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Summary: A Streetcar Named Desire

The book, *A Streetcar Named Desire,* written by Tennessee Williams, highlights societal brutality. The author narrates the story of a woman who creates an illusion for herself and the society in search of happiness. Thirty year old protagonist, Blanche had lost her parents, husband, family home, and job as a teacher. She had nowhere to go so she came to live with her sister Stella who is married to Stanley Kowalski and pregnant. She is weak emotionally as well as penniless. She is greatly traumatized by the death of her husband whom she married at a young age of sixteen. Her husband committed suicide after she taunted him for being sexually incapable. She repeatedly tried to escape guilt by involving in sexual affairs with strangers. She was envious of the lifestyle and husband of Stella. However, she was influenced by the muscularity of Stanley. She was attracted to Mitch, a friend of Stanley’s, because of his kindness, unlike Stanley. Mitch was also interested in her.

As the story progresses, the tension between Blanche and Stanley intensifies. He becomes more attracted to her physical appearance. But she showed her disdain towards his crudeness and coarseness. She repeatedly mentioned the cultural differences between them. Their conflict turned into a war for the affection of Stella.

Eventually, the story reaches its climax on the birthday of Blanche. Her sister was at the hospital giving birth while Blanche was at home. Blanche decorated the apartment to celebrate her birthday. The tragedy started when Stanley, who was drunk and agitated by Blanche’s comments, raped her to prove what she used to say about his superiority. She became disgusted and at the same time drew to his utter coarseness. She rebelled the last time as opposed to her polite yet sexually suppressive background. It seems that she did that to reprimand herself because she felt like she had dishonored her soul. Blanche’s resistance and fight against the oppression of Stanley was the final loss she bore in her entire life. The moment she had arrived at her sister’s house, her delicate personality had already reached a breaking point. Now, she was completely wrecked and shattered. She became an outcast and was sent to a mental asylum.

In the end, Blanche lost her only close relative, her sister Stella, and also Mitch whom she thought was a perfect man.

Reading the book, *The Street Car Named Desire*, provided me with a new insight on the despicable act of ‘lying’. Blanche explained this act as a way to believe that her life was better. Her reasoning sounded rational, however, it was far from reality. She distorted her image and lifestyle in her head and for the people around her. She tried to deviate her mind from the guilt of her husband’s death. She opted for an imagination different from reality but, in the end, a reality she was running from, stood in front of her. I believe, Williams portrayed the fact that we all hide something from others. He reflected elements of his personal story into the book. The book forces the reader to think about the conflict which arises when the society learns a fact about a person which he does not want to share. Another personal conflict arises when a person realizes that what he has imagined is far from reality. People go through numerous struggles every day. I think that a person should be strong enough to realize the truth and society should not be judgmental to overpower anyone. Everyone deserves an equal right to live and enjoy life according to his perspective and without being dominated.