

John Osborne: Look back in anger

Historical background

In 1944 education act is passed (Nov zakon o izobraževanju), with this, education became child-centred, the child's needs are important.

They changed the laws to have a better society- spiritual, mental physical well-being (samo zadovoljen, izobražen posameznik bo pripomogel k družbi)

Working class people can afford education (grants-posojila- for working class students)

1945- The labour cabinet comes to power

They offer their citizens a welfare state; they provide social, medical benefits for all social classes. The government nationalises the railway, airlines, the bank of England, motor transport. The people weren't happy, they expected utopia.

1947/48- dissolution of the colonial empire (India, Sudan), gain independence (samostojni)

1951 the conservative government is back to power, people become *dissoluble* ???

Queen Elisabeth II. Comes to the throne, a false euphoria, people are euphoric- the Elizabethan age

1956- in Egypt: Nasser nationalizes the Suez canal, the British are not happy. They invade the canal with the French and the Israeli, but they retreat the same year from the gulf(zaliv)

The soviets suppress Hungarian uprising. There are 2 world powers: USSR (Sovjetska zveza) and USA.

There's fear of a nuclear war, so the people start a CND movement (Campaign for nuclear disarmament). John Osborne is active in this campaign; People from all walks of life (vseh socialnih stanov).

Alison's father is lost in this new world, because working class people have more rights.

A mixed marriage- poroka med stanovi je bila sramota, – they **come from different social classes** and they argue a lot.

Alison Porter:

vzgojena, govori tuje jezike, ne izrazi stališča (po ovinkih), se podredi

About 25, upper-middle class, se ima v oblasti, doesn't say much, not used to expressing emotions

Appearance: attractive, deep dark eyes,

- Character: resort, generally polite, self-controlled, well-mannered, doesn't express her feelings, defensive, helpful, reserved, introverted, passive, patient.

She completely humiliates herself as she was piece of garbage

She's wearing Jimmy's shirt, which means that she loves him, she doesn't care what she looks like, an expensive skirt, that means that a part of her is connected to the roots.

The combination: she wants to be Jimmy's wife.

Trenje med njima izvira iz razlik zaradi socialnega stanu, različno sta vzgojena.

Alison ve, da ga še bolj razjezi, če je tiho.

She isn't expected to state her opinion clearly. He provokes her all the time. The lap between them is larger also because of different ways of communication. J. doesn't say: well, naturally. She tends to get along with other people wishes.

A bone of contention- jabolko spora

She's neat, tidy, cleans all the time.

Her language is carefully controlled; she doesn't want to hurt other people's feelings. She never communicates directly.

The painful experience of the miscarriage makes her understand what suffering means and gives her time to think about her relationship with Jimmy.

She has married Jimmy despite the fact that her parents were strongly against it. She accepted the role of a working-class housewife. She rarely replies Jimmy's constant insults and provocations. When she can't handle it anymore, she leaves.

Jimmy Porter:

is 25 years old, thin, skinny, honest, highly educated, full of malice, cruel, vulgar (v besedišču), silovit v svojem nastopu, offensive (žaljiv), brutal, rich vocabulary, ironic, affectionate (when he's alone with A., but these moments are rare), non-commit.....

Straight to the point, never diplomatic, verbally abuses Alison – cruelty.

Se ne bo uklonil

Working class: direct, grobo besedišče

He has many different sides.

Sb you would like to avoid

His vocabulary is rich, he's well educated, and he doesn't want a job.

Attitude to women: he puts them down, sexist, chauvinist.

Misogynist – hates women

Jimmyjeva jeza izvira iz otroštva. Kaznuje vse ženske, ker je bila njegova mati tiha, mirna. (Ko začne, ne more nehat.) she doesn't show emotions, she never cared.

He had traumas (se znaša nad drugimi, kaznuje druge za svoje otroštvo – nedopustno)

Impression of him: he's sad, angry, malicious, self-centered, he's a victim. He doesn't do anything to change his life, to make it better. Then he could be successful.

His vocabulary: like hell- puts the person down

He gives vent to his anger, he swears to make himself feel better.

In the 1950 this wasn't tolerable. Intolerable, therefore this play caused mixed opinions.

Working class people are used to brawling, but don't resent each other. They don't use if-clauses, modal verbs.

Jimmy had had a tough childhood and feels a constant need to complain. Alison also tells that in the Act II.: "Don't try and take his suffering away from him – he'd be lost without it." He is a very unhappy person – he has problems in relationships with women (though he does have sex-appeal), and with friends and family as well. He wants everybody to do what he says; his women (both Alison and Helena) and Cliff. He is really hard to get along with. Jimmy hates Alison's family and her family hates him

Jimmy is a young man of the working class who is at war with himself and society. He is highly intelligent non-achiever who sells sweets on a stall in a local market. He feels that no one wants what he has got to offer.

There is a boiling resentment inside of him. However, all his bitterness, hysteria and cruelty seem to be just **cry for recognition**. He makes the lives of those he *cherishes* impossible.

Jimmy ridicules many aspects of British society, such as the upper class behaviour, the church, the bishops and the American age.

Jimmy's anger is linked to his own past, 12 months when he was watching his father dying. He was only a small, frightened boy at the age of 10 who spent hours in the tiny bedroom

beside of his dying father. The death of his father had a very strong impact on him. He felt the bitterness and learnt about helplessness, loss and betrayal.

Jimmy torments Allison because he can not forgive that she comes from upper-middle class and he from lower-middle class. He is verbally attacking his wife and he is trying to get her down on her knees, but she is unable to express her emotions. By attacking her, Jimmy destroys what he actually treasures and Allison leaves him. He immediately starts a life with Helena. His life with Helena brings up the same pattern.

Cliff Lewis:

Cliff is a good friend of both of them; always caught between them, “on the no man’s land”.
working class, dobrodušen, topel človek.

Je zaljubljen v Alison, a ve, da ona ne čuti enakega do njega.

25 years old, shorter than Jimmy, chubby, sb you can trust, naturally intelligent (not educated but self-taught)

His way of speaking: polite, his honesty isn’t brutal, straight forward, diplomatic, ironic – intelligent. He’s a kind person, helpful, trustworthy, reliable, wants other people to feel good. He doesn’t leave because he loves both of them and hates to see them suffer.

Cliff has good, relaxed, easy going relations with everybody. He is always nice and keeps doing favours to everyone. He calms down the fights between the other three. Without him their relationships would probably collapse.

Cliff is simple and kind person. He is Allison’s real friend who is trying to protect her from Jimmy’s anger. Through his kindness he supports Allison in the worst moments. He describes himself as “No man’s – land” between Jimmy and Allison.

Cliff works with Jimmy on the sweet stall. He is “an uneducated peasant” according to Jimmy’s description. He is helpless against Jimmy’s rhetorical fury.

Helena Charles:

She is Alison’s friend from upper-class, who is at first Jimmy’s greatest enemy but becomes his mistress. She does not let him hurt her, as he did Alison..

She is an actress who comes to stay with the Porters while she performs in a play at the local theatre. Jimmy has long despised her, as he considers her a member of the Establishment.

When she contacts Alison's father and asks him to take Alison home, Helena seems genuinely concerned about Alison. However, she seduces Jimmy and replaces Alison in the household.

When Alison returns, Helena realizes that her affair with Jimmy is wrong and decides to leave. She has a strong character and high self-esteem and she leaves Jimmy when she finds out that this kind of life leads her.

Odločila se je, da gre, ker se tega ne gre več, ni prav, da živi s poročenim moškim.

Their flat:

Small, 2 armchairs, chest of drawers with a pile of books (they read a lot), newspapers, magazines (they know what is going on in the world)

Outline of events:

Reading quality papers: interested in every day events, political situation.

Alison is doing the ironing (making a noise); she has to bring them everything.

Radio: Jimmy likes traditional British music, finds values in it.

Alison disturbs Jimmy so he switches the radio off. He is self-centred- everything is about him. He opens the window and shouts at the church bells.

Jimmy starts to verbally abuse Alison. Cliff intervenes, he starts to dance (a foolish dance), and he feels that the tension is mounting (se stopnjuje).

Cliff pretends to be a mouse. Jimmy pushes him to the ironing board- intentionally. Cliff wants to prevent a disaster- he's a peace-maker. J. is his dear friend, but he likes A. She is comfortable around him, but not in love.

Alison gets burned, Jimmy is supposed to stay, but he leaves, because she asks him to. He acts like a spoilt child, feels guilty. He is offended because she shouts at him She is disappointed, frustrated, tells Cliff she's pregnant (because she's afraid – J. made fun of her when she told him she was a virgin.) J. goes to buy cigarettes. Cliff stays, because it's his nature. Then he apologizes, starts to play a game.(?)

Cliff says there's a phone – Helena. **Jimmy flies off the handle.** He goes through her bag, looking for some evidence- letters about him, but there's nothing about him, he resents her. He feels threatened by two women, is scared.

Every Sunday, they have the same ritual; the men read newspapers, Jimmy constantly insults Cliff and Alison, Alison is busy ironing. They talk about all sorts of things, and though Jimmy keeps attacking Alison, she says nothing until Jimmy knocks over the ironing board and she gets burned. Jimmy leaves the room and while Cliff is taking care of Alison's leg, she tells him she is pregnant and that Jimmy knows nothing about it yet.

When Jimmy returns, she wants to tell him about the baby, but then Alison's old friend, Helena, rings because she wants to stay with them for a while. Jimmy doesn't like that because he hates her.

After two weeks Helena still lives there. Things are getting worse and worse. Alison tells her all about her relationship with the two men and Helena wires Alison's father to come and take her home. While Jimmy is on a funeral of an old friend of his, Alison leaves him and Helena takes her place. After several months Cliff leaves. Alison comes back and catches Helena and Jimmy kissing on the kitchen table. Jimmy leaves the room and the women start talking. Helena decides living with Jimmy is a mistake and leaves him and so does Alison. Jimmy ends up all alone.

Endure- zdržati

Wait on someone hand and foot

Life like this takes its toll, you have to live, it sucks you dry.

PG 32

Primere, metafore:

Bojna ladja

Butcher-sofisticiran mesar.

Arabec, ki brska po jetrih

Kirurginja

Medevil seach - srednjeveški napad

PG 28

Flegmatic

Brez hrbtenice

She is similar to his mother.

Act 2

Nigel is a politician, member of the parliament, as a brother he is loyal; he is one of Jimmys enemies.

Helena is manipulative, bossy, expects people to obey her. Through her we learn sth about J. and A. marriage.

Their first months of marriage:

They lived with Hugh Tanner and his mother in their flat. She helped them with their sweats. H. and A. didn't get along. She felt like a hostage because they went to parties from Alisons friend. J. and H. insulted them, ate a lot. A. is upset but doesn't do anything. H. wanted to go abroad and wanted J. to go with him. He didn't go because of A. and resented that

She wished both of them to go and leave her behind. A. said that Hughs mother may be guilty for all, believes she's ignorant. A. was not hostile towards Mrs. Tanner.

A. explains Helena about **Blarands**. They started the game when Hugh went abroad, when they played that game, they relaxed.

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When they came back from India, everything in London was different: working class people had gain some rights (education), upper-class didn't enjoy.

A. mother: stubborn, ready for any kind of change. J. didn't wear fancy clothes, different from others, physically attractive.

J. doesn't want Alison to go to church with Helena. He's possessive, doesn't want A. to be influenced by her, he can't control her as much as he used to. He says: you're with or against me. A. mother: a rhino giving birth.

Substantial (snoven, materialen)

They got married in a church, J. doesn't expect parents to come, and they changed the church so that they wouldn't. Now he wants to break Alison, so he could be the winner.

Jimmys father was a soldier in the Spanish civil war, he was fighting for a good change in the world.

When a child is watching his parent die, it's traumatic. He didn't have a mother to rely on, she took care for the father physically, but he could feel the tension.

Pg.91: he was making a wish: I want to stand up in your tears.

Brawling-preklinjanje, kreganje

Incompatible- nezdržljiv

Pg. 100

Alison sits on the fence, she doesn't express her point of view, and it's simpler and comfortable if you don't say what you think. He says that they are guiltier because they allowed it.

She's shocked of what her father had said. Deep down inside of her she's not ready to go.

102- She is surprised of how she reacts. Marriage is nowadays all about competition.

(Colonel)

103- Talks about love, about himself, about life in India

104- I think the last day, the sun shone. He misses the life in India.

105 She finds similarity between Jimmy and her father

110- Cliff: I hope he raws it up your nostrils.

Helena gives him the letter, the reaction is unexpected.

Remorse- obžalovanje, awe- strahospoštovanje.

Act 3

Is similar to Act 1. Helena has taken Alisons place.
It's another Sunday