

Sweet bird of Youth (revision powerpoint)

I don't ask for your pity, but just for your
understanding – not even that – no.
Just for some recognition of me in
you, and the enemy, time, in us all.

-Tennessee Williams



Presentation Summary

- List of characters
- Significant quotes
- Devices
 - ❖ metaphors
 - ❖ stage directions
 - ❖ symbols
 - ❖ Metaphors
 - ❖ Repetition
 - ❖ Hyperbole
 - ❖ Punctuation
 - ❖ Personification
- Themes
 - ❖ Thematic links
 - Important highlights
 - ❖ White supremacy
 - ❖ Modern life
 - ❖ Dreams and illusions
 - ❖ Religion
 - ❖ Loneliness



List of characters

+quotes

Chance wayn:

“I don't ask for your pity, but just for your understanding-not even that-no. Just for your recognition of me in you and the enemy time in us all”

Heavenly:

“Papa you married for love, why would'nt you let me do it, while I was alive, and the boy still clean, still decent.”-

”Papa, there was a time you could have saved me, by letting me marry a boy that was still young and clean, but instead you drove him”



Boss finley :

“A lot of people approve of taking violent action against corrupters. And all of them that want to adulterate the pure white blood of The south. Hell, when I was fifteen, I came down barefooted out of the red clay hills as if the Voice Of God called me. Which it did, I believe. I firmly believe He called me. And nothing, nobody, nowhere is gonna stop me, never...”

”And what is this mission? I have told you before but I will tell you again. To shield from pollution a blood that I think is not only sacred to me, but sacred to Him. ”

Princess Kosmonopolis :

“Well, sooner or later at some point in your life, the thing that you lived for is lost or abandoned and then ... you die; or find something else. This is my something else ...
(she approaches the bed)”

”Please shut up, I’m *forgetting!* [...] I can, I will. I’m forgetting ... I’m forgetting ...”




Nonnie

“Chance you didn't place second. You got honorable mention. Fourth place, except it was called honorable mention.”

Ms. Lucy

“Y'know this boy Chance Wayne used to be so attractive i couldn't stand it. But now i can almost stand it”



Tom Finley:
Boss Finley's son who devoted his life to the "Youth for Tom Finley. Significant lieutenant to his Father

Fly + Hatcher :
employees at the hotel

Scudder:
Chief of the staff at St clouds hospital. He knows very well the finley family

Other mentionable characters


The heckler : a hillbilly who is not from ST.Cloud. Known for asking daring questions a Boss Rallies.

Edna, Budy, Scotty and Violet: Old friends of Chance Wayne. Now however, almost none approve of his return.



Significant Quotes

1. « Just for your recognition of me in you, and the enemy, time, in us all.
»
2. "But I knew in my heart that the legend of Alexandra Del Lago couldn't be separated from an appearance of youth...[...] I wasn't young, not young, young. I just wasn't young anymore ..."
3. " Baby, you've changed in some way, but I can't put my finger on it. You all see a change in him, or has he just gotten older?"(Miss Lucy) " To change is to live, Miss Lucy, to live is to change, and not to change is to die. I'm not scared of it now. Are you scared of it, Miss Lucy? Does it scare you ?"(Chance)




4 “ Baby you’ve changed in some way, but I can’t put my finger on it. You all see a change in him, or has he just gotten older” (Miss Lucy)

5 “ What Is the name of this picture ?...-...Name of it?Youth!...-Just youth?”(Scudder)

6 “ Beauty ! say it! Say it! What you had was beauty! I had it!”(Princess)

7 “I’m being used.Why not? Even a dead race horse is used to make glue”(Princess)



8 “ He’s in the dimmed out background as if he’s never left the obscurity he was born in.” (Princess)


9 “ I guess there’s a clock in every room people live in...It goes tick-tick, it’s quieter than your heartbeat , but it’s slow dynamite, a gradual explosion, blasting the world, we lived in into pieces..Time- who could beat it, who could defeat it ever ? Maybe some saints and heroes, but not Chance Wayn. I lived on something, that-time ?” (Chance + Princess)


10 “ The embalmers must have done a good job on me, Papa” (Heavenly)



Devices

- - Stage directions : Allows the play write to send a message to the public through the characters or the set up. The stage directions also allow the playwright to dramatize a scene
 - “The sound of a clock ticking is heard, louder and louder”
 - “The Lament slowly fades in”
 - “The clock ticking fades away”
- Metaphors
 - -Youth: “Forget the legend that I was and the ruin of that legend” (goes with beauty, money/fame as well) -Metaphor that transforms Princess Kosmonopolis into a city moldering city. This reflects the the effects of time. Eventually just like any city we grow old and abandoned.

- 
- **-Time: “She's not young now, she's faded, she's ...”
(Aunt Nonnie speaking of Heavenly to Chance)
-Metaphor that transforms Heavenly into a dead flower. Just like the latter she was once beautifully when left untouched to grow, but as she got picked her beauty was corrupt and started to fade away (just like her innocence)**
 - **-Money/Fame: “Now, tonight, I’m addressing the Youth for Tom Filey clubs in the ballroom of the Royal Palms Hotel.”
(Boss Finley) Boss thinks he will be welcomed like a king/god, as Jesus when he came back from the desert and Jerusalem welcomed him with palms thrown at his feet.
“Royal Palms” is thus a metaphor for his “castle/kingdom”.**

- 
- -Innocence: “But he's going to hold her as the fair white virgin exposed to black lust in the South, and that's his build-up, his lead into his Voice of God speech.” (Heckler to Miss Lucy) Metaphor White Supremacy. Boss plans to portray Heavenly as an innocent in order to intensify his religious ideology.
 - Time: “ Come on chance, we're going to change trains at this station...So come on, we've got to go on...Chance, please”(Princess). The train is used here to symbolises moving forward. By wanting to change trains, Princess wants to change her way of thinking and thus her way of living.



- Repetitions:

“Princess, the age of some people can only be calculated by the level of – level of – rot in them. And by that measure I’m ancient.” + shocking imagery (rot in them)

“ I can I will. I’m forgetting....i’m forgetting” (Princess) Symbolises her denial towards her youth having left her~> In order to regain her already lost career.

- -Personnification:

α”Nothing goes that quick, not even youth” (Chance)

“It goes tick-tick, it’s quieter than your heartbeat,But it’s (time) slow dynamite, a gradual explosion, blasting the world we lived into tiny pieces”(Chance)



- - Similes:

- α “I’m dead as old Egypt” (Princess)

- α “ Dry, cold, empty, like an old woman. Feels as if I ought to rattle like a dead dried-up vine when the Gulf wind blows” (Heavenly)

- - Onomatopoeia:

- α “tick-tick” emphasises the impression of time passing by.

- - Accumulation:

- α “it’s slow dynamite, a gradual explosion blasting the world we live in to burnt out pieces” (+metaphor of time)



- Punctuation

- “BEAUTY! Say it ! Say it ! What you had was beauty! I had it!” : The exclamation point intensifies Princess’s feelings. She feels sorrow, sad and in a way mad that just like Chance she lost in her opinion, one of her best assets.

- Symboles

- Easter Sunday : The play is set during Easter Sunday, which is very comprehensive as all the characters are looking for a personal resurrection. Princess is looking to regain her Faime, while Chance wants to bring back his old relationship with Heavenly and Boss is looking to resurrect his old political status



➤ Mirrors

Numerous references to mirrors can be found in the play. The mirror is in the latter seen as a revelator. Ms. Lucy's real opinion of Boss Finley is revealed to the antagonist through his old lover's message on the bathroom's mirror. In addition at the beginning of the play the characters mention a fourth wall, which symbolises how the characters struggle with their reflections and the passing time. ("Chancerises, pauses a moment at a mirror in the fourth wall to run a comb through his slightly thinning blond hair before he crosses to open the door).

➤ Sea birds

The call of Seabirds are heard numerous times in the play: we hear their calls in the window of the hotel room in which Princess and Chance are staying. These birds symbolise youth and the passing of time, as just like them they eventually fly away ("Shadows of bird Sweep the Blinds").



➤ Theatre

Theatre plays a significant role in the play as the playwright uses it to symbolize how the latter is constantly used to shape the lives of the characters. One of Chance's traumatic relates to performance and theatre as the character is haunted by lost at a state drama competition. He thus decides to rely on an old actress to regain his fame. In addition Chance later mentions that in order to be a good gigolo he must put on a good performance to satisfy his clients.

➤ Names

The characters names give out numerous information about each of them. Chance Wayne, for instance is given to the character whose Chances of succeeding are waning. Princess Kosmopolis, reflects how the character is constantly moving (Kosmopolis meaning city). It also reveals that the character sees herself as a sophisticated artist. Heavenly's name represents what she's suppose to reflect: innocence. Miss Lucy's name on the other hand emphasis how young she is, as well as her unmarried status.



- The lament

The lament is a song associated to Jesus's death. In the play it represents the melancholic situation of the play as well as the tragedies Chances and Princess would like to resurrect.

- Clocks

Clocks in the play represent time and it's passing , The object is especially referenced to at the end of the play when time and it's mistakes catch up to Chance.



Themes

- Religion/Resurrection:

The play takes place during Easter Sunday, thus the theme is very recurrent. Every Character tries to in their own resurrect an important factor of their life that's fading away. Princess tries to regain her faim, while Chance tries win back his old relationship with Heavenly. Religion is also a theme used by Boss Finley to gain political faim. The latter states to his public that he was sent by God to complete a mission on earth like Jesus.

- "It's Easter Sunday" - Chance Wayne wants to live forever his youth // Jesus died on Easter Sunday to live forever at his father's side

- "Because the Voice of God called me to execute this mission." (Boss Finley)



- Youth/ Aging / Time :

Youth/aging/time play an important role in the play as every character tries, to no vain, to fight time in order to regain their youth. Chance, per instance refuses to accept the fact that his beauty has passed and is ready to do everything he possibly could to win back this beauty. Princess on the other hand.


□ “Chance, you've got past something you couldn't afford to go past; your time, your youth, you've passed it. It's all you had and you've had it.”

α-”Yes, time..

... Gnaws away, like a rat gnaws off his own foot caught in a trap, and then , with its foot gnawed off and the rat set free, couldn't run, couldn't, bled and died...”

“BEAUTY! Say it! Say it! what you had was Beauty! I had it! Say it”

“i just wasn't young, not young, young. i just wasn't young anymore.”



Purity :

Heavenly is the character that most likely represents the theme the most as her whole being is based on her innocence.. However as she got involved with Chance and loses this purity, her whole identity seems to be taken away according to her father

“But he's going to hold her as the fair white virgin”

“My little sister Heavenly didn't know about the diseases and operations of whores, till she had to cleaned and cured ”



- Escapism:

In order to compensate the whole that their youth once filled, most of the characters rely on escaping mechanism such as Sex, alcohol or even drugs.

“Wild dreams! Yes. Isn't life a wild dream? I never heard a better description of it ... (*He takes a pill and swallow from flask*) Chance drinks alcohol and takes drugs to continue living his dream (opposition with reality)

“Yes, I took a wild dream and - washed it down with another wild dream, Aunt Nonnie, that's my life now ...” = Chance Wayne is stuck between dreams and reality, a fact that the playwright emphasizes with the use of punctuation (ellipsis). This helps the reader to understand that Chance is in suspension between two worlds.

“Well sooner or later, at some point in your life, the thing that you lived for is lost or abandoned, and then ... you die; or find something else .this is my something else” Unlike the other characters, who mostly take drugs, Princess



Racism:

This theme is notably seen throughout Boss Finley's political ideology as the politician is completely against black men.

“It's me, Tom Finley. So I recognize both races.” (Boss Finley)


“ i can't and will not accept, tolerate, condone this threat of a blood pollution”(Boss Finley)



Links

- **The handmaid's Tale**

- 1) Hypocrisy: This is seen through the use of alcohol in the handmaid's tale, as despite the rules that the leaders impose on Gilead (forbidding alcohol for example) most men still manage to break those laws by drinking alcohol (notably the commander). The law breakers also use old forbidden objects to gain what they want from women (e.g = The commander who gives Offred an old magazine to spend time with her). The same hypocrisy can be seen in SBOY, as most characters are ready to use others in order to get what they want (e.g Chance who uses Princess to become famous and win back Heavenly).
- 2) Illusions: Offred creates her own illusion of love and life in order to keep sane living in Gilead. Chance and Princess do the same by constantly making themselves believe they could beat time. In both books , the characters are thus driven by wild dreams and illusions.



3) emprisonnement = Is a them highly seen in H.T as the women are imprisoned by men and are expected to do certain things in order to stay alive . On the Other hand, characters of SBOY are imprisoned by their wild dreams, which will eventually cause their doome at the end.


4) Forbidden love = Seen in H.T through the forbidden relationships between Nick and Offred and the latter and the commander. The same kind of relationship is seen in SBOY between Chance and Heavenly.

5) devices = Nostalgic tones = seen in HT through the switch between past and present tense. The same device is seen through Princess's monologues at the beginning when she switches between past and present to recall her faded fame.



- **The Picture of Dorian Gray**

- 1) **Mirrors:** In both books, the mirror is a symbol of reflection for the protagonists. On one hand, Dorian's realises that his youth is fading away through his mirror, which in the book is his portrait. The latter is also the object that portrays the protagonists mistakes throughout the end of the story. Just like Dorian, Chance and Princess both realise that their youth is fading away through their mirrors, which despite everything they do, are constantly there to remind them that time catches by eventually
- 2) **Escapism:** Is a theme in both books as in both cases, characters reduce themselves to sex , love, alcohol and drugs to escape reality. In the picture of Dorian Gray, the protagonist notably escapes by hiding his mistakes (portrait), just like Chance who refuses to admit to reality.



3) Corruption: Chance is accused of corrupting and taking away Heavenly innocence, while Lord Henry is accused of corrupting Dorian.

4) Youth: Is a large theme in both books, as they both have characters who refuse to let go of the past and the good that comes with it.

5) Manipulation: Seen through both works as they both have characters who are manipulated badly. On one hand, Dorian's innocent self is influenced by Lord Henry (in a bad way) and Basil (in a good way). On the other hand, Heavenly is badly influenced by Chance, who takes away her innocence.

6) literary device: Symbolic items : Mirror: reflects youth and the passing of time in both cases.


7) Women manipulated by men : In SBOY, Heavenly is manipulated by Chance and is under the control of her father and brother. Sybil, in PODG is so manipulated by Dorian that she loses her ability to act.

8) Protective figures: Heavenly: Boss + Tom Junior. Sybil : Her older brother and mother.



- Intimate Apparel

- 1) Hypocrisy: Just like a large number of characters in sweet bird of youth that use others to regain their youth or fame (an example is Chance who uses Princess to live a happy life with his ancient lover, George also uses Esther's money to get what he wants (especially alcohol), even though the protagonist had big plans for her lifelong savings
- 2) Dreams : Dreams play a big part here, as Esther's long (almost unimaginable at the time) childhood dream was to open a hair salon for black women. This can be linked to almost all the characters of SBOY who all have dreams of their own. Chance for instance wants to win back Heavenly, while Princess want to regain her fame.



3) Society's expectations on women: In SBOY society expects Heavenly to remain innocent, while Princess is supposed to remain young in order to remain famous. These same expectations can be found in intimate apparel as Esther is expected to be married at her age and Ms Van Buren is expected to have given birth to at least one child at this point in her marriage



Love in the time of Cholera

- 1) Illusions: In LITTOC, Florentino creates an illusion by making himself believe that he was still a virgin who waited for his childhood lover Fermina. This can be linked to Chance who also creates an illusion, by making himself believe that he was still young and beautiful enough to gain back the pleasures of his youth, especially heavenly. In both cases we thus have men driven by love and illusions (Other link= youth).

Stranger in the village

- 1) The past ; The protagonist in stranger in the village recalls the past of racism and white supremacy, while the same thing happens in SBOY as the characters basically live in the past in their heads.
- 2) White supremacy: is seen through the similar acts of racism in both books.




Robert Frost poems

- 1) Nostalgic tones : Seen in SBOY through Princess's monologue on her past. This is also seen in most of Frost's poems such as Birches and to earthward where the poet recounts old memories from his youth.
- 2) Symbolic objects : In SBOY, the bird is seen as a symbolic pattern as it signifies the passing of time and youth. Robert Frost also uses the bird to symbolize society's expectation on a man in the woodpile.

The tempest

- 1) Power= both works have characters who are longing for power and its advantages. In SBOY, Chance is longing to regain his youth and all the power that came with it while Princess is trying to do the same for her passed fame. In the Tempest , Antonio, Sebastian and Caliban are ready to overthrow Prospero in order to gain power on the island.
- 2) Imprisonment : While the characters of The Tempest are imprisoned on an island, Chance and Princess are imprisoned by their illusions, which stops them from clearly moving on.
- 3) Women under the control of men : Just like Miranda who has to follow her father rules and later her husband, Heavenly also has to remain under her father's control and respect most of his sayings.



4) Importance of Performances: In both books, can be seen diction of performance and theatre which show the importance of the latter in life in both cases.

5) Use of stage direction : in *The tempest* the use of stage directions that modifies music and many other factors contribute to the dramatisation of the play. The same use of stage directions is seen in the *SBOY*, such as the lameet which dramatises certain scenes.

Women's poetry


- 1) Through the themes of society's expectation = *I'm "wife"-i've finished that (199)* by Emily Dickinson, *Snapshots of a daughter in law* by Adrienne Rich
- 2) Through the themes of Aging and passing of time= *Twenty-one love poems* by Adrienne Rich and *Snapshots of a daughter in law* by Adrienne Rich.
- 3) Through the themes of Losing track of reality = *i felt a funeral,in my Brain* by Emily Dickinson
- 4) Through the themes of expectations and prime of life = *Snapshots of a daughter in law* by Adrienne Rich.



White supremacy

White supremacy consists of beliefs and ideas purporting natural superiority of the lighter-skinned, or “white”, human races over other racial groups. Supremacist groups often have relied on violence to achieve their goals. White supremacy especially manifested itself between the 1950s and the 1960s in the white power movement which was a response to the black power movement. Many white supremacists were troubled by the US government’s adoption of or acquiescence in measures such as affirmative action, school busing, and rules against racial discrimination in the social market.

Boss Finley is thematic used by Williams to illustrate his concerns about the personal and social corruptions common throughout the 1950s in America, which was saturated with an ideology of individualism and capitalism. Politicians like Boss would do everything they can, even if this meant feeding into the public’s white supremacist beliefs in order to gain power and money.



Notable quotes:

“ As you all know, i had no part in a certain operation on a young black gentleman. I call that incident a deplorable thing. That is the one thing about which i am in total agreement with the Northern radical press. It was a deplorable thing. However...i understand the emotions that lay behind it. The passion to protect this violent emotion something that we hold sacred our purity of our own blood “

“He’s going to hold her up as the fair whithe virgin exposed to the black lust in the South, and that’s his build up, his lead into his Voice of God.”

“However i can’t and will not tolerate this threat of a blood pollution.”