Death of a Salesman Cheat Sheet Cheat Sheet

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Definition of Capitalism

an economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state.

Symbol - Seeds

Quote	Explanation
"The grass don't grow there anymore, you can't raise a carrot in the backyard... Remember those two beautiful elm trees out there? When I and Biff hung the swing from them?"	The grass symbolizes Willy's hopes and dreams, dead and barren like the grass. The elm trees symbolize Biff and Willy's past strong bond.
"On the way home tonight, I'd like to buy some seeds... Not enough sun gets back there. Nothing'll grow anymore."	Willy's desire to buy seeds and grow them symbolizes his pursuit to redeem himself as a salesman and a father.
Meaning	The seeds symbolize Willy and his attempt to prove his worth as a salesman and a father.

Symbol - Stockings

Quote	Explanation
"I won't have you mending stockings in this house! Now throw them out!"	Willy is reminded of his lies and affair. He wants Linda to throw away her stockings, to get rid of this reminder.
"She's nothing to me, Biff. I was lonely. I was terribly lonely... You-you gave her Mama's stockings!"	Biff wanted to follow Willy's instructions to be liked. Willy blames himself for how Biff's life turned out. He is reminded of how he failed as a father.
Meaning	The stocking represents Willy's guilt of having an affair and inability to provide for his family.

Quotes from the Commentary

Page	Quote
xxxix	"Dream is likely to become nightmare for individuals caught in between the dualities of an encroaching materialism and the rampant consumerism it implies."
xxxix	"Happiness is equated with material success; anything less than being rich signifies failure."

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Not published yet.
Last updated 1st August, 2019.

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