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EWRT 2

Spring 2020

Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* (Act Two, Scene Three, and Act Three): Reading Questions

Act Two, Scene Three Questions:

1. Review the scene in which Karl Lindner arrives to the Younger’s apartment as a representative of the “Clybourne Park Improvement Association” (113-121):
2. How does Lindner describe this association (particularly its purpose and aims) and how does this description square with the “reality” of what this association is about? What is the association’s “real” purpose and how does Lindner defend against it?
3. How does the family respond to Lindner’s visit and offer? What is he offering exactly and why? Why does it take him so long to get to this offer? Does everyone know why Lindner is there at the same time, or are some of the family members aware of his purpose before others? What does this tell us?
4. Review the scene of Bobo’s arrival, when it is revealed that Walter Lee has been swindled out of the money and didn’t put all of the money in the bank as Mama instructed him to do (127-30):
5. What do you think about what Walter Lee has done? Why does he do this and is it justified in any way? What does it tell us about his character and about his deferred dream?
6. How does Mama respond and what do you think about her response? (129-30)

Act Three Questions:

1. How does the family react to the fact that Walter Lee has lost all of the money? Describe how each family member reacts and explain what this shows us about them and status of their deferred dream.
2. What is Asagai’s critique of Beneatha’s reaction to the loss of the money? What do you think about his critique? (132-7)
3. What is the “new philosophy” behind Walter Lee’s decision to reverse course and accept Lindner’s offer? What does each family member think about Walter Lee’s decision? (141-5)
4. What causes Walter Lee to change his mind about the offer once Lindner arrives? On what basis does Walter Lee refuse Lindner’s offer? What do you think about this decision? (146-9)
5. What do you think about the conclusion to the play overall? As I mentioned in the paper prompt, the ending of the play is uncertain and critics are divided as to how to read the end of the play. We don’t see the family move into their new house, but we have some sense of the violence and hardship that awaits them there in the all-white neighborhood where they are moving. Would you characterize the ending as an example of the family’s deferred dreams being fulfilled or not? Overall, is this a positive and “happy” ending or is it a tragic one? Is it somewhere in between? Explain your position and its significance.