CHAPTER II

THE EARLY PHASE

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the four full length plays of Eugene O'Neill, written in the early part of his dramatic career. They are Beyond the Horizon (1918), The Emperor Jones (1920), The Hairy Ape (1921), and All God's Chillun Got Wings (1923). The successful dramatization of these plays established O'Neill as one of the greatest playwrights of the time. In these plays, he brilliantly expresses man's tragic agony in a helpless world. The plays show how man suffers from a sense of loneliness and isolation which arises out of insecurity and social evils, and how his unending struggle for the search of belongingness leaves him in an isolated state.

Out of the four plays discussed here, the last three deal with the racial prejudices and the protagonists of these plays belong to the black race. The chief characters of these plays suffer from the loss of belongingness which ironically, they find in their deaths. In comparison to the female characters, the males, in these plays, suffer more deeply. The women are selfish, non-cooperative and are the cause behind the tragic suffering of men. So far as the dramatic technique is concerned, through the use of expressionistic symbolism, O'Neill analyses the tragedy of men's isolation and loneliness at different levels.

Beyond the Horizon, the first major play written by Eugene
O'Neill, established his reputation as a playwright by bringing the first Pulitzer Prize for him. As his first full-length play, it properly builds on all his significant earlier works. Arthur and Barbara Gelb remark, "O'Neill expressed for the first time on a large scale his 'hopeless hope' philosophy, painting with sweep and grandeur the tragic theme that was soon to distinguish him from all American playwrights who had come before. It deals with his sense of special relationship between man and his environment. The play depicts the tragic story of Robert Mayo, the true tragic protagonist who has lost his harmony with the environment. Owing to this loss of harmony he is unable to belong to his circumstances and suffers from a sense of isolation throughout his life. His loss of belongingness, the conflict between his dream and desire compel him to live between hope's eternal optimism and the inevitability of despair. Ultimately, he remains as an alienated person till the end of his life.

The play mainly deals with the tragic story of two brothers, Robert and Andrew, who are in love with the same girl, Ruth. Both the brothers are opposite to each other in nature, in their approach towards life. Robert is a young farm-born dreamer, whose romantic mind and frail body yearn for the open sea, the swarming ports of the mysterious East, the beckoning world beyond the line of hills which enclose his native town. On the other hand, Andrew has no interest in all sorts of romantic imagination. He is a 'real Mayo', a true son

of the soil, born to do nothing but work in field. The play begins with the incident that Robert is about to ship on a voyage with his uncle. His brother, who is happy with the farm, is looking forward to his marriage with Ruth Atkins, a childhood sweet-heart. When Robert tells Ruth he loves her, her response causes him to abandon his chance of escape and to marry Ruth, while Andrew replaces his brother on the sea voyage. Robert proves inept and temperamentally unsuited to farming and brings the farm to slow disintegration and ruin. He realises that his wife, who has become resentful and morose, has always loved his brother. Anyhow, they have managed to pass their time for the sake of their daughter and mother. But after the death of his own mother and the baby, Robert becomes more helpless, and faces a lot of economic trouble. Then, Andrew returns, successful and wealthy, and finds Robert surrounded by the ruins he has created and dying of tuberculosis. On his death-bed, Robert still dreams of freedom beyond the horizon and reconciliation between Ruth and Andrew.

The play opens with the description of a country-yard atmosphere which projects the inner life of the characters:

The road runs diagonally from the left, forward, to the right rear and can be seen in the distance winding toward horizon like a pale ribbon between the low, rolling hills with their freshly-ploughed fields clearly divided from each other.  

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2 Eugene O'Neill, Beyond the Horizon and Marco Millions (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), p.5. Hereafter, the quotes from Beyond the Horizon will refer to this edition and be indicated only by the page number in parenthesis in the body itself.
This suggests the separateness of Andrew and Robert. "A straggling line of piled rocks, too low to be called a wall, separates this field from the road" (p.5) again symbolises the attitude of the brothers towards life. The field stands for Andrew, the elder brother who believes in work, and the road is meant for the day-dreamer Robert who aspires what lies beyond. On account of their own nature they are separated from each other by a wall of piled rocks—the naked realities of life.

At first we find Robert is sitting on the fence, reading a book in the beauteous atmosphere of the fading sun. His appearance expresses his personality: "There is a touch of the poet about him expressed in his high forehead and wide, dark eyes. His features are delicate and refined leaning to weakness in the mouth and chin" (p.6). This individuality of his character keeps him apart from the rest of the characters in the play. It seemed that he is haunted by a sense of isolation which ensues from his romantic nature ever in search of beauty. O'Neill describes him: "...he turns his head toward to horizon, gazing over the fields and hills. His lips move as if he were reciting something to himself" (p.6). On the other hand, Andrew is returning from his work in the field, "an opposite type to Robert—husky, sunbronzed, handsome in a large-featured, manly fashion—a son of the soil, intelligent in a shrewd way but nothing of the intellectual about him" (p.6). This shows his devotion towards work in contrast to Robert's worship of beauty. Both the brothers are sharply distinguished by their thoughts. Being a farmer's son, whose duty is to work
in the field, Robert's expectation lies beyond the horizon. His high ambition is the cause of his loneliness which compels him to seek some peace in a lonely atmosphere, for which he is isolated from his family.

Their discussion reveals the fact that Robert is about to go on a sea voyage to the beautiful foreign world beyond the horizon with his uncle, captain Dick Scott. As he is not satisfied with the environment to which he belongs, he says to Andrew: "What I want to do now is keep on moving, so that I won't take root in any one place" (p.9). It clearly shows that he has lost his roots, his identity; and his motive behind the voyage is nothing but his search for identity. He thinks his search for identity may be fulfilled by his urge for beauty. He describes the cause behind his journey to Andrew:

Supposing I was to tell you that: it's just beauty that's calling me, the beauty of the far off and unknown, the mystery and spell of the East, which lures me in the books I've read, the need of the freedom of great wide spaces, the joy of wandering on and on--In quest of the secret which is hidden just over there, beyond the Horizon? Suppose I told you that was the one and only reason for my going? (p.18).

Robert's longing for beauty is marred by the confession of Ruth. On the eve of his departure he comes to know that he is being loved by Ruth, who he thought loved Andrew. For the sake of Ruth he changes his planning:

Ruth told me this evening that- she loved me. It was after I'd confessed I loved her. I told her I hadn't been conscious of my love until after the trip had been arranged, and I realized it would mean--leaving her. That was the truth. I didn't know until then... I hadn't intended telling her anything but--suddenly--
felt I must. I didn't think it would matter, because I was going away, and before I came back I was sure she'd have forgotten. And I thought she loved-someone else... And then she cried and said it was I she'd loved all the time, but I hadn't seen it (Simply). So we're going to be married-very soon-and I'm happy-and that's all there is to say (Appealingly). But you see, I couldn't go away now-even if I wanted to (p.46).

At first, Robert insists Ruth to accompany him in his voyage. But she refuses, citing the reason of her mother Mrs. Atkin's illness and her own outlook towards life. She says to Robert:

I wouldn't want to live in any of those outlandish places you were going to. I couldn't stand it there, I know I couldn't—not knowing anyone. It makes me afraid just to think of it. I've never been away from here, hardly and--I'm just a home body. I'm afraid. (p.30).

Her bent of mind is entirely practical, contrary to the poetical mind of Robert. In fact, she is trapped in the cage of illusion—she hopes she will lead a life of conciliation with Robert. But the nature of Robert is incompatible with her's. Robert is a man living in the world of imagination, i.e., poetry, and she, for this transitory charm, wooes him.

In order to satisfy Ruth and to marry her he chooses the wrong way and decides to stay at home instead of leaving. Now he begins to think that perhaps he may be able to find all his dreams and desires in the life with Ruth. Robert says:

I could find all the things I was seeking for, here, at home on the farm. The mystery and the wonder—our love should bring them home too, I think love must have been the secret—the secret that called me from over the world's rim—the secret beyond every horizon,
and when I did not come, it came to me...Oh, Ruth, you are right; Our love is sweeter than any distant dream (p.31).

Robert's changing of decision astonishes the members of his family, because farming is entirely different to his nature. His father does not like his idea but with all his confidence Robert tries to convince him: "I'm going to settle right down and take a real interest in the farm, and do my share. I'll prove to you, Pa, that I'm as good a Mayo as you are--or Andy, when I want to be" (p.49). Although his confidence is entirely based on his false idea, he again goes on saying:

I know what you're going to say, and that's another false idea you've got to get out of your heads. It's ridiculous for you to persist in looking on me as an invalid. I'm as well as anyone, and I'll prove it to you if you'll give me half a chance. Once I get the hang of it, I'll be able to do as hard a day's work as anyone. You wait and see (p.50).

Therefore, Robert remains behind to marry Ruth, feeling that love is perhaps what he hoped to find in his search.

By knowing the decision of Robert, Andrew suddenly decides to take the place of his brother which is another matter of surprise for everyone. He does so because he himself had loved Ruth and he was expecting to marry her. He is anguished. In order to release his anguish and not to become an obstacle between his beloved and his brother, he leaves for the sea voyage--the world of dreams where he can mitigate the pain of his heart. From this point he wants to be alienated, to be away from the rest of the world. His father James Mayo warns
him against the wrong decision.

Your place is right here on this farm—the place you was born to by nature—and you can't tell me no different. I've watched you grow up, and I know your ways, and they're my ways. You're runnin' against your own nature, and you're goin' to be a 'mighty sorry for it if you do (p.58).

Despite the warning of his father Andrew sails in the place of his brother in order to forget Ruth. He confesses the reason of his leaving to his brother: "But you can't expect me to stay around here and watch you two together, day after day—and me alone" (p.44). Andrew's decision of leaving the farm is nothing but a way of escapism. He does not want to witness the happy life of the couple, and suffer alone in the farm.

After his departure, Robert hopefully accepts his new position as a family man and farmer. Arthur and Barbara Gelb remark:

Robert makes the mistake of declaring his love for Ruth and staying with her on the farm, instead of following the sea as he had planned. Thus by winning he loses .... Andrew who having lost Ruth, takes Robert's place as a sailor. But it was pure art that enabled O'Neill to alter an unresolved personal situation into one in which the poet wins the girl while losing his soul and the adventurer grows materialistic in the face of poetic experience he cannot appreciate.

Both the brothers change their ways and are finally separated from each other.

Shortly after the marriage the reality crowds in upon romance. The false fabric which covered both Ruth and Robert begins to break and they are now to face the pangs of bitter

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Arthur and Barbara Gelb, O'Neill, p.335.
realities of life. The setting of the second act becomes quite
different from the first. The room is no longer set in order.
The details in interior setting evoke the image of decay:
"The room has changed.... The chairs appear shabby from lack
of paint; the table cover is spotted and askew; holes show in
the curtains; a child's doll, with one arm gone, lies under the
table; a hoe stands in a corner, a man's coat is flung on the
couch in the rear; the desk is cluttered up with odds and ends;
a number of books are piled carelessly on the side board"
(p.71). It symbolises the change from prosperity to
distintegration in the family and characters. The chaos of the
room symbolises the chaos in the lives of the characters
especially Robert and Ruth.

Robert is proved as a misfit to the environment. Still he
tries his best to manage the farm for the sake of his child and
wife. But there occurs a strange change in the character of
Ruth. She becomes peevish and is indifferent towards Robert.
One day she even tells him that she did not, infact, love him.
She loved Andrew, but the momentary charms of Robert made her
to say that she loved him.

What do you think--living with a man like you--having
to suffer all the time because you've never been man
enough to work and do things like other people. But
no; you never own up to that. You think you're so
much better than other folks, with your college
education, where you never learned a thing, and always
reading your stupid books instead of working. I s'pose
you think I ought to be proud to be your wife--a poor,
ignorant thing like me; (Fiercely) But I'm not. I hate
it; I hate the sight of you; Oh, if I'd only known; If
I had n't been such a fool to listen to your cheap,
silly, poetry talk that you learned out of books; If I
could have seen how you were in your true self—like you are now—I'd have killed myself before I'd have married you. I was sorry for it before we'd been together a month. I knew what you were really like—when it was too late (pp. 97-98).

Hearing this all the remaining hopes of Robert are shattered. From the very beginning Ruth is a practical woman whose only aspiration is to lead a happy life with Robert. It becomes difficult on her part to suppress her desires. She becomes more outspoken day by day. He also realises his mistake. He says: "...And now—I'm finding out what you're really like—what a—a creature I've been living with. (With a harsh laugh) God; It wasn't that I've kept on telling myself that I must be wrong—like of fool:—like a damned fool" (p. 98).

The relation between Ruth and Robert becomes more polluted day by day. The reality tortures both so terribly that they are from this moment completely alienated from each other. The remaining hopes of their union are lost. Neither Robert nor she finds any meaning in life except the love of their child, for whose sake they continue to live together. They have attained the point from where there is no return backwards. Both, in anguish, lay open their hearts to each other. Robert calls Ruth a 'slut' and Ruth cries 'Andy' Andy;' But Robert, because of his romantic nature, absorbs this shock; he reticently takes the decision about fulfilling Ruth's desire. He is able to do so because he may live a dejected life on account of his very nature of living in the world of dreams. In the meantime Andy arrives and the curtain falls ending the first scene of act two.
The setting of the scene two, like the other early settings, is also symbolic. The hot and cloudless day signifies the breaking of illusion and disturbance of mental peace. The bleached sun-scorched grass symbolizes the withering of the illusion of Robert by the sum of truth. We see, "Robert is discovered sitting on the boulder, his chin resting on his hands, staring out toward the horizon seaward. His face is pale and haggard, his expression one of utter despondency" (p.101).

The alteration between spacious and cramped sets illustrates the conflicting desires of the two brothers, Robert and Andrew. The details in the outdoor setting suggest movement and distance which expresses Robert's dream for the 'beyond'. We find, Mary, his daughter playing beside him and insisting him to play with her but he shows no keenness. He is indifferent to Mary because Mary is the symbol of his withered love with Ruth:

MARY : (pulling at his hand solicitously). Is Dadda sick?

ROBERT : (looking at her with a forced smile) No, dear, Why?

ROBERT : (gently). No, dear, not to-day. Dadda doesn't feel like playing to-day (p.101).

Robert, disgusted with life, sits in the farm when Andrew comes. Robert has again acquired his previous temperament. He again wants to absorb himself in the dream world where he can forget his mental and physical agony. Again he is close to his past. He cannot live alienated from his past. We observe that by marrying Ruth, who is forgetful about her past, all sorts of sufferings surround him, because he is severed from his very nature.
On the other hand, his brother Andrew is no more happy with his sea voyage. He travelled through a number of places, some of which as Argentina, where he has business opportunity, are of his interest. Although he has travelled a lot, he could not find any pleasure in the sea. He says to Robert:

Had to do something or I'd gone mad. The days were like years. Nothing to look at but sea and sky. No place to go. A regular prison. (He laughs) And as for the East you used to rave about—well, you ought to see is, and smell it; And the chinks and Japs and Hindus and the rest of them—you can have them; One walk down one of their filthy narrow streets with the tropic sun beating on it would sicken you for life with the "wonder and mystery" you used to dream of. I can say one thing for it through—it certainly has the stink market cornered (pp. 109-10).

Basically, Andrew is a farmer, a son of the soil and feels happy only over the land. It shows both the brothers are sharply opposite to each other by their nature— for which they are alienated form themselves. If Andrew had stayed at home and Robert had gone to sea, each would have held true to his essential nature and been able to live in harmony with the elements of his environment. Therefore, Robert belongs to sea and Andrew to the land. By changing their paths, both have lost their sense of belongingness to their surroundings. Robert, in the cup of the hills, cut off from the horizon, is imprisoned forcibly and held back from joining the elements to which he really belongs. His weakness and his romanticism are irrelevant; until he can unite himself with the sea, he can not be strong. On land, the unyielding furrows are sterile, and by the same way, Andrew does not find any interest in voyage but travels unmoved to charming shores, seeing only abused land.
Ruth is now diverted from Robert and is attracted to Andrew. She starts talking Andrew in the same way as she talked to Robert before their marriage. She is the root cause behind the tragedy of both the brothers. She has repeated the history set by beautiful women. O'Neill describes her:

She is a healthy, blonde, out-of-door girl of twenty, with a graceful, slender figure. Her face, though inclined to roundness, is undeniably pretty, its large eyes of a deep blue set off strikingly by the sunbronzed complexion. Her small, regular features are marked by a certain strength—an underlaying, stubborn fixity of purpose hidden in the frankly appealing charms of her fresh youthfulness (pp.20-21).

As men are very insecure creatures they certainly need a lot of love and they need beautiful women. But unfortunately beautiful women are seldom designed to provide love. Love is eternal, an essential, in every human being but Ruth’s conception of love is entirely based on her self-interest. The real intention behind her approach to Andrew is nothing but only security. Living a hopeless life with Robert she becomes helpless and insecure, at least economically. Therefore, in order to get security she insists Andrew to stay in the farm. She says:

... Oh, Andy, you can't go; Why we've all though—we've all been hoping and praying you was coming home to stay, to settle down on the farm and see to things. You must n't go...-- and how the farm'll be ruined if you leave it to Rob to look after. You can see that (pp.120-121).

But Andrew by now has no more interest in her as before. He, like others, is passing his life in solitude. He is also the victim of the same disease of isolation which has affected Ruth and Robert. He has borne the pain of separation to such an
extent that he no more longs for the union. He is dejected. "Everybody hereabouts seems to be on edge to-day. I begin to feel as if I'm not wanted around" (p.125). He, that is why, prepares himself again for the sea voyage.

The first scene of the third act begins with the description of the interior setting, the sitting-room of the farm house. It is somewhat similar to the first scene of the second act. This alteration between indoor and outdoor setting has a greater significance in the life of Robert. The indoor scenes, which are cooped in a small room, evoke his imprisonment. The outdoor settings are correlated with the actions of the character. The relationships among the characters are, more or less the same. But physically Ruth as well as Robert is deteriorated. O'Neill describes their physical conditions:

She/Ruth/has aged horribly. Her pale, deeply lined face has the stony lack of expression of one to whom nothing more can ever happen, whose capacity for emotion has been exhausted. When speaks, her voice is without timbre, low and monotonous......His/Robert's/hair is long and unkept, his face and body emaciated. There are bright patches of crimson over his cheekbones and his eyes are burning with fever (p.132).

Robert has been the victim of tuberculosis and his nature has become peevish. Though apparently he says that he is quite healthy but actually he is approaching, gradually towards the death. Both he and Ruth are isolated from each other to an extent which cannot be compensated by any other means. Robert desperately kisses Ruth. The intensity of the pain of separation reflected here--"...one kiss--the first in years, isn't it?" (p.141)--reveals that there hardly existed any relation between them during the past years.
Robert's condition worsens continuously; he slowly approaches towards his end. In the meantime, Andrew returns from his voyage with a doctor for Robert. The doctor also feels that the things have gone worst. Only the miracle can save Robert. Andrew, because of his optimistic nature, believes in miracle but Robert is devoid of any hope, any positive attitude towards life.

In Ruth, there is a great conflict between her inner and outer selves. She did not marry Andrew, instead she chose Robert, but now she realises that she had committed a mistake. That is why she again loves Andrew. Her conflicting attitudes separate her from others as well as from her own self. Though with someone, she is alone. She says: "I didn't want to be alone with him that way" (p.143), and she answers to Andrew about her relation with Robert:

ANDREW : And you've lived together for five years with this horrible secret between you?

RUTH : We've lived in the same house—not as a man and wife. (p.168)

Her answer clearly shows she is divided within herself. Neither she belongs to her husband nor she entirely belongs to herself for which she suffers from a sense of insecurity and loneliness.

Robert now is no more interested in his life. His disease is not terrible, still he does not try to save his life. Haunted by the sense of aloneness, he still wishes to witness the sight of horizon. He orders Andrew, "...Pull the bed around so it'll face the window, will you, Andy? I can't sleep, but I'll rest and forget if I can watch the rim of the hills and dream of
what is waiting beyond....And the shut door, Andy. I want to be alone" (p.164). He would better like to go beyond the horizon, i.e., beyond any illusion, any falsity, which is possible only after death. He thinks that his death will break the wall of isolation between Ruth and Andrew. He takes a promise from Andrew of marrying Ruth after his death.

In the last moment, Robert's attempt to re-establish a vision parallels the manner in which his early dream originated. He says:

...Don't you see I'm happy at last—because I'm making a start to the far-off places—free-free;—freed from the farm—free to wander on and on-etrernally; Even the hills are powerless to shut me in now...Look; Isn't it beautiful beyond the hills? I can hear the old voices calling to come-... And this time I'm going— I'm free; It isn't the end. It's a free beginning—the start of my Voyage; Don't you see? I've won to my trip—the right of release—beyond the horizon; Oh, you ought to be glad-glad for my sake;...Andy;.... Remember Ruth--(p.173).

He dies, but his sacrifice will not fulfil his hopes because the realities with which Ruth and Andrew have been acquainted will ever stand between them and they will never be able to establish any real contact, and here lies the tragedy of Robert's life. Doris V. Falk rightly remarks, "Robert's death is an escape, not a victory. It is a sorry compensation for a barren life, wasted in a futile search for identity". By losing their identity, their sense of belongingness

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all the three major characters have failed to establish the real communion among themselves and have remained alienated from one another, as well as from their environment.

The Emperor Jones is O'Neill's much talked-about play. In O'Neill's drama there is an eternal conflict with those powers which are beyond man's control. Man is represented in relation with God. As O'Neill opines, "Most modern plays are concerned with the relation between man and man, but that does not interest me at all. I am interested only in the relation between man and God." Man's lack of faith in some supreme power and his too much materialism and inner emptiness are the cause of his tragic fate. Always this has been the main subject for drama because

as far as we can judge, man is much the same creature, with the same primal emotions and ambitions and motives, the same powers and the same weaknesses, as in the time when the Aryan race started toward Europe from the slopes of the Himalayas. He has become better acquainted with those powers and those weaknesses, and he is learning ever so slowly not to control them.

Ultimately, it leads to isolate him from his environment as well as from his inner being. He reaches a position where he finds himself alone, insecure and becomes an isolated being. Sometimes his over ambitiousness, his false confidence and self-pride leave him in an isolated state. This happens in the case

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Brutus Jones—the protagonist of *The Emperor Jones*.

The play deals with rise and fall of Brutus Jones the negro and fugitive emperor, who reminds us of the Shakespearean tragic hero Macbeth. Julius Bab remarks:

This Negro is only an insolent tyrant in a Caribbean island; yet the collapse of his criminal egomania, the defeat of his extraordinary vitality by the imaginings of his own brain—these are represented so magnificently, so movingly, that the play seems to me to offer a complete parallel with Shakespeare's Macbeth.

Jones, an ex-pullman porter, through deception and corruption becomes emperor and possessor of great wealth on "an island in the West Indies as yet not self-determined by White Mariners." After achieving this emperor job, his life-style, his ways of thinking begin to change. He tries to ignore the reality, his own past. Jones is involved in clash with one of his friends while playing the games of dice, which results in his murdering of his friend. This sends him to prison. But in the prison he also kills the guards and again becomes a convict. In order to save himself he flees away and reaches an island. Because he is a tricky fellow, he impresses the innocent natives of that island and becomes the ruler of that region. Since by heart he is incompatible with negro people, he exercises the pressure over them. He imposes extra-taxes and other duties which are unendurable for the subjects. He earns a

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7 Julius Bab, "As Europe Sees America's Foremost Playwright," *O'Neill and His plays*, p.350.
lot of money and deposits it in a foreign bank as well as keeps it secretly under the white rocks in the Jungle. He does so because he is always in a sense of insecurity. His life is restless, he cannot share his feelings with the negro people, who belong to his own class.

In this way Jones is isolated from that class of people to which he himself belongs. Outwardly he is very ambitious and firm-determinate. But inwardly he is always haunted by a sense of unknown fear and loss of security. To save himself from the fury of his people he also beguiles them saying that he can only be killed by a silver bullet, spreading superstition among the people. His brutish activities make the people conscious of their own sufferings and make them rebel against him. Jones, in order to save himself, again decides to take flight and starts off philosophically the lonely march that takes him to Martinique, the world where, he thinks, wealth and freedom await him. He has hidden food in the forest and his revolver is loaded with five lead bullets meant for his enemies and a silver bullet for himself in case he is ever really cornered.

But in the forest he does not find his secretly kept belongings. Like a mad person he removes the white rocks in the forest but is unable to locate the place. He shows vain courage, hope and smartness. His body cannot keep balance with his mind. However, night falls, and to the incessant accompaniment of pounding drums he conforms to dark faces of his own mind and the history of his own race. In a terrifying
series of short episodes he is assailed by the phantoms of his victims and his past life, journeying back through auction block and slave ship to his primoral origins in the Congo. Out of fear, he has fired all the bullets of his pistol at the images which pass before his sight. At dawn the natives led by Lem start their search and find Jones laying very near the place where he had entered the forest. They fire a silver bullet into his body, believing it the only means to end his life as he had told them.

From the outset, Jones leads a different life. We find him an entirely isolated person. He has neither any family nor any kith and kin. He has no interest to run his life in a joint way. We come to know all these facts about his past life from his conversation with the cockney trader, Henery Smithers, his partner through whom he has earned a lot of money. His discussion with Smithers shows that he is aware of the consequences of his deeds; that is why he has deposited all his money in a foreign bank. He starts his life in a negative way, involves in gambling, killing and all sorts of anti-social activities. After killing the prison guards in the United States he comes to this island. By nature he is shrewd and suspicious and this keeps him away from his surroundings. About his appearance and nature, the playwright says:

He is tall, powerfully-built, full-blooded negro of middle age. His features are typically negroid, yet there is something decidedly distinctive about his face--an underlaying strength of will, a hardly self-reliant confidence in himself that inspires respect. His
eyes are alive with a keen, cunning intelligence. In manner he is shrewd, suspicious, evasive.\textsuperscript{8}

His manners and appearance make him a different being and for his own nature he is cut-off from the society. Neither in the States nor in West Indian island he has established any social links with anybody, which is a natural instinct in every social being. Identity is nothing but a farce for him. Being a convict he becomes a ruler at the cost of his identity. But the identity which he assumes in the island becomes false because he has again done the same mistake. It seems that treachery is part and parcel of his nature. He always faces the problem of identity. But whenever he gets a new identity by his tricky efforts, he misuses it. Being a negro he hates negroes like anything, he never tries to identify himself with his own class to which he really belongs. When he leaves for the forest he says to Smithers:

\begin{quote}
Does you think I'd slink out de back door like a common nigger? And de emperor Jones leaves de way he comes, and that black trash don't date stop him--not yit...\textsuperscript{(p. 16)}.
\end{quote}

He never considers himself a negro, rather he thinks that the black people of his race are inferior to him. It clearly shows that he has not a sense of fellow-feeling. Time and again he calls "nigger", "bloody niger" which indicates that he has no sense of brotherhood and belongingness. Always he is haunted by

\textsuperscript{8} O'Neill, Nine Plays, p. 5. Hereafter the quotes from The Emperor Jones will refer to this edition and be indicated only by the page number in parenthesis in the body itself.
a sense of isolation; he belongs neither to himself nor to his own classes of people. Even he has not a sense of respect for the white people. While Smithers warns him to the danger he has to face in wild forest, he calls him:

Look- a- heat white man; Does you think I'su a natural bo-n-fool? (p.13).

This shows his false confidence and egoism which keep him isolated from the mass. He hates both white and black people and this ultimately separates him from the society. Again, when Smithers reminds him about his early days in the island he expresses the same.

Talk polite, white man; Talk polite,
You heah me; I'm boss beah now, is you forgettin? (pp 6-7)

But, on the contrary, he has forgot his own past after attaining the emperohood.

His oversmartness places him in a lonely state; he is confident that he can make people fool in any circumstances at any time and says to Smithers:

Think dese ign'rent bush niggers dat ain't got brain enuff to know delr own names even can catch Brutush Jones? Hah, I s'pects note; Not no yo'life; Why man de white men went after me wid blood hounds where I come from an' I jes'laughs at 'em. It's a shame to fool dese black trash around heah, dey're so easy. You watch me, man. I'll make dem look sick, I will I'll be 'cross de plain to the edge of de forest by time dark come once in de woods in de night, they got a Swell chance o' findin' dis baby; (p.13).

Jones's false pride and vain courage always make a dividing line: between himself and his surroundings. None but he
himself is responsible for this gap which keeps him aloof from
the trend. Neither he considers anybody's suggestion nor he tries
to understand the capacity of others. When Smithers reminds him
about the obstacle he has to face in jungle and warns him of Lem and his rituals, Jones flatters:

I ain't no chicken—liver like you is. Trees an 'me,
we're friends, and dar's a full moon comin bring me
light. And let dem po' niggers make all de full spells
dey's se a min' to. Does yo's'pect I'se silly enuff to
b'lieve in ghosts an' ha'nts an'all dat ole woman's
talk? (p.15).

As soon as Jones enters the forest he loses his self
confidence; he is haunted by a sense of loneliness. But his proud
nature, his egoistical temperament does not allow him to accept
the fear whole-heartedly. He consoles himself to avoid the
obstacles which come in his way. The dark night in the forest
reveals his true personality, his dual nature. We find a
separating line between his mind and his body. He seems to be an
abnormal being, his body does not cooperate with his will. He
becomes tired but still shows his vain courage:

Feet, you is holdin' up yo' end fine an' I sutinly
hopes you ain't blisterin' none. It's time you get a
rest...You is still in de pink--on'y a little mite
faverish. Cool yo' selfs. Remember you done got a long
journey yit before' you... (p.18).

In spite of all his false consolation, a sense of fear is
already developed within him. He feels hungry and tired, does
not find the 'Box of grub' which he had secretly kept under
the white stone. His sense of fear does not allow him to light
the match—stick; he addresses to himself:

Niger, is you gone crazy mad? Is you lightin' matches to show dem whar you is? (p.19).

The natives, whom he considers as fools now begin to frighten him. He wants to hide himself from their sight.

In the next scene he faces same type of obstacle in his way; he is frightened by the appearance of Jeff whom he murdered before and becomes more nervous. Out of fear he also fires at him and again loses his second bullet. Still he has not lost all his hope to escape from the island. But at the same time his attitude shows that he is aware of the consequence:

Dey's gettin' near; Dey's comin' fast;
And heah I is shootin' to let 'em know jes' whar I is; Oh Gorry, I se got to run. (p.22).

With the beginning of the scene four his condition becomes pathetic; he, trapped by the wild forest, does not find any proper path to move. The royalty of emperorhood and its costume seem burden for him. Out of anger he says:

I'm meltin' wid heat; Runnin' an' runnin'
An' runnin'; Damn' dis heah coat; Like a startit jacket; (He tears off his coat and flings it away from him, revealing himself stripped to the waist) Dere; Dat's better; Now I kin breath ....Dere; I gits rid O'dem fippety Emperor Trappin's an' I travels lighter....(p.23).

By throwing the coat and costume he has thrown his emperor's job only to save himself but he is unable to make himself away from abnormality. He is not able to avoid the
sounds of tom-tom. To do away with the natives and the tom-tom he says:

I must 'a' put some distance between myself an'dem--nennin' like dat--and yit--dat damn drum sounds jes'de same--nearer, even. Well, I guess I a 'most holds my lead any how. Dey won't never catch up. If only my fool legs stands up. Oh, I'se sorry I evah want in far dis. Dat. Emperor job is sho' hard to shake....(p.23).

In his roaming in the forest his true personality is revealed through his mental agony. His dual nature keeps him away from himself and makes a wall within his mind. He has been isolated from himself. The sound of the tom-tom contributes a lot to reveal his true personality.

The tom-tom in The Emperor Jones can be compared to the repeated blast of the whistle in Bound East for Cardiff; some would call them stage devices to excite the nerves of the audience. In reality they are symbolical elements dramatized; they represent, in both cases, a brooding fate, a predestination...O'Neill is dealing with ancestral terrors latent in the sound, as with Jones, or with a strange, cruel Nature, as in all his sea dramas, man's destiny, here always depends on a terrible, unequal struggle between man and a created reality from which he is sharply distinguished.

Ultimately, he turns into a split person. There is a clear distinction between his thought and deed. The sin he has committed in his past life now appears to him and reveals his true personality. But in each instance he commits the same mistake; he fires at the prison guard and at the same time asks

\[9\] Camilo Pellizzi, "Irish-Catholic Anti-Puritan" in O'Neill and His Plays, p.354.
for his shovel:

What's my shovel? Gimme my shovel 'til I split his damn head. (p. 25)

This shows that his inner being never forgets his past and makes a distinct point between his present and past. He recollects his past, feels he is the same Negro prisoner and again fires at the image of the prison guard.

When a man tries to deny his past, his origin, he becomes away from his self. Belongingness becomes a problem for him. That is the tragedy from which Jones is suffering now. His inner being constantly reminds him of his past but his will power denies it and makes him busy in his present. Jones's false pride, his indifferent attitude to the people of his own race to which he belongs keeps him away from himself. He does not realise his true identity and ultimately becomes an alienated person from his own self. As Doris V. Falk explains:

Jones hopeless flight through the forest is not from the natives at all, but from himself—the fundamental self from which his blind pride and its self-image have so longer separated him, and which, inevitably, comes to its own. This is the primary symbolism movement through the forest in a circle, hypnotized by the rhythm of a drum beat and ending where he began. The progress of Jones is progress in self-understanding; it is the stripping off the masks of self, layer by layer, just as bit by bit his emperor's uniform is ripped from his back, until at the end he must confront his destiny--himself—in nakedness.¹⁰

The ghosts whom Jones meets in the forest are nothing but his past; each represents an aspect of himself or a hidden motive of his past action. It continually haunts him step by step. In the scene in which he confronts the slave auctioner his condition is more picturesque. He is naked and exhausted, and surrounded by a group of savages who belong to his own race. He is frightened by seeing the activity of slave auctioner:

"What you all doin', white Falks? What all dis? What you all lookin' at me fo'? What you doin. Wid me, any how... Is dis a auction? In you sellin' me like dey uster befo' de war?...And you sells me? And you buys me? (p. 28)"

It clearly shows that Jones begins to realise his own identity, his own self, yet he is to accept it wholeheartedly for which he fires at the auctioner.

Jones becomes desperate after he spends his fifth bullet. He has only the silver bullet with him which he keeps for himself. Jones realises that he has returned to the clearing where he entered the forest, he is back where his journey begun, as if the circular path symbolises the origin of Jones. We find him as a convict then as an emperor who denies his belongingness to his own race and struggles for a lost security. But finally he reaches in a condition where he finds himself alone. His inner consciousness begins to accept the reality. It becomes impossible in his part to prevent himself from dancing. He joins with the dance of Congo witch-doctor. By that time he forgets about his emperorhood, he is exhausted and full naked like his ancestors:

Jones has become completely hypnotized. His voice joins in the incantation, in the cries, he beats time with his
hands and away his body to and fro from the waist. The whole spirit and meaning of the dance has entered into him, has become his spirit. Finally the theme of the pantomine halts on a howl of despair, and is taken up against in a note of savage's hope.......

In the meantime appears the crocodile God summoned by the witch-doctor Lem. Jones is frightened by the sight of the crocodile. Suddenly out of fear he remembers his silver bullet, "De silver bullet; You don't got me yet; (p.32) Jones shoots at the crocodile with the silver bullet which he had kept for himself. Thus symbolically he kills his own self.

Jones has no faith in the rituals and the religious ceremonies of the natives. When Smithers warns him of Lem and the rituals of his subjects, he says:

Dat fool no-count nigger; Does you think I' se scared o'him? I stand him on his thick head more'n once befo' dis, and I does it again if he comes in my way--And dis time I leave him dead nigger fo' sho'; (p.13).

He has achieved a Whiteman's name and occupation and has assumed the responsibilities of law, judgment, punishment. Evolving from the primitive, he has become different to his own people and has imposed a new self on him. By doing so he has denied the primordial God. Jones pride, his acts of will, his conscious individuality as Emperor are the false masks of a white savage. At the end, the black must cast himself upon the God and return home. But firing the silver bullet he denies to be possessed by God.

Throughout his life he tries to maintain a life of his own,
cut off from society, indulged in gambling and killing. Vaguely he seeks a new identity but always finds him insecure. Though lastly he cries for God out of fear and insecurity yet he refuses the God from the beginning. In the first scene when Smithers warns him about the rituals of negro, Jones says:

Does't you know dey's got to do wid a man was members in good standin'o' de Baptist Church?... It don't git me nothin' to do missionary work for de Baptist Church. I'se after de coin, an' I lays my Jesus on de Shelf for de time bein... (p.15).

He himself is responsible for his destruction. His over-ambitiousness and his blind pride alienate him from his own self as well as from God and society. But O'Neill provides a heroic death to him. The rebellion shot Jones with the silver bullet, which according to him is the key to his death, an appropriate symbol of the destruction of self by its own pride and greed. In the end Smithers rightly remarks about his false royalty:

Silver bullets; Gawd blimay, but yet died in the 'eight O' style, any'ow; (p.35).

The stage technique of the play has added much more to the thematic study. It projects the inner life of the character in a more prominent way. The Emperor Jones opens in a spacious high ceilinged farm with bare, white-washed walls, situated on a high ground. It associates grandeur and coldness of heart. The sense of alienation is also evoked and is further enhanced by the selection of the audience-chamber with only the Emperor's throne in it. The white colour predominates because not only the walls are white washed, even the floor is of white tiles and portico
pillars are also white. The play enacts the search for real identity of the coloured excoriating Jones. Jones has reached this present state from his humble origin through the white man's trick of business. He is gradually unmasked and his real, black self emerges. The placing of a black man in a context, predominantly white, communicates Jones' sense of guilt and his longing for purity.

In the second scene Jones is now seen at the end of the plains where the great forest begins. Only when the eye becomes accustomed to the gloom can the outlines of separate trunks of the nearest tree be made out enormous pillars of deeper blackness. As his real, black self is exposed, the whiteness deceives. The white pillars become now the enormous pillars of deeper blackness. The forest is the symbol of his unconscious. The play moves through the forest density to open space. The scene shifts successively from the small triangular clearing to the wide dirt road, then to the large circular clearing and finally open space with a single tree. The change is from the closed to the more and more spacious. This suggests Jones's growing self-recognition.

Sense of belongingness either to a faith or to a feeling has been an inborn quality in man. For his happiness and tranquility he needs a sense of security, a sense of stability. When this age-old belief shatters, he becomes isolated from his being. He considers himself a different person, completely alien to his circumstances. Being isolated from his immediate environment he feels lonely,
alienated and unhappy and this leads him to seek an identity of his own. When he fails to achieve this lost harmony he suffers from a sense of isolation. This sense of isolation and loneliness is the major theme in the plays of Eugene O'Neill.

The _Hairy Ape_, a masterpiece of this coveted author, also depicts the same theme—isolation or loss of identity, and loneliness. Regarding the play, O'Neill explained:

The _Hairy Ape_ was propaganda in the sense that it was a symbol of man, who has lost his old harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and had not yet acquired in a spiritual way. Thus, not being able to find it on earth nor in heaven, he's in the middle, trying to make peace... Yank can't go forward, and so he tries to go back. This is what his shaking hands with the gorilla meant. But he can't go back to "belonging" either. The gorilla kills him. The subject here is same ancient one that always was and always will be the one subject for drama, and that is man and his struggle with his own fate. The struggle used to be with the gods, but is now with himself, his own past, his attempt "to belong".

In the present context, the title _The Hairy Ape_ symbolises the diagnostic character of a savage and ferocious animal in man with an unusual sense of animality. The most remarkable aspect of O'Neill's technique in this play is the blending of the constantly repeated image of the 'ape' with tragic reality. Besides being the central metaphor dominating the whole action of the play,

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11 _O'Neill and His Plays_, pp. 110-11.
The Hairy Ape conveys the image of man's primitiveness and puts forth a living human reality of the present, making us feel like the ape. The artistic fusion of the image and experience heightens the value of the play as a sustained allegory. The strange tyranny is that man is present in a continual repetition of his past. The 'ape' is ingrained in man. We cannot avoid the awaiting doom unless we control the 'ape thriving within us! It seems, these two small words 'hairy' and 'ape' become the root cause of the tragedy in the life of the protagonist, Yank. They signify the strength, the brutality in the character of Yank, a distinguished stoker on a transatlantic liner, who is proud of his physical strength and superiog feelings of belongingness. Yank, a true devotee of work, considers himself as the force behind the moving ship. Dedication to work keeps him aloof from romantic imagination. In reply to his colleague Paddy’s song—"Far away in Canada, /Far across the sea,/There’s a lass who fondly waits/Making a home for me—"12 Yank, whose only concern is work, says in a bitter voice:

Sht up, Yuh lousy Boob' where d' yuh get dat tripe? H0me? Home, Hell! I'll make a home for yuh! I'll knock yuh dead. Home!! T'hell with home! Where d'yuh get dat tripe? What d'yuh want wit home? (p.43).

12 Eugene O'Neill, Nine Plays (New York: Modern Library, 1941), p.43. Hereafter, the quotes from The Hairy Ape will refer to this edition and be indicated only by the page number in parenthesis in the body itself.
This shows his indifferent attitude towards home or family as supported by Long, his another colleague:

Listen'ere, Comrades! Yank' are is right.
"E says this 'ere stinkin' ship is our 'ome.
And 'E says as 'ome is 'ell. And 'E 's right! (p.42).

Ship is everything to them, and they belong to ship. They are so attached to ship, that they hardly think of anything except ship; their motto is "Drink, don't think!" (p.43). Being aloof from the social trend, they are proud of their working capacity, especially Yank, whose confidence in his physical strength and attachment to ship is superior to that of the rest. "He resembles Brutus Jones in the primitiveness of his nature, but whereas the primitiveness of Jones is spiritual that of Yank is entirely physical. Yank 'belongs' and the world's movement depends upon him; all who do not 'belong" have no interest for him."13 Comparing himself and his Comrades with the capital class, the ship owners, Yank rebels: "Dem bolds don't amount to nothin'. Dey're just baggage. Who makes dis old tub run? Ain't it us guys? Well den, we belong, don't we? We belong and dey don't. Dat's all" (p.44).

When old Paddy dreams the good old days. Yank violently opposes him, considering stockhole a hell:

Yuh don't belong no more, see.
Yuh don't get stuff.
Yuh're too old. (p.47).

But he is confident and has a great faith in his strength and ability. He considers himself the strength behind all power;

without whom nothing can run in the man-made mechanized world.

He considers himself the power behind the moving world:

I'm de end! I'm de start!... I'm steam and oil for de engines; I'm de ting in noise dat makes yuh hear it; I'm smoke and express trains and steamers and factory whistles; I'm de ting in hold dat makes money! And I'm what makes iron into steel! Steel, dat stands for de whole ting! And I'm steel--steel--steel!... We run de whole works. All de rich guys dat tink dey're somep'n dey ain't nothin'! Dey don't belong. But us guys, we're in de move, we're at de bottom, de whole ting is us! (p.48).

This sense of belongingness and pride in Yank is nothing but his attachment to work. He, at any cost, is ready to prove his belongingness and this concept of belongingness is entirely built upon his own imagination. Yank is satisfied with the present; and proud of his ability and strength. He asserts that it is his energy on which the ship and the passengers ultimately depend. In reply to Paddy's sentimentality he boldly affirms: "Tinkin' and dreamin', what'll that get yuh? What's tinkin' got to do wit it? We move, don't we? Speed, ain't it? Fog, dat's all you stand for. But we drive trou dat, don't we? We split dat up and smash trou--twenty-five knots a hour! Aw, you, make we sick; Yuh don't belong" (p.49).

Nothing troubles him; he never thinks of God or fate, of home or society. He has no place in his heart for the romantic past of Paddy, nor has any idea to consider the sense of beauty. His only pride is that he 'belongs'.

Yank's encounter with Mildred Douglas, a rich anaemic girl, whose father is the President of the Steel Trust, shakes the whole concept of his belongingness. She is the representative of
a world entirely different from that of Yank. She is pale, colourless, decadent and an artificial product of society. Her only aim is to see "how the other half lives"(p.59). She sees Yank is stoke-hole, when he is in full cry. O'Neill describes the reaction:

He sees MILDRED, like a white apparition in the full light from open furnace doors. He glares into her eyes, turned to stone. As far her, during his speech she has listened, paralysed with horror, terror, her whole personality crushed, beaten in, collapsed, by the terrific impact of this unknown, abysmal brutality, naked and shameless. As she looks at his gorilla face, as his eyes bore into hers, she utters a low choking cry and shrinks away from him, putting both hands up before her eyes to shut out the sight of his face, to protect her own. This startles YANK to a reaction. His mouth falls open, his eyes grow bewildered. (p.58).

She never dreamt of seeing such a sequence and a person like Yank. Before leaving the place she exclaims, "Oh, the filthy beast" (p.58). But her looks and attitude express much more than what she comments. Yank 'feels himself insulted in some unknown fashion in the very heart of his pride" (p.58).

The story here begins to change Yank's life. He becomes confirmed about the look of Mildred when Paddy conveys him: "Sure, 'twas as it she'd seen a great hairy ape escaped from the Zoo!" (p.62).

This is the greatest blow to Yank's belief as well as to his concept of belongingness. He begins to think that he, who was so proud of his strength, suffers humiliation in the hands of a woman, and the woman who, physically so weak and faint, should have, in turn, appreciated his masculinity. His bodily strength which claimed superiority although has been identified
with the bodily strength of an animal. Body, which was his only source of pride becomes a prison for him. After that crucial incident Yank no longer feels that he 'belongs'. Therefore, he tries to escape from the prison where he cannot be content to 'belong'.

The more he thinks about the incident, the more helpless he feels. Finally, he reaches a position where he is described as Rodin's 'Thinker'. It seems as if he is lost within himself, and he has lost something upon which his entire confidence is built on. Gradually, his firm belief is shaken and in order to clear his doubt he asks: "Say, is that what she called me--a hairy ape?" (p.63), and again confirms by remembering the incident: "Hairy ape, hub? Sure? Sure! Dat's de way she looked at me, aw right. Hairy Ape! So dat's me, huh! (p.63).

The only thing which made his life endurable was his feeling that he belonged and he was a necessary, vital and human part of social order. But now he starts realising that he is not counted as an individual for anything and sees the possibility of restoration of his old self-respect on taking revenge on Mildred. He exclaims:

Ain't she de same as me?
Hairy ape, huh?...
I'll show her I'm better'n her...
I belong and she don't see!
I move and she's dead!
Twenty-five knot's a hour,
dat's me (p.64).

Owing to a faint ray of hope and shattered confidence, Yank, at
times, desperately argues of his belongingness but when he becomes conscious of the reality, his hopes are of no avail and he roars; "She don't belong... "I'll fix her! Let her come down again and I'll fling her in de furnace! She'll move den! She won't shiver at nothin', den! Speed, dat'll be her! She'll belong den!" (p.64) and at the end of this scene Yank becomes quite violent:

She done me doit! She done me doit, didn't she? I'll git square with her! I'll get her some way! Git often me, Youse guys! Lemme up! I'll show her who's a ape! (p.65).

Yank is now motivated by his strong desire for revenge on Mildred by whose interference he has lost his sense of belonging. The immediate problem for him is: Where he stands? If he is not fit for the stoke-hole then where he fits? He has all along been identified with the ship and the stoke-hole, and when he loses his old identity, the immediate problem for him is to find out a fresh one, as it is the basic nature of each and every individual. His search for a new identity and his urge for belongingness lead him to Fifth Avenue for taking revenge on the upper aristocratic society which Mildred represents.

But the world to which Yank enters is an artificial materialistic world, a type beyond his knowledge, where people lead a mechanised life. Here Yank also tries desperately to impinge his identity on the so-called upper class society: "Yuh don't belong...I belong... get me!". (p.70) Asserting his primitive strength, which was the cause of his concept of
belonging, he says:

See de steel work? Steel, dats me! Youse guys live on it and tink yuh're somep'n But I'm in it, see! I'm de hostin' dengine dat makes it go up! I'm it--de inside and bottom of it! Sure! I'm steel and steam and smoke and de rest of it! (p.7).

What he wants is a recognition, where he stands. This is not only a problem for Yank, but the problem of the whole social system to which persons like Yank hardly belong. This crisis of identity in American society has closely been studied by Eugene O'Neill. Heinrich Straumann remarks: "Viewed in the larger context of nineteenth-and twentieth-century writing, this motif grows into one of the three distinct great themes of American literature, viz. the search for identity based on a fundamental feeling of uncertainty about what the individual essentially is and where he belongs..."14 His experience in Fifth Avenue makes him aware of his position because this world is far away from the people of his stature. He becomes more helpless than before and this helplessness in a crowded civilized world compels him to seek recognition through his second nature--i.e. violence. Finally, Yank finds himself in jail after assaulting a person of the so-called upper class.

Earlier, according to him, steel represented steamers, engines, buildings. But now he finds the real steel which symbolises cages, cells, locks, bolts and bars like the dream of every American, which is based on, "Liberty! Justice! Honour!

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Opportunity! Brotherhood!" (p.76). But these are far from the reality. How sweet to listen the voice in prison?

...the greatest nation the world has ever known, where all men are born free and equal with equal opportunities to all where the founding fathers have guaranteed to each one happiness, where Truth, Honour, Liberty, Justice and the brotherhood of Man are a religion absorbed with one's mother's milk taught at our father's knee, sealed, signed, and stamped upon the glorious constitution of these United States! (p.76)

Dreams and realities are poles apart. If these are the constitutional mottos of the greatest nation of the world, then where does Yank belong to? Thus, Yank, throughout the play, is linked with the evolutionary process—a thinking ape. Society, faced with the desire of the beast to become human, places him in cage after cage, condemning him without seeing him, mocking his power and life. So interpreted the narrative arouses emotions of protest against a world that victimizes any of its citizens this way. Yank's unconscious self accepts the fact, remembering the world of Mildred, that he is a "Hairy-ape' in a cage of steel. The word 'hairy-ape' continues to torture him and he considers prison as a zoo.

In the prison-cell, behind the steel bar, Yank starts realising the naked reality of life. He feels that his power and strength, with which he was identified throughout, is nothing but a false ego, merely a dream, an illusion. The force which he thought strength—steel—was in reality no strength at all. The idea that he was steel, he belonged to steel as steel belonged to the industrial world, is completely wrong. He becomes aware that the power which he considered his own does not belong to him;
instead, it belongs to Mildred's Father. "Sure-her oldman-
President of de Steel Trust - makes half de steel in de world-
steel- where I thought I belonged - drivin'trou- movin' in dat -
to make her - and cage me in for her to spit on! Christ'."
(p.77.)

In modern industrialized world there are several Yanks.
They have grown up with the faith that they 'belong' and they
think that they are the vital parts of a social order. In fact,
they are merely part of a machinery world, who can be replaced
according to the need of the machine.

Yank's urge for belongingness, his search for identity
carries him to the office of I.W.W., an organization which fights
for the workers. Unfortunately , here also he fails to find any
answer to his problem. Being suspected by the Secretary of
I.W.W. as a spy he is thrown from the office. His rejection by
the I.W.W. is a terrible shock to his belief. The comment of the
Secretary--"Oh hell, what's the use of talking? You're a
brainless ape" (p.83)-- makes him realise that the main source
of trouble is not in the society, nor in Mildred but in himself.
He pathetically says:

So boids don't tink I belong... Steel was me, and I
owned to world. Now I ain't steel, and de wold owns
me. Aw, holl! I can't see-- it's all dark, get me? It's
all wrong (p.83).

Now, he realises the truth, he becomes aware that the
entire system is wrong and there is no real solution to his
problem. He thinks as if he is in a state of complete darkness.
In fact O'Neill never suggests any solution for the problem of his
characters. He sees no hope for man in his suffering. Whatever hope he sees for man lies in individuals who may have the courage to possess their own souls. Most individuals, however, he sees hopelessly dehumanized, and his heroes who are searching for new values are so ingrown, tormented, and doomed that they are not likely to lure one into following their example.

Most of O'Neill's really pleasant characters are his conventional, unthinking bourgeois, for at least they are capable of affection of others. He accepts no answer to life, but death. That is what happens in the case of Yank. O'Neill describes the helpless condition of Yank in a more realistic way after he is thrown out from the I.W.W. building. Yank's helpless answer to policeman shows that he has lost all his way for the sake of his identity.

In reply to policeman's question he says:

Policeman: What you been don?

Yank: Enough to gimme life for! I was born see? Sure, dat's de charge (p. 84).

When a man loses his way and finds no solution to his problem, he considers his life curse, acquiesced to being born. Finally, he descends in that position where he thinks the greatest mistake is nothing but his existence. "In the Stokehold, Yank belongs. His Credo—that he is the force at the bottom that makes the entire mechanized society move—is right. He is such a force until the meeting with Mildred causes him to doubt himself and sends him out in a frenzied effort to destroy the God of power he has served at his furnace alter." 15

solution to his problem neither in his acceptance nor in his rejection.

It is the most difficult task for a man to live alone because he is gregarious by nature. But now Yank is rejected by the society, he does not belong to the human-world. Suffering from this sort of isolation, he tries his best to belong to somewhere, even to the animal-world. Search for identity becomes an obsession with him and it leads him to the zoo where he stands face to face with a gorilla in its cage and seeks its companionship:

Ain't we both members of de same club—de Hairy Apes? (p.85)

He considers even the position of Gorilla better than his. "You belong! Sure! Yuh're de on'y one in de would dat does, yuh lucky stiff!" (p.85).

Like other human beings he has neither the sweet past nor the memory of home life recollecting which he can satisfy himself or get some security. The life he had chosen places him in the point of no return. Pathetically he says to the ape:

Youse can sit and dope dream in de past, green woods, de jungle and de rest of it. Den yuh belong and dey don't. Den you kin laugh at 'em, see? Yuh're de champ of the world. But me—I ain't got no past to tink in, nor nothin' dat's comin, on'y what's now—and dat don't belong. (p.86).

But this is not the end of his search for identity. To join the class of ape he invites the ape, and is finally seized,
thrown by the brutish animal. Before meeting his tragic end he says:

He got me, aw right. I'm trou. Even him did n't tink I belonged...Christ, where do I get off at? Where do I fit in? (p.87)

With a doubtful note-- "And, perhaps, the Hairy Ape at last belong" (p.86)--the dramatist ends the play.

When we examine the last sentence in its depth the question suddenly arises: where did Yank belong to? Torn between two worlds--the animal and the spiritual--he does not know where he stands. Life to O'Neill consists largely in this very struggle of the self with itself--a concept suggested in The Hairy Ape: O'Neill says that the motion and the spirit that impels all thinking is nothing but the search for identity. In saying so he has extended the symbolism of Yank's struggle beyond psychology to philosophy, and in a sense, to anthropology. The search for identity is not only a personal problem, but becomes the collective universal problem of mankind. Regarding this vital problem of modern world, says Henrich Straumann: "There is a search for man's true identity, there is an earnest plea for the recovery of clearly established moral and religious values set against an awareness of evil and guilt, and there is a revolutionary will to create new form of expression...".

Yank cannot go forward to the spiritual nor can he go back to nature whence he came, and so he stands in between, taking

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all punishment. Finally, he remains as an isolated and lonely person. With a deep sense of responsibility he searches for an image of himself, but he cannot see beyond his conscious self, and the barrier can be overcome only by death.

All God's Chillun Got Wings, is the next important play in which man in relation to his social environment and his failure to adjust within the social sphere have been the dramatist's major themes. In his plays, he tries to maintain the individuality of his characters who are the victims of social forces and who ultimately fail to achieve the desired individuality. In their struggle to establish themselves, his characters become isolated beings. What they desire cannot be granted to them and what they get cannot be desired by them. Sometimes, his characters are in a state of illusion, they are not able to bridge the gap between reality and dream; they try to proceed in their own way but finally fail in their attempts. As a result, they suffer from a sense of isolation and loneliness. Then, obviously arises the problem of identity, the problem of belongingness. The play All God's Chillun Got Wings deals with the same problem. According to Travis Bogard the play deals with the tragic story of a married couple who are deeply committed to each other yet are divided by a profound sense of isolation and loneliness which is the basis cause of their tragedy.¹⁷

The play deals with the tragic marriage between Jim Harris, the intelligent, sensitive negro boy and Ella Downey, his white wife. Both are unable to adjust themselves to their circumstances. Growing up in the slum area of New York, in the innocence of childhood, they pledge their love. Jim adores Ella who spurns him when she begins to feel the force of race prejudice. She lives with Mickey, a white vagabond and becomes the mother of an illegitimate child. Mickey deserts her and the child dies. In despair, Ella accepts the proposal of marriage of her true worshipper Jim and they live in France. After two years they return to New York with a hope that Jim would appear in the Bar examination. But his effort to study law is defeated by his sense of racial pride. Ella is inferior in mind and feeling to her husband and, in conflict with his mother and sister, is unable to conceal her dislike of his race. She is driven gradually insane by the rejection of both the races. She belongs neither to her own race nor to the race of her husband. By marrying a white girl, Jim also faces the same problem. In the end vaguely both try in vain to return to their childhood so that they may free themselves from the clutches of racial bondage and finally, remain alone.

The play opens in a street, the lower part of the New York City where Jim and Ella are two innocent children, playing with each other, knowing no difference but of the colour. For him she is 'painty-face' and for her he is 'Whitest among White'. From the very beginning Jim has a fascination towards the white race and the cause underlying may be Ella, who belongs to that race.
Jim considers himself inferior to the white boys of the street because they call him "Jim Crow". In order to change his colour he has tried a lot; he tells Ella:

You know what, Ella? Since I been tuckin' yo' books to school and back, I been drinkin' lots O' chalk 'n' water tree times a day. Dat Tom, de barber, he tol' me dat make white, If I drink enough....

His fascination towards the white compels him to hate the black; he does not like to be called negro, though he belongs to that race. When Ella consoles him "I'd like to be black" and their friends call her crow, Jim suddenly protests:

They wouldn't never dast call you nigger, you bet'. I'd kill 'em'...

From the very beginning he reveals an unconscious hatred of the Negro in himself. The cause behind his indifference may be Ella, her lonely companion from white race, who consoles him "I wish I was black like you" (p.94) and also agrees "I'm your girl" (p.94)

This is the greatest achievement for a negro boy that someone who loves him belongs to a superior race than his. This superior complexity grows in his mind and for the sake of Ella he unconsciously separates himself from his own race.

With the passing of time everything changes accordingly,

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18 Eugene O'Neill, Nine Plays (New York: Modern Library, 1941), p.94. Hereafter, the quotes from All Gods Chillun Got Wings will refer to this edition and be indicated only by the page number in parenthesis in the body itself.
except his feelings Ella whom he promised not to forget. But with maturity comes the awareness of disharmony between the races. Ella, who once was so much involved with Jim now begins to hate him for his race. Still Jim keeps her memory in the softest corner of his heart. He can tolerate everything against himself but not a single word about his sweet heart. When Mickey hints his relation with Ella, Jim violently opposes:

What-I wanted to say! I know-I've heard—all the stories—what you've been doing around the ward—with other girls—it's none of my business, with them—but she—Ella—it's different—she's not that kind (p.98).

But on the contrary Ella does not like to talk with Jim:

JIM : Then why haven't you ever hardly spoken to me—for years?
ELLA : (resentfully) What would I speak about? You and me've got nothing in common any more.
JIM : (desperately) May be not any more—but—right on this corner—do you remember once—?
ELLA : I don't remember nothing! (Angrily) say! What's got into you to be butting into my business all of a sudden like this? Because you finally managed to graduate, has it gone to your head?
JIM : No, I—only want to help you, Ella.
ELLA : Of all the neve! You're certainly forgetting your place! Who's asking you for help, I'd like to know? Shut up and stop bothering me!
JIM : (Insistently) If you ever need a friend—a true friend—(p.100).

Inspite of her Indifferent attitude he offers his friendship, which has been rejected by her:

I've got lots of friends among my own—kind I can tell you (Exasperatedly) You make me sick! Go to he devil! (p.100)
She clearly makes a dividing line between her and Jim and refuses friendship with him. But still, he has the same faith, same devotion towards her. He is teased by whites for his black skin. This keeps him away from the society of whites and his fascination for white race also keeps him separate from the blacks. Joe rightly remarks:

...What's all dis fakin' an' pretendin' and swellin' out grand an' talkin' soft and perlite? What's all dis denyin you 's nigger- an' wid de white boys listen 'to you say it! Is you aimin' to buy white wid yo' ol' man's dough like Mickey say?... Tell me befo' I wrecks yo' face in! Is you a nigger or isn't you?... (p.101)

Jim's desire 'to buy white' places him in a state where he is not accepted by the white people nor is he adjusted to his own community. To become a lawyer and to get Ella as his own companion keeps him isolated from both the races. His inner consciousness does not forget his own origin and his desire never allows him to accept the truth.

Being deceived by the white ruffian Mickey, Ella remembers her old worshipper. The same 'nigger' is the only hope for her. Her conversation with Shorty shows to what an extent she changes herself in order to get security:

ELLA - he's been my only friend.
SHORTY - A nigger
ELLA - The only white man in the world. Kind and white. You're all black-to the heart. (p.105).

By saying so, she keeps her aloof from her own race and is haunted by the same feeling, the loss of belongingness.
In spite of his racial consciousness Jim desperately tries to fulfill his dream through hard work, but he never forgets his own origin, his complexity that he is inferior to the white boys. Helplessly he describes his condition at the time of examination:

I can't explain—just—that it hurts like fire. It brands me in my pride. I swear I know more'n any member of my class. I ought to, I study harder. I work like the devil. It's all in my head—all fine and correct to a T. Then when I'm called on—I stand up—all the white faces looking at me—and I can feel their eyes—I hear my own voice sounding funny, trembling—and all of a sudden it's all gone in my head—there's is nothing remembered—and I hear myself stuttering—and give up—sit down—they don't laugh, hardly ever. They're kind. They're good people (In a frenzy). They're considerate, damn them! But I feel branded! (pp.107-7).

Even if he knows everything, he is unable to answer in class room. He considers himself a poor naked boy in comparison to his white classmates. He goes on saying:

And it's the same thing in the written exams. For weeks before I study all night. I can't sleep awast. I learn it all, I see it, I understand it. Then they give me the paper in the exam room. I look it over, I know each answer—perfectly. I take up my pen. On all sides are white men starting to write. They're so sure—even the ones that I know nothing. But I know it all—but I can't remember any more—it fades—it goes—it's gone. There's a blank in my head—stupidity—I sit like a fool fighting to remember a little bit here, a little bit there—not enough to pass—not enough for anything—when I know it all! (p.107).

Although Jim has prepared well but fails to write a bit at the time of examination. The real problem of his failure is nothing but the racial consciousness that is deep rooted within his mind. He is free outwardly but psychologically he is in bondage. His only problem is how to belong. He fails to answer
because he considers himself a misfit to his circumstances and ultimately becomes an isolated person in the midst of white students. Doris V. Falk has rightly remarked:

He has deliberately renounced his hated self in order to attain an impossible self-image. Marrying Ella and becoming a lawyer are for Jim part of the unconscious longing to achieve what he thinks it means to be "white". His drives are what Morney calls "tyrannic shoulds", and his fear that he can never fulfill these demands makes him crawl in constant apology to himself and society.

This unconscious desire to be a 'white' has constantly been supported by Ella since his childhood days. In fact, it is nothing but a fantasy, merely an illusion. Still he satisfies his pride by her consolation: "You have been white to me" (p. 107). Being cheated and cut-off from Mickey, Ella becomes insecure and needs someone's help who can give her security and identity. She helplessly expresses:

I'm alone. I've got to be helped. I've got to help some one--or it's the end-one end or another (108).

But who else can give a security to an ex-prostitute except Jim who has been waiting for her since his childhood and whose only ambition is to please her. He eagerly says:

Oh, I'll help--I know I can help--I'll give my life to help you--that's I've been living for--(108).

His vain effort to identify himself with the white race becomes a passion for him. He is ready to go up to any extent.

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for her love. Truly, his love for Ella is not merely a relation between a man and woman; it is a devotion that keeps him away from his own being, makes him forget about this origin. He has conceded to leave everyone even his own land, for her sake, for her satisfaction. Her helplessness and his ambition are united in their marriage. But none of them are free from the racial bondage. They still have the same guilt complexity within themselves. It seems that the races meet, converge, but do not really mingle.

But all these blue hopes for a new life fade away. Being alienated from their own land and people they are never mentally satisfied. Constantly they suffer from a sense of isolation, they try to separate themselves from the general trend. At first Ella shows this type of abnormality. Jim tells to his sister Hattie: "Ella didn't want to see anybody" (p.116). As a loyal husband and a true worshipper on the altar of his love Jim considers it as a sign of happy life. He thinks his wife may not like the interference of anybody in their lives. But, contrary to his expectation things go wrong. Ella slowly enters into the deep layer of racial bondage. She tries to keep herself aloof from everybody. Jim remembers the change:

But she never did get to wanting to go out any place again. She got to saying she felt she'd be sure to run into someone she knew--from over here. So I moved us out to the country where no tourist ever comes--but it didn't make any different to her. She got to avoiding the French folks the same as if they were Americans and I couldn't get it out of her mind. (p.116).

In order to get a security she marries him but never comes
out of the racial complexity. She hides herself, suffers from a sense of isolation which affects her mental as well as her physical condition. In discussing the play O'Neill once explained, "The real tragedy is that the women could not see their 'togetherness'--the oneness of Mankind. She was hammed in by inhabitions. Ella of the play loved her husband, but could not love him as a woman would a man, though she wanted to, because of her background and her inherited racial prejudice." Consequently, Jim is also affected by the same sort of feeling. It gradually develops in their mind. They slowly separate themselves from the crowded street of life. Jim describes to Hattie:

We never quarreled a single bit. We never said a harsh word. We were as close to each other as could be. We were all there was in the world to each other. We were along together. (p.116).

Jim realises that this sort of lonely feeling originates from their escapism and from their guilt complexity. To Jim such isolation becomes unbearable. He has to attain his goal to fulfil his aim to become a lawyer and so they return to America. Jim confesses:

Yes. We decided the reason we felt sort of ashamed we'd acted like cowards. We'd run away rom the thing-and taken it with us. We decided to come back and face it and live it down in ourselves, and prove to ourselves we were strong in our love--and then, and that way only, by being brave we'd free ourselves, and gain confidence, and be really free inside and able then

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to go anywhere and live in peace and equality with our selves and the world without any guilt uncomfortable feeling coming up to rile us (pp.116-17).

Their homecoming in a hope of finding peace is nothing but an illusion. Everything goes contrary to their expectations. Gradually, the awareness of race comes to them. Francis Fergusson rightly remarks:

And then the real drama begins: the struggle in Jim between his love for Ella and his ambition to succeed in the world; the struggle in Ella between her love for Jim and her hatred of him as the cause of her exile from her own people. The point of conflict in Jim's career; for his self respect he needs to become a lawyer, while Ella, who has never really accepted him as her husband, needs to preserve her spiritual ascendancy by preventing him from passing his examinations. Tied together by their love and by their solitude, they alternately take refuge in each other's arms and fight for mastery or vengeance.

At first she considers her marriage as a personal redemption. But again it proves an illusion. Yet, each of them has felt the peace to be illusory, based on an evasion both of the social and personal issues between them, much as their childish efforts to change their colours has failed to admit the reality of their circumstances. As their awareness of living in a false world grows Ella beings to withdraw, isolating herself and Jim, by a wall of fear bred to shame.

To save themselves from the hostile eyes of outer world they choose Jim's parental house as a secure place where they

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21 Francis Fergusson, "Melodramatist" in O'Neill and His Plays, et. Cargil et al. p.275
may lead a happy life. But to their hard luck, there waits a black world consisting of black people and black atmosphere. O'Neill gives a detailed description of the flat where they have to stay:

... A flat of the better sort in the Negro district... on the wall, in a heavy gold frame, is a coloured photograph--the portrait of an elderly Negro... In the left corner, where a window lights it effectively, is a Negro primitive mask from the Congo--a grotesque face, inspiring obscure, dim connotation in one's mind, but beautifully done. Conceived in a true religious spirit. In this room, however, the mask acquires an arbitrary accentuation...(p.112)

Especially, the Congo mask, a wedding presentation from Jim's sister Hattie, plays a vital role to arouse racial consciousness in the mind of Ella. It seems Hattie tries to make them aware about their origins. The sense of shame of being black, shame born bitterly of his love for Ella, brings him into conflict with the play's principal racial symbol, the Congo mask. Ella's first sight of it causes her to recoil as she recognizes in it all the elements of black colour that terrify her. Although Ella tries to ignore the hidden truth behind the mask but it is clear that she considers the mask to be the source of her shame as it symbolises the black heritage of her husband. She gives a mock-reply to Hattie:

I'm not scared of it if you're not (Looking at it with disgust) beautiful? Well, some people certainly have queer notions! It looks ugly to me and stupid- like a kid's game-making faces! (She slaps it contemptuously) Pooh! you need n't look hard at me. I'll give you the laugh. (p.119).

The entire surrounding in which she has to live compels
her to consider herself a lonely white prisoner in the world of negroes. The furniture, the portrait of Jim's father and the racial pride of Hattie constantly shock her. She says:

'It's his old Man—all dolled up like a circus horse! Well they can't help it. It's in the blood, I suppose. They're ignorant, that's all there is to it (she moves to the mask-forcing a knocking tone) Hello, Sport! who d' you think you're scaring? Not me! I'll give you the laugh. He won't pass, you wait and see. Not in a thousand years!(she goes to the window and looks down at the street and mutters) All black! Every one of Them!... (p.120)

She is so much divided by the racial bondage that it is almost impossible on her part to keep herself away from the superior feelings of 'white'. Therefore, she suffers from a lack of belongingness. She belongs neither to her own race nor she is able to fit herself in Jim's world. Her vain attempt to deny the power of mask makes a barrier between Jim's ambition and her pride. Ella fears the mask which represents the blackness in Jim, to which she cannot belong. Being defeated by life and cheated by Mickey, Ella accepts Jim but she is not able to cross the racial barrier. The marriage to her is, in spite of her gratitude to Jim, a symbol of her final degradation. Gradually her hatred for her husband grows and with it her guilt. At all costs she must establish her superiority over him. She does so by destroying his self-confidence so that he is incapable of passing the Bar-examination he has been studying for. She fears that after passing the Bar Examination, Jim will be above her position, above her own race and this is unbearable for her pride. She becomes more and more abnormal day by day, reaches
in a position where she calls Jim a 'dirty nigger'.

Undoubtedly, she loves Jim, but she wants to keep herself away from his race, where they can enjoy a life of their own. Unfortunately, her hope is shattered by his ambition. She cannot stop identifying Jim with the Congo mask and suffers from the conflict which reaches the climax in Scene III of Part II, where Ella talks to the Congo mask: "...What're you grinning about, you dirty nigger, you? How dare you grin at me? I guess you forget what you are" (p.129).

Finally, Jim fails in his Bar Examination and that is all she wants. She is not happy: "Oh, I'm glad, Jim! I'm so happy! You're still my old Jim—and I'm so glad" (p.131). In a frenzy she stabs the mask and says, "it's all right, Jim! It's dead. The devil's dead. See! It couldn't live—unless you passed. If you'd passed it would have lived in you. Then I'd have had to kill you, Jim don't you see?—or it would have killed me. But now I've killed it" (p.131). By stabbing the mask she finally denies her belongingness to the race of her husband.

Thereafter, her triumphant escape into madness forces Jim to give up his goal and to live with her in the diminishing cell. Ella, now realises that she has ruined him and Jim has no other alternative but to accept her affirmatively as his destiny. Both of them try to go backward as they are not able to adjust themselves with the forward movements. In the end of the play,
Jim cries:

Forgive me, God—and make me worthy: How I see your Light again! Now I your voice!... Forgive me, God, for blaspheming you! Let this fire of burning suffering purify me of selfishness and make me worthy of the child you send me for the women you take away (p.183).

Ella consoles her: "Don't cry Jim! You mustn't cry! I've got only a little time left and I want to play. Don't be old uncle Jim now. Be my little boy, Jim. Pretend you're painty face and I'm Jim Crow. Come and play" (p.133). In his final words Jim agrees: "I'll play right up to the gate of Heaven with you" (p.133).

Far away lies Jim's vision from this world. It is seated in his personal relationships with Ella, with whom, beyond his desire and struggle, aspiring to be the Child of God, he can conquer fate and achieve happiness.

In his search for human values, O'Neill faces unsurpassable barriers that divide man against man. Through his dramatic skill he analyses the tragedy of man's state of isolation and feeling of loneliness in various ways. Here he dramatizes man's quest for understanding, love and affection, and belongingness in the midst of disruptive forces at work against human solidarity. On the surface the play seems to deal with the problem of miscegenation. But actually it is a tragedy of man's isolation and loneliness. Both Jim and Ella fail to 'belong' to anyone and anywhere. They cannot even belong to each other. Though the title conveys the message of man's professed faith that "All God's Chillun Got Wings", there are several barriers that separate God's one child from another. Jim might have got 'wings', he has the new hope with him but his hope, entirely based on illusion, remains an illusion.