begun a serious relationship. Though Monroe had divorced her previous husband, Joe DiMaggio, a few months earlier, Miller was still married with children not yet in their teens. In great conflict about his emotions, the writer felt as if his world was colliding with itself, and a great sense of guilt and helplessness for his political beliefs. Having been invited to Brussels, Belgium, for the premiere of *The Crucible* in 1955, Miller was denied a renewal of his passport. Ruth Shipley, chief of the U.S. Passport division, explained that it was not in the national interest for the playwright to go abroad.
Soon after the passport incident, Miller began work on a screenplay about juvenile delinquency and gang warfare in America.

By 1956, Miller knew that his marriage to Marry was finally over and that he wanted to marry Marilyn Monroe. No concrete explanation has ever been given by Miller for the breakup of his marriage, but his relationship with Monroe and his feelings of alienation from Mary were surely primary factors. He had his divorce in Pyramid Lake, Nevada, where the writer Saul Bellow also had his divorce at the same time.

Marilyn was shooting a movie called *Bus Stop* in Hollywood at the time, and they planned to get married as soon as the film was completed. Soon after *Bus Stop* was finished (in June of 1956), Arthur and Marilyn were married in a Jewish ceremony at the Westchester home of agent Kay Brown. Marilyn had converted to Judaism in order to marry Miller in a traditional ceremony. Attending the wedding were Brown's husband, Miller's parents Isadore and Augusta, his brother Kermit and his wife, his sister Joan and her husband, the Rostens, Miller family friends.

Still a newlywed, Miller was summoned by HUAC to testify in Washington about his political affiliations and those of his friends. He did not name those associated with leftist activities. Miller's refusal brought him a contempt charge in 1957 with a jail term, but his lawyer managed to get the sentence overturned on appeal. It is said, "The ultimate irony of that period for Miller was the fact that he was in no way a staunch supporter of the Communist Party." My real view of American Communists," Miller wrote in his autobiography, "was of a sect that might as well be praying somewhere in the Himalayas for all the relevance they had to any motion in the American world."
While Miller was appearing before HUAC, a new full-length production of *A View from the Bridge* was being mounted by Peter Brook in London. It received very favorable reviews and played helped to enthusiastic audiences. The success of the play helped to renew Miller’s confidence as a writer and to boost his spirits after his frustrating ordeal with the Congressional inquiry into his private life.

With *A View from the Bridge*, Arthur Miller had once again created a unique tragedy -- a tragedy whose scope stems from a small world, yet takes on gigantic dramatic proportions. Now thoroughly enmeshed in Marilyn’s life, Miller became involved in the filming of *The Prince* and the Showgirl, starring Monroe and Laurence Oliver. There was, however, one piece he was able to complete for *Esquire* magazine that year, a short story he called “The Misfits.” The story, which the author said dealt with indifference, loneliness, and isolation, was about “our lives” and about how “meaningless they are and maybe how we got to where we are.” Miller worked out *The Misfits* into a screenplay. He wanted to boost her faith in art. Marilyn’s unhappy and unfortunate childhood, as well as the often cruel way in which her beauty had been exploited by people she had trusted in the past, only added to Miller’s dream of being the one main in Marilyn’s life who would not betray her.

But Marilyn became more depressed and got addicted to drugs. As the days passed, Miller became increasingly estranged from his troubled wife as his own depression deepened. In an interview of *Life* magazine, which was published after her death, Marilyn said of her marriage to Miller that it was for her “not a union of two stable adults, but rather a relationship of a confused child-like woman and a man who represented security.” This became painfully obvious during the filming of *The Misfits*. 
His relationship with Marilyn never recovered from those months in the desert and after the film was finished, they separated.

The film, though it never received sufficient publicity, was quite well received by those who saw it on its first release in 1961. It is said, "All in All, Miller’s brief encounter with Hollywood proved his worst fears to be well founded."\(^{45}\) He also blamed Hollywood for taking Marilyn away from him.

It seems the things moved fast in Miller’s life now. By January of 1961, Monroe was applying for a Mexican divorce from Miller, and two months later his mother, Augusta, died at the age of eighty. Though things were over with Marilyn, Miller began to enjoy the company of a young Austrian photographer he had met while still in Nevada with *The Misfits*: The woman, Inge Morath, had been traveling the globe with the world-famous photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson. The photographer and the playwright were instantly attracted to one another. Once his divorce from Marilyn was official in 1962, Miller married her for the third time. Soon after the wedding, their daughter Rebecca was born.

Out of this apathetic feeling came a film scenario entitled the *Truth Drug* - an attempt to explain the sixties artistically. The story, more humorous now for its nostalgic value, told of a young researcher who stumbles upon a chemical that can transpose the most aggressive animal into a loving one.

Still sorting through his ideas for the science play, the writer took a trip to Germany with his wife in 1964. While there, they visited old concentration camps and attended a trial in Frankfurt of Nazi criminals.
some of them doctors and scientists - who were charged with atrocities during the war.

In August of 1962, as he neared the end of the play (now titled *After the Fall*), he received the news of Marilyn's death caused by an overdose of sleeping pills. Though they had not spoken for a while, Miller felt a profound sense of loss at Marilyn's death and a deepened anger at the rest of the world for pushing her to that end. More disappointment came with the news that the Lincoln Center project was off due to unavoidable differences between the artistic collaborators and the bankers who comprised the board. Left stranded with a newly completed play, Miller and Whitehead worked to produce *After the Fall* in a new repertory theater on West Fourth Street in New York City. The makeshift downtown Theater was not ideal the playwright and the producer were called upon to screw in the seats on the afternoon of opening night and the less-than-perfect facility only served to underscore the author's sense of impending doom.

*After the Fall* was not well received. There were many people, too, who noticed an uncanny resemblance of Marilyn in the female lead character, Maggie, although Miller denied basing his character on his late wife. It is known for guilt and denial. This montage approach did not go over well with the critics either, but the play nonetheless held together well enough for Whitehead to ask for another drama from his friend Miller. As an act of solidarity, the playwright wrote *Incident at Vichy*, loosely based on the life of an old friend, a psychoanalyst who was arrested with false papers in Vichy, France, and was saved by a man he never met. The play was banned both in Russia and France for it depicted scenes of anti-Semitism.
David Carver made Arthur Miller the president of PEN in Paris in 1962. At their first meeting, Carver explained that PEN had been founded by a group of popular writers after World War I. Among its founders were George Bernard Shaw, G. K. Chesterton and H. G. Wells, all of whom believed in the power of the written word to change the way people think. Miller visited Soviet capital in that capacity. The business of PEN kept the writer occupied for four years during which he held the office of president. But even with his commitments to the organization, in 1968 he found time to begin work on a new play entitled *The Price*. It was the story of two brothers, one a policeman and the other a surgeon who meet again, years after an angry breakup.

*The Price* had a respectable season in New York and went on to play in theaters throughout Europe with some notable international actors. The play *The Price*, produced in 1968, showed that people cannot resolve conflicts within themselves or with others unless they face the truth. During the struggle to free Peter Reilly, Miller completed a play entitled *The Creation of the World and Other Business* which, like *The Price*, considered the inevitable failing of human nature and how we, as a society, react to them. The years 1976 and 1977 were productive ones for the writer, but not altogether successful ones. By 1976, Miller had completed *The American Clock* a mural of American society during the Depression. The next play, *The Archbishop's Ceiling*, completed in 1977, was a drama derived from the playwright's travels through Prague as president of PEN.

Some plays, such as *The Crucible*, take a while to find their rightful place. Frequently, time must pass before they are accepted; other times they must be produced in other countries before they must be produced in other countries before they are appreciated. In the case of *The American Clock*
and *The Archbishop's Ceiling*, recognition took ten years and would come from England rather than America. By 1986, both plays were packing London theaters and doing exceptionally well.

Ironically Miller found that television, rather than the stage, was able to handle one of his hard-minded plays. In 1979 he wrote the television script *Playing for Time*, a tragic story of a woman who survived the death camps of the Holocaust by playing in an all-prisoner musical group. The Nazis used this makeshift orchestra to calm those marching to the gas chambers.

In the early eighties, Miller created two one-act plays that also tried to explore the conventions of theater in a new and interesting way. *An Elegy for a Lady* was an attempt to write a play with multiple points of view, one for each of the two characters, plus a third—that of the play itself.

In 1983, the playwright traveled to Beijing, China, where the Beijing People’s Art Theater mounted a production of *Death of a Salesman*. The fact that this production even existed, much less the fact that it was the first by a foreign playwright in post-Mao China, was unbelievable to most people. The fact that *Salesman* was an immense success in China only underscored its brilliance and its universality and proved, even to Miller, the play’s relevance in other societies.

One of the pieces, entitled *Clara*, depicts a man named Kroll, who is shocked when he discovers the body of his murdered daughter. The companion piece to *Clare*, entitled *I Can’t Remember Anything*, was comprised of two elderly characters who also struggle with memory and the unpredictable way recollections can surface and the present can instantly become a forgotten past.
Miller continued to live quietly in Connecticut with Inge, his wife of more than twenty-seven years. His daughter Rebecca is a young painter and actress in New York City. Robert Miller, his son by his first wife, is working in the film industry in California, and Jane, his daughter, is a weaver and the wife of a sculptor. The nearly eighty-five year-old playwright is also a grandfather to Robert’s three children. Arthur Miller died in 2005.

Bruce Glassman observes, "Arthur Miller’s career as a writer has truly been a collaboration between the life inside his head and the life he actually experienced. Each of his works sprang from a curiosity about the nature of human behavior and a desire to enlighten his audience on issues of social value."46

Miller writes: "I have gone through years when my plays were being performed in half a dozen countries but not in New York. Thus, when George Scott did Salesman in New York and Tony LoBianco A View from the Bridge on Broadway and then Dustin Hoffman Salesman again, and a score of other major productions of my plays were mounted in and around the big cities, I seemed to have been “revived” when in fact I had only been invisible in my own land."47

Indeed, Miller continues to be staged across the world today.
Miller's first play is rather based on his father's family and its business. The initial typescript of the play is shorter and simpler than the various versions that followed. Abe Simon, a coat manufacturer, is faced with ruin when a strike of shipping clerks prevents him delivering his goods. The bank is about to call in his credit note. One son, Ben, who has grudgingly gone into business, supports him, despite his own left-wing convictions. Another son, Arnold, back from college and imbued with Communist theory, will not. There are hints of a possible solution if Ben will marry the daughter of a rich manufacturer but this is a sub-plot which is dealt with in a perfunctory way. The conflict, in essence, is that between private interest and the general well-being, but there are, as the title suggests, no villains; the characters are all victims of a system which alone is evil. This is a critique of American family which is torn of ideology. This sets man against man and places material rather than human values at the centre of affairs. Thus, Abe insists, much as Isidore Miller had done, that "If you don't get them they'll get you. You gotta be on one side or the other in this business. In any business... It's dog eat dog." His son, Arnold, sees things differently: "You've got to get out and on top and look down and see, see what one thing is worth against another. The world is different now than when you were young. It's not there to be made now. Now we've got to change the world!"
Again, no definite model of the new world in process of being born but a call for a new generation to escape from the sterile and destructive materialism which had corrupted the 1920s, a spirit embodied in the titles which Miller chose to give to two subsequent revisions of the play: *They Too Arise* and *The Grass Still Grows*.

2. **HONORS AT DAWN:**

Miller's second play though listed as his first by some was *Honors at Dawn*, written in 1936. In fact this was a product of 1937 and with it he received his second Avery Hopwood Award, the judges being Susan Glaspell, herself an outstanding playwright and regional director for the Federal Theatre; Allardyce Nicoll, the drama critic; and Percival Wilde, a prolific playwright whose work was especially popular with amateurs. Not as accomplished as *They Too Arise*, it nonetheless comes out of the same concern with the battle for human rights. Miller, the committed playwright, was doing battle for the working class. *Honors at Dawn* is another strike play, rooted to some degree in personal experience drawing, as it does, on the time he had spent in an automobile parts warehouse and his experience of university life. Once again there are two brothers, representing different responses to life and adopting radically different stands with respect to an economically and socially divided country. Harry celebrates the American dream. The son of a Polish immigrant, he embraces the myths and prejudices of a society whose chief virtue seems to lie in the economic rewards which it offers to those with the energy and ruthlessness to claim them. His brother, Max, seems uninterested in the siren call of success. He is a practical man who takes pleasure in his ability to maintain and improve machinery, a talent which he is invited to extend to the perfection of society by his workmates at the Castle Parts factory. They are involved in a fight for
higher pay and union recognition and persuade Max to assist them by distributing leaflets. When he is seen doing this he is offered a bribe to inform on his fellow workers but refuses, joining his brother at university as a means of avoiding the dilemma. When precisely the same offer is made to Harry by the university authorities, themselves under pressure from the factory owner whose donations to the university give him a hold over the institution, he readily agrees in return for a loan to finance his extravagant lifestyle. His job is to report back on radical students and on a professor whose views have brought him into conflict with the same factory owner.

3. **THE GREAT DISOBEDIENCE:**

Miller's third play, *The Great Disobedience* could not win an Avery Hopwood Award. Based on his visit to Jackson prison, it set out, as did Tennessee Williams in his early unpublished play *Not About Nightingales*, to identify the need for prison reform. It reminds us Charles Dickensian social philosophy. Just as *Honors at Dawn* had detected the hand of big business in university affairs so *The Great Disobedience* sees the prison system as intimately involved in capitalism's efforts to protect its profits and maintain its control. The character Victor Matthews, who has become an inconvenience to the rubber company for which he works as a compensation doctor, is sent to prison, ostensibly for performing an illegal abortion but in fact because of his failure to protect the interests of his employer. This is presented as doubly evil in so far as the abortion itself is seen as a life saving gesture (the young girl in question was contemplating suicide) offered to someone already suffering as a consequence of an inequitable society. The penal system not only corruptly cooperates with big business; it becomes a symbol of the power of capital and industry to rob individuals of their freedom. Between Victor and his fate stand two people; Caroline, the
woman who loves him, and Dr. Karl Mannheim, an old college friend who is now the prison psychiatrist. Only two years earlier they had all been at university together, Caroline then being Karl's girl. Now Victor's career is in ruins and Karl's depends on the goodwill of a sadistic Deputy Warden. The question is whether Karl will side with a corrupt system or with his friend. He is certainly liberal in his approach to the men in his care and tries to reduce the worst effects of the world in which they find themselves. He attempts to change the system in subtle ways.

4. THE GOLDEN YEARS:

Miller wrote his next play The Golden Years when he stayed in Brooklyn. The Golden Years concerns the ravaging of Mexico by Cortes. Montezuma, king of the Aztecs, is pictured as insecure even in his absolute power, indeed, in part, because of his absolute power in that he is unsure what purpose it could be said to serve. Cortes, meanwhile, battles his way to the heart of the empire in search of gold, though in the name of Jesus. The play explores the reason for Montezuma's capitulation before this adventurer who lacks even the sanction of the Spanish throne. It dramatizes the dilemma of a man who suspects he may have encountered his own fate and hence, mesmerized, paralyzed by the sheer certainty of the invader, surrenders himself and his people. This is a tragedy of the tribal king and the fortune for the invader. And this invader is a tyrant. The play offers a comment on Miller's own times as well as a study of power and its seductiveness. Miller speaks of The Golden Years as looking toward a non-existent poetic theatre inspired by the Elizabethan models. In fact, there were other models closer to home in Maxwell Anderson's plays, while T. S. Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral received its first production at the hands of the Federal Theatre which Miller admired. Auden and Isherwood,
likewise, believed in the possibility of a drama whose language transcended the urgencies of a world confronted by the prosaic realities of Depression at home and Fascism in Europe. In fact the 1930s writing abounded in the elevated language of an idealized socialism (as evidenced in the theatre by Clifford Odets, and in the novel by John Steinbeck), or simply the soft metaphysics of William Saroyan.

5. THE HALF-BRIDGE:

Next Miller wrote *The Half-Bridge* (1941-43), the only one of his plays to deal directly with the war. It has never been published or produced and is, perhaps, the weakest of his apprentice plays. It concerns Mark Donegal, mate of a merchant ship, who is encouraged by a Nazi agent to use his ship for piracy and insurance fraud. He does this as he is disillusioned by an America which seems to him to have betrayed its frontier past for a flaccid mediocrity. The half-bridge of the title is a reference to the incomplete life of anybody who fails to understand the necessity to open communication with others. His sense of a powerful absurdity governing human affairs is conquered, finally, by a new vision of human solidarity. The echoes of 1930s communalism are still apparent but, in common with the much revised. But if *The Half-Bridge* is of little more than academic interest Miller was now on the verge of launching his public career, for the following year his first Broadway play appeared. It was, however, a play with a history.

6. THE MAN WHO HAD ALL THE LUCK:

In 1940 Miller wrote the novel *The Man Who Had All The Luck*. It tells the story of a man, David, for whom everything turns out well and who believes that he has no hand in his own destiny. He is a happy chap. He is
the beneficiary of chance, of coincidence, of, in short, luck. What seems missing from life is any sense of justice as an operative principle. The result is guilt and fear, guilt at what he feels is his unfair advantage, and fear of the ultimate fall which he is convinced must eventually come if the justice for which he looks, and in which, perversely, he wishes to believe, should finally operate. On the other hand, the young man Amos's hopes come to nothing. Others in this small community also have to live with disappointment. Overwhelmed by an absurdity which sends one man on to success and another spiraling down to failure, David first drifts into psychosis and then takes his own life. Finally death is the only reality he can embrace. Miller rewrote it as a play, publishing it in 1944 in a volume of new American writing, whose editor was prescient enough to include the work of other unknowns: Norman Mailer, Jane Bowles, and Ralph Ellison. In shrinking it from a 360 pages novel he opted for a different story and a different style. It became a fable in which the accidents of fate are deliberately underscored. By the time it was produced, however, still further revisions had been made, the most crucial occurring to Miller as he sat on a Long Island beach. David and Amos became brothers.
Arthur Miller's Major Plays:

1. ALL MY SONS (1947)

What starts out as a relaxed image of American life as neighbours congregate in Joe Keller's backyard on a summer's evening soon begins to develop tensions. Ann Deever is coming from New York to visit Joe's 32 year-old son Chris. She was once engaged to Chris's brother Larry, a pilot who was lost in action in the Second World War, and Kate Keller, mother of Chris and Larry, refuses to believe that Larry is dead. Moreover, Ann is the daughter of Joe Keller's former business partner, now serving a jail sentence for equipping fighter planes with faulty engines, killing 21 pilots. Although it was Keller who instructed him to do so on the telephone, Keller denied his part in the crime, but Deever's son George has discovered the truth and comes to take Ann away from the Kellers. Despite everything, Ann still wants to marry Chris, and shows him a letter written by Larry before he went missing saying that he is going to kill himself because of his father's crime. Chris horrified that his suspicions about his father are now confirmed, confronts Keller with the letter and demands that he give himself up to the authorities. Keller, realizing that the missing pilots 'were all my sons', goes indoors to shoot himself.

This was Miller's first Broadway success and is still widely performed. Its theme, a seemingly happy, prosperous family having to face guilt from the past, is like updated Ibsen, and the action is not free from melodramatic elements, not least in Keller's suicide and Chris's tearful responses.
2. DEATH OF A SALESMAN (1949)

Willy Loman is a traveling salesman in his early sixties. He is 'tired to the death' after a life of hard work. He tells his wife Linda how worried he is about their elder son Biff, 34 and unemployed. Biff is contrasted with his younger brother Happy, who has a steady job, his 'own apartment, a car, and plenty of women'. But Happy is not content, and the two brothers dream briefly of working on a ranch 'out West'. Willy drifts off into reminiscing about the past: we see Biff and Happy as young boys, and Willy boasting about his earnings, although Linda is having difficulty making ends meet. Willy's neighbour Charley offers Willy a job, but Willy drifts off into a dream about his Uncle Ben, an adventurer whom Willy admired and who has recently died. When Willy wanders off for a walk in his slippers, Linda tells her sons to respect him. Willy pretends to earn money as a salesman but is actually borrowing money. Worse still, he is preparing for suicide so that his family can get his life insurance money: Linda has found a length of rubber pipe by the gas pipe. Though Biff hates the city, he agrees to stay and help his parents and ask for a job from his former boss Bill Oliver. The following morning, Willy asks his boss Howard for an advance. Howard not only refuses; he even sacks Willy. Willy goes to Charley, again indignantly refuses the offer of a job, but borrows money from him. That evening Biff and Happy have invited their father out for dinner. Happy finds a woman for himself and his brother. Biff waited all day, only to discover that Bill Oliver could not even remember him dismayed. Biff stole his fountain pen and ran off. Willy arrives, and soon Willy and Biff are arguing again. A past episode that has haunted Willy throughout the play is now enacted. Biff comes to see Willy in his hotel room and discovers that he has got a woman with him. Biff and Happy abandon Willy to leave with their women. When they get
home, they find their father in the dark planting seeds. Ben invites Willy to join him in death, and Willy drives off at high speed and kills himself. At his graveside Charley sums up his life: 'A salesman is... a man way out there in the blue, riding on a smile and shoeshine.'

Probably the best-known play to have come from the States and frequently revived, *Death of a Salesman* is arguably the closest any 20th-century playwright has come to writing a contemporary tragedy. Willy Loman ('low man'), 'a King Lear in mufti', as the critic John Gassner described him, is intended to demonstrate that even the most ordinary individual can be the focus of tragedy. When asked what Willy carried in his bags, Miller answered; 'Himself.' Having tried to sell himself as a salesman, all that is left is to sell his own death. In this 'mobile concurrency of past and present', which Miller originally thought of entitled *The Inside of His Head*, the writer skilfully blends naturalistic dialogue with dream-like reminiscence.

3. **THE CRUCIBLE (1953)**

Salem's minister Revd Samuel Parris prays for his 10-year-old daughter Betty, who with other local girls had been dancing at night in the forest. Parris is concerned that, led by his black slave Tituba, the girls had 'trafficked with spirits'. At first, his beautiful niece Abigail Williams denies witchcraft. When Thomas Putnam and his wife declare that they have been bewitched, Abigail admits that Tituba and the Putnams' daughter Ruth conjured spirits, but she persuades the other girls to remain silent about Abigail's curse on John Proctor's wife. As Proctor's servant, she had had an affair with him, until his wife threw her out of the house, but she still longs for him. Rebecca Nurse, a respected grandmother, manages to soothe the little
Betty. A neighbouring minister Revd John Hale, an expert in witchcraft, interrogates Tituba and the girls. Under severe interrogation, Tituba confesses to witchcraft and names local women in league with the Devil. Abigail hysterically joins in, denouncing more women as witches. Betty sits up and joins in the denunciations. The marshal is summoned. A week later, the town court is trying witches. At their home, Proctor's wife Elizabeth urges him to report that Abigail had initially denied any witchcraft, since now even the gentle Rebecca Nurse is accused of being a witch. To Proctor's horror, Elizabeth is also arrested when a doll pierced by a needle is found in her home. He realizes that Abigail is plotting to have her condemned so that she can have Proctor to herself. Proctor gets his servant girl to admit that the doll was hers and goes before Deputy Governor Danforth to get Elizabeth released. When Abigail pretends to be bewitched, Proctor admits to his affair with her and declares 'it is a whore's vengeance'. However, Elizabeth when questioned denies the affair to protect Proctor's reputation.

Proctor denounces the court and is arrested. Hale walks out in disgust. Although doubts increase when Betty steals her father's money and runs away with Abigail, Danforth insists that Proctor and the witches must be hanged. Proctor is offered life in exchange for a false confession, but he refuses, and goes bravely to his death.

This is arguably the best known historical drama of the 20th century and secured Miller's reputation as one of America's leading playwrights. Although it clearly refers to the McCarthyite witch-hunt of Communists in the USA in the early 1950s, its concern with justice and the dignity of the individual at a time of hysterical suspicion transcends mere topicality. Proctor is, like Willy Loman, just an ordinary individual, but his moral
courage, like that of Miller before the House Un-American Activities Committee, lifts him to heroic status. When the Wooster Group included a speeded-up version of *The Crucible* in LSD (...Just the High Points...) in 1983, Miller intervened to stop the deconstructive use of his material.

4. A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE (1955)

Eddie Carbone, a 40-year-old longshoreman, lives with his wife Beatrice and his pretty orphaned niece Catherine in an apartment overlooked by Brooklyn Bridge. As Catherine grows up and takes a job, Eddie becomes unnaturally edgy about her. Two young cousins of Beatrice come from Italy— as illegal immigrants ('submarines') to live in the apartment: Marco is serious-minded, intent on finding a job so that he can send regular remittances to his family in Sicily; Rodolpho is good-looking and light-headed. Catherine is attracted to Rodolpho, and Eddie, jealously implying that Rodolpho is homosexual, warns Catherine that he wants to marry her only to obtain an American passport. When Eddie discovers Rodolpho emerging from Catherine's bedroom, he orders him out of the house. Catherine says she will leave with him, so Eddie, breaching the Italian code of honour, calls the Immigration Bureau and has the 'submarines' arrested. Marco spits at Eddie and denounces him. When Marco is allowed out on bail to attend the wedding of Rodolpho to Catherine, Eddie, now shunned by his neighbours, threatens him with a knife. They fight and Eddie is killed. The lawyer Alfieri, who has commented on the action throughout, cannot help admiring Eddie's passion.

Originally written as a one-act play, much of it in verse, this represents Miller's attempt to recapture something of the power of Greek tragedy in a modern setting. Like Willy Loman, Eddie deludes himself, but,
as the chorus-figure Alfieri says, Eddie's total if misguided commitment to his incestuous fascination with his niece raises him above 'all my sensible clients'.

Arthur Miller's Minor Plays

In 1953 Miller wrote the play A Memory of Two Mondays. Actor Martin Ritt liked the play and they thought that they needed a 'curtain raider.' This inspired Miller to write A View from the Bridge, an one-actor. Kermit Bloomgarten produced the play.

1. AFTER THE FALL (1962)

In August of 1962, Miller wrote the play After the Fall. At the same time, he received the death of his past wife Marilyn Monroe due to overdose of sleeping pills. He had her death and his life with her in mind. He felt a profound sense of loss at her death and a deepened anger at the rest of the world for pushing her to that end. As he anticipated, the play was a failure. Much of the audience did not grasp the intertwined themes of guilt and denial and many remained confused by the play's unusual mixture of characters, abrupt appearance and disappearances, and transformations of time and place. This montage approach did not go over well with the critics either. But the play nonetheless held together well enough for the producer who asked Miller for one more play.

2. INCIDENT AT VICHY (1964)

Six men and a boy have been taken off the streets by the police in Vichy, capital of unoccupied France in the Second World War. They are Marchand, a self-important businessman; Lebeau, a painter; Bayard: an electrician; Monceau, an actor; a Gypsy; a Waiter; and a boy of 15. None of
them knows why they have been arrested. Three more detainees are brought in by the police: an old Jew, the indignant Doctor Leduc, who insists that he is a captain in the French army, and the Austrian aristocrat Prince von Berg. The men begin to discuss the deportation of the Jews which has begun in Vichy, France. As they are interrogated one by one by a Professor of 'racial anthropology', the detainees begin to suspect each other of being Jewish and exchange stories about extermination camps in Poland. As they become more aware of their plight, they consider trying to overpower the guard, but as Leduc recognizes, the authorities 'rely on our own logic to immobilize ourselves'. Leduc confronts the German army Major about his complicity in this racist action, but admits his own moral weakness: he would abandon the others if he were set free. Von Berg is given a pass when his credentials are checked, but, partly to assuage his own guilt, he nobly gives it to Leduc, so that he can escape. S. C. Mathur thinks the play deals with the division between man and man.

This well-wrought long one-acter recognizes not only that racism is found the world over, but also that the victims, in this case the Jews, were often partly complicit in their own oppression.

3. THE PRICE (1990)

Police Sergeant Victor Franz and his wife Esther wait in the apartment of Victor's late father for the arrival of a dealer who will offer them a price for all his old furniture and ornaments. Victor joined the police when he had to drop out of college to support his father in the hard days of the Depression. Nearing retirement, he is extremely resentful of his brother Walter, who became a famous surgeon while contributing only a few dollars a month to his father's upkeep. At last the elderly dealer arrives. He is
Gregory Solomon, an 89-year-old Jew in failing health but with a warm sense of humour. After checking on the items for sale, he finally offers $1,100, which Victor uncertainly accepts. At this moment, Walter, whom Victor has not seen for 16 years, enters. The brothers confront each other, Victor complaining that he sacrificed his life while Walter was able to go on to be a success.

However, Walter reveals that he has had a breakdown and is now divorced; moreover, Victor's sacrifice was an illusion, because their father kept a secret horde of his own money. In this wholly realistic piece, Miller explores some of his recurrent themes of guilt, resentment, and of the search for success in a materialistic society. All four characters, in different ways, have had to pay the price for a life without love and honesty.

4. THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OTHER BUSINESS (1973)

This play, like The Price, considered the inevitable failings of human nature and how, we, as a society, react to them. The play explores the nature of God and what kind of psychological situated must have given rise to the creation of God in the first place. Using biblical imagery and parallels, Miller also questioned the enforcement of laws and the nature of justice. This play was truly the product of the years the writer spent involved in the New Cannam murder case.

5. THE AMERICAN CLOCK (1976)

The years 1976 and 1977 were productive ones for the writer, but not altogether successful ones. By 1976, Miller completed The American Clock, a 'mural' of American society during the Depression. A rather
unconventional series of scenes and moods, the play failed to reach significant audiences in America.

6. **THE ARCHIBISHOP’S CEILING (1977)**

The next play, *The Archibishop’s Ceiling*, completed in 1977, was a drama derived from the playwright's travels through Prague as president of PEN. It, like *The American Clock*, was a highly intellectual piece that attempted to tell a story in unconventional, splintered units of dialogue and action, and its fate in the United States was the same.

7. **BROKEN GLASS (1994)**

Phillip Gellburg, a Jewish New Yorker, works loyally and successfully for a firm of property developers, is proud of his son Jerome who has joined the army, and lives in comfortable circumstances with his wife Sylvia. When Sylvia reads of Nazi oppression of the Jews she collapses, unable to walk. Their doctor Harry Hyman diagnoses 'hysterical paralysis', and Harry reminds Phillip that 'we get sick in twos and threes'. This leads to the gradual revelation of the state of Phillip and Sylvia's marriage. For 20 years, since shortly after the birth of Jerome, Phillip has been impotent. He is reluctant to discuss it, and even lies to Harry about having recently made love to Sylvia. Sylvia believes that his impotence stemmed from her desire to return to work after Jerome's birth, and Phillip's insistence that he would be the breadwinner for the family. Meanwhile, he confronts subtle anti-Semitism at work. His boss Mr Case refers to him as 'you people', and when a Jewish financier steals a march on a property that Case had hoped to buy, Phillip fears that Case suspects him of betraying secrets to a fellow Jew. With his job in trouble, and still unable to face the truth of his marriage, he has a heart attack. Sylvia comes to his bedside, and,
just as she reassures him there was nothing to blame. He has another fatal
attack, and she can suddenly stand.

With his usual acute insight, against the backdrop of Nazi persecution
of the Jews. Miller here analyses a marriage, and debates the nature of
identity. Sylvia is forced into her own kind of oppression by having
reluctantly to assume the identity of a loyal Jewish housewife. Phillip, like
Willy Loman before him, finds himself burdened with the identity of the
clever and industrious Jew, and both collapse under the strain. Phillip can no
longer bear to 'live so afraid', and is relieved to learn that there are Chinese
Jews, thus shattering racial stereotypes. The somewhat melodramatic ending
proceeds from genuine catharsis.

ARTHUR MILLER'S OTHER ONE ACT PLAYS:

Apart from his full length plays and those well-known one
actors, Miller has left us many lesser known one actors such as That They
May Win (1943), Fame (1970), The Reason Why (1970), The Poosidin's
Resignation (1977), Elegy for a Lady and Some Kind of Love Story
(both, 1982), I Don't Remember Anything (1986) and Clara (Danger:
Memory!) (1986).

ARTHUR MILLER'S RADIO PLAYS:

Miller has written several radio plays. He adapted his own plays for
radio too. Some of his radio plays are The Pussycat and the Expert Plumber
who was a Man (1941), William Ireland's Confession (1941), The Four
 Freedoms (1942), Grandpa and the Statue and That They May Win (both
1945), and The Story of Gus (1947).
**ARTHUR MILLER'S SCREEN PLAYS:**


**ARTHUR MILLER'S ADAPTATIONS:**

The case of Miller's adaptation of Henrick Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* is fairly well known. He adapted Ferenc Molar's *The Guardsman* in 1947.

**ARTHUR MILLER'S OPERA:**

Miller wrote an opera called "Uno Sguardo dal Ponte" (1961) and this is based on his play (earlier a novel) *The Man Who Had All The Luck*.

**ARTHUR MILLER'S ADAPTATIONS:**

Once Miller was depressed thinking that his dramatic career could not prosper. Hence, he began to write novels. He wrote his novel *The Man Who Had All The Luck* in 1940s. When this novel too could not be published he turned it into a play of the same name though its content changed. Later on, he adapted it into an opera as well. He wrote the novel *Focus* in 1945.
ARTHUR MILLER'S SHORT STORIES:

A good novelist can also be a good short story writer. So was Miller. He wrote short stories often and they were published in reputed books and magazines. His short stories as follows:

"The Paster Masks" published in Encore in 1946.
"Monte Saint Angelo" published in Harpers in 1951.
"I don't need you anymore" published in Noble Savage in 1960.
"I Don't Need you anymore" in 1967.
"Ham Sandwich" published in Boston University Quarterly in 1976.

ARTHUR MILLER'S ESSAYS:

Miller was a good drama critic. He has written many essays about his theory of drama. Some of these are "Subsidized Theatre" (New York Times, 1947), "It Takes a Thief" (Colliers, 1947), "Tragedy and the Common Man" and "The Nature of Tragedy (both in New York Times in 1949), and "Salesman in Beijing (1984).

ARTHUR MILLER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY:

Miller wrote his autobiography Timebends in 1987. The work was published by Grover Press.
Miller was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1958. He served as president of International P.E.N. (1965-1969) and thereafter remained active in causes supported by P.E.N., notably in trying to improve the lot of dissident writers in the Soviet Union. He received many awards over his career, including the National Institute of Arts and Letters Cold Medal for drama (1959), the John F. Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award (1984), the William Inge Festival Distinguished Achievement in American Theatre Award (1995), and the Jerusalem Prize (2003). Revivals of several of his plays garnered Tony Awards, including the 1999 Tony for best revival of a play for the 50th anniversary production of *Death of a Salesman*; in that year he was also given a Special Lifetime Achievement Tony Award. Miller died in Roxbury, Conn., on Feb. 10, 2005.
References:


37. Bruce Glassman, *Arthur Miller*, p. 44.


42. Bruce Glassman, Arthur Miller, p. 71.


45. Bruce Glassman, Arthur Miller, p. 81.


47. Arthur Miller, *Timebends*, qt by Bruce Glassman, p. 117.


49. Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*, p. 43.