

NOTES FOR A *STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*

BY Tennessee Williams

Scene 1

- I. Characters:
- A. Stanley Kowalski: common, working class man; physical; realistic; belligerent
 - B. Stella DuBois Kowalski: Stanley's wife; has forgotten genteel upbringing in order to enjoy her marriage to a man of a lower social class
 - C. Blanche DuBois: sensitive, older sister of Stella; she's left her teaching job and been forced out of the family mansion, Belle Reve, in Laurel, Mississippi
 - D. Others
 - 1. Steve & Eunice: the neighbors upstairs
 - 2. Mitch: Stanley's friend; Mitch's mom's ill so the men can't play poker at his house
- II. Plot Summary
- A. Setting: after WWII in French Quarter (oldest part) of New Orleans, Louisiana
 - B. Premise: Blanche arrives at the Kowalski's to stay for a time.
- III. Things to Know:
- A. Contrasts:

	STANLEY	vs.	BLANCHE
1. Names/Backgrounds	Polish, common		French, aristocratic
2. Voices	loud		whispery & soft
3. Dress	colorful, bright, loud		soft, white, flowing
4. Manner / Behavior	crude, uncouth, animalistic		refined, delicate, moth-like
 - B. Symbolism of Names:
 - 1. Blanche: white DuBois: woods
 - 2. Stella: star
 - 3. Belle Reve: beautiful dream
 - 4. streetcar named Desire . . . : passion (*desire*) leads to death which leads to heaven
 - C. Other Symbols
 - 1. Light: Blanche avoids the light
 - 2. Loneliness: Blanche's fear of being alone
 - 3. Music: music with Stanley & at the bowling alley, music with dead husband
 - 4. Illusions/Half Truths: alcohol
 - D. Important Quotes: Know who said and why it's significant to the story . . .
 - 1. "They told me to take a street-car named Desire , and then, transfer to one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks and get off at –Elysian Fields."
 - 2. "God love you for a liar! Daylight never exposed so total a ruin! But you—you've put on some weight, yes, you're just as plump as a little partridge! And it's so becoming to you!"