

## **COMPASS OF SHAME**

**COMPASS OF SHAME:**  
**A STUDY OF AFFECT IN *LOOK BACK IN ANGER* AND *BAY THE MOON***

By  
**INAS A. HASSAN, B.A.**

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AUTHOR:       Inas A. Hassan, B.A. (The American University in Cairo, Egypt)

SUPERVISOR:     Dr. R. Granofsky

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## ABSTRACT

The imaginative writer uses language “for the expression, clarification and deepening of feelings” and this enriches “the affective life of man” (Tomkins, *Affect* 1:219). By concentrating on the self, Affect Theory provides an original perspective for character analysis, which certainly contributes to psychoanalytic literary studies. With its intricate classification of emotion, affect theory enables literary scholars to re-examine postwar drama with a new vocabulary and a comprehensive framework. Affect theory has deepened our knowledge of emotions and of the role of shame in particular, both destructive and creative, in shaping the human personality. Perhaps some of the most compelling evidence of the complexities of the *central* affect, shame, can be found in the dynamic milieu of postwar plays. When studying the postwar human psyche, applying such an overarching theoretical framework that focuses on the inherent nature of shame to John Osborne’s *Look Back in Anger* (1956) and Mahmoud El-Lozy’s *Bay the Moon* (1998) is crucial for understanding the Angry Young Men movement. By employing Silvan Tomkins’ Affect Theory and Donald Nathanson’s Compass of Shame, this thesis will demonstrate how the depiction of each protagonist as the ‘angry young man’ is in fact an *affective* response to the crisis of how intolerable postwar generational shame was pushed beyond reasonable limits. By extracting the affective patterns in both plays, I will show how the protagonists’ unsuccessful shame management attempts trigger their recurring angry tirades that intensify throughout the plays without effecting any shame-relieving change.

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Drama rests on the dynamic that is created between characters on the stage. It must be concrete and it must be expressed, even if it is only in silence or a gesture of despair. The theatre is not a schoolroom, nor is it, as many people seem to think, a place where “discussion” takes place, where ideas are apparently formally examined in the manner of a solitary show-off in an intellectual magazine. It is a place where people spend much of their time responding nakedly – or failing – to the burden of trying to live, and preparing to die. \*

John Osborne

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\* Carter, Alan. *John Osborne*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Sons, 1969

## Introduction

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Despite its important role as the central affect in understanding the complex psychodynamics of literary works, recognizing ‘shame’ has been restricted to the fields of psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, and psychology. Between 1895 and 1938, Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, said surprisingly little about shame. He hypothesized the existence of a life force he called *libido*, which is “energy that traveled throughout the brain to power or drive the mental apparatus” (Nathanson, *Shame* 42). For him, the symptoms of mental illness were explained by patterns of improperly or incompletely channeled libido energy. In his need to find a general theory for emotion, he outlined a simple logic:

The sexual drive [by his definition] was the basic force that powered all human activity; when this drive was prevented from achieving its goal, people complained of anxiety; therefore, all anxiety was caused by sexual tension. (Nathanson, *Shame* 44)

With this new concept, Freud proposed a system that aimed at explaining all emotion. He claimed that all positive feelings were created by the satisfaction of the libidinous needs, all negative feelings by the denial of those needs. After extensive research and observation, Freud was unable to explain everything in human behaviour on the basis of a life-giving libidinous drive. He made frequent alterations in his “flawed” theory and was forced to postulate the existence of a “life-destroying” force he called *aggression*. In his classical psychoanalytic theory, all anger, hatred, meanness cruelty – indeed, all negative passions – are traced to this hypothetical destructive force. The language of



psychoanalysis after that shifted from discussion of libido and aggression to an even more vaguely defined form of energy called the *drives*.

Freud's "drive" theory defined shame as a "specific form of anxiety" and he proposed that shame, along with morality and disgust, caused repression. For him, shame was a result of exposure of one's "nudity or defectiveness," and it was related to being feminine and passive (Shultz 8). Freud suggested that shame was a derivative of self-reproach, and he confused it with guilt and associated it with libidinous anxiety. While psychoanalysis remains a valid form of treatment for many emotional disorders, its restriction to the libido as the sole emotional channel soon subsided. Freudian drive theory soon turned out to be a dead end. Over a period of almost forty years, Silvan Tomkins, one of the most influential theorists on emotion and emotional expression, developed a set of original ideas about the nature of affect and its relationship to cognition and personality. Tomkins appreciated the rich and controversial literature on libido, narcissism, aggression, and anxiety; however, it lacked a coherent framework for the incorporation of affect and emotion in general human psychology. Affect Theory proposed such a framework, with differentiated positive and negative affects rather than drives providing the basis of human emotion and motivation.

For Silvan Tomkins, the pioneer of affect theory, affects, like instincts and drives, are part of human beings' innate biological apparatus, and they form the primary motivational systems. Affect is the root of such words as *affection*. When we have been *affected* by something we have experienced an emotion because of it; when *disaffected* we are indifferent and have little emotional involvement (Nathanson, *Shame* 49). In

Tomkins' view, "the cognitive 'appraisal' of a situation is not sufficient in itself to provide the urgency that is part of human motivation" (Adamson 12). Such is the role of affect: it makes certain things matter, makes them compelling, in a way that no objective assessment is capable of doing. Tomkins identified nine innate affects as building blocks of the emotional complex, they are: *interest-excitement*, *enjoyment-joy*, *surprise-startle*, *distress-anguish*, *fear-terror*, *anger-rage*, and *shame-humiliation*. Each may be regarded as a pattern of expression or a specific package of information triggered in response to a particular type of stimulus. Tomkins was the first theorist to separate affect from drives and cognition, to argue that affect constitutes one of the basic systems of human functions.

Tomkins addressed the limitation of psychoanalysis' framework, namely the restrictions of the libido, aggression, and anxiety, and showed how the affects better explain negative emotions:

The importance of aggression and anxiety was ineradicably established by the enormous authority of Freud. All the remaining affects were either unrecognized or misidentified by him. Distress, and especially the birth cry, was mistakenly identified as the prototype of anxiety despite the obvious fact that children cry without being anxious, and become anxious without crying. The superego was regarded as a turning of aggression inward against the ego, failing to recognize the critical roles of shame, contempt, and disgust, and misidentifying them as aggression. (Tomkins, *Exploring* 21-2)

He continued the same line of reasoning for the positive affects to assert that affects, not sexual drives, are the primary motivators:

The positive affects of excitement and enjoyment were misidentified as sexuality, despite the fact that the excitement affect in sexual excitement is no different than excitement affect about anything under the sun. He [Freud] failed to recognize the fusion of affect and drive in sexuality and so failed to understand that sexuality required amplification by excitement for potency,

but that excitement did not require amplification by sexuality to seize the human being. (Tomkins, *Exploring* 21-2)

Unsurprisingly, over the past two decades, psychoanalysis moved away from a confining framework based on “aggressive drives and sexual conflict toward an understanding more attentive to the affects and their observable influence on the development of human personality” (Adamson 4).

Psychoanalytic literary criticism focuses mainly on the author of the work, on the work’s content and, to a certain extent, on its formal construction and on the reader. Despite Freud’s now-disputed comparison between art and neurosis, the connection between psychoanalysis and literature still prevails. He thought of the artist / author as a stubborn neurotic who, by his creative work, kept himself from any real cure to his condition. He wrote:

The artist is originally a man who turns from reality because he cannot come to terms with the demand for the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction as it is first made, and who then in phantasy-life allows full play to his erotic and ambitious wishes. But he finds a way of return from this world of phantasy back to reality; with his special gifts, he moulds his phantasies into a new kind of reality, and men concede them a justification as valuable reflections of actual life. Thus, by a certain path he actually becomes the hero, king, creator, favourite he desired to be, without the circuitous path of creating real alterations in the outer world. (Wellek 82)

Here, the artist, like the neurotic, is oppressed by unusually powerful instinctual needs which lead him to turn away from reality to fantasy. Freud claims that the author is a day-dreamer who knows how to “work over, shape, and soften his own day-dreams in ways which make them acceptable to others” (Eagleton 179). Indeed, psychoanalyzing an author is highly speculative since psychoanalysis, to some degree, deals with the unconscious motivations of the mind.

In view of the current dominance of Lacanian and poststructuralist versions of psychoanalysis<sup>1</sup>, literary scholars were reluctant to investigate how shame, as a central human emotion, may enhance our understanding of literature and its *affective* reality. French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan's emphasis on the metaphorical language of the unconscious led to new readings of texts as well as other media such as film and television. He attempted to re-write Freud's theories by re-interpreting Freud in the light of structuralist and poststructuralist theories of discourse and claimed that the unconscious is structured like language. For Lacan, language is "empty" because it is just an endless process of "difference and absence between the inseparable union of one *signifier* [the speech sound or word composing a sign] to one *signified* [the conceptual meaning of the sign] to another along a linguistic chain which is potentially infinite" (Eagleton 166). This potentially endless movement from one signifier to another is what Lacan means by "desire." He explains that all desire springs from a lack and human language works by such a lack: the absence of real objects which signs designate, as well as the fact that words have meaning only by virtue of the absence and exclusion of others.

While Freud focused on the mysterious unconscious, and Lacan focused on the obscurity of language, psychologists and psychoanalysts, such as Silvan Tomkins, Donald Nathanson, and Léon Wurmser were eager to turn to the imaginative world of literature for evidence of a compelling psychological reality. Tomkins claims that the "affective complexity of human beings is one of the most distinctive features of their success as a species" (Adamson 6). He finds that one of the most important functions of literature has been to provide "a privileged place of redress, a sphere of expression where emotional

life can be explored and refined in ways that are discouraged elsewhere” (Adamson 6). Certainly, the world of literature offers a wealth of metaphors and images that, after close examination, reveal prevailing affective patterns. Given that in literature any character’s ‘self’ is put on display, studying affect theory vis-à-vis literary texts in this thesis will better explain any character’s relations, emotions, and motivations. By concentrating on the self rather than attempting to define peripheral elements, adopting affect theory will certainly contribute to psychoanalytic literary studies.

Since affect theory depends on the ‘dynamics’ of human-interaction, I found it fitting to apply in drama, which as John Osborne defines it in the epigraph, “rests on the dynamic that is created between characters on the stage.” What makes postwar drama compelling, though, is that the plays are in fact depictions of the playwrights’ *actual* experiences, which allows the characters to be explored via affect theory<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps some of the most compelling evidence of the complexities of the *central* affect, shame, can be found in the dynamic milieu of postwar plays. Indeed, the particular power of shame when combined with other affects such as distress-anguish, contempt, anger-rage, and fear-terror makes it a crucial element in the emotional life of human beings. “Shame-binds,” as Tomkins calls them, [when shame ‘binds’ with drives and other affects] are key in understanding the significance of shame in human psychodynamics given that “shame exists *only* in terms of other affects” (Nathanson, *Shame* 136, my emphasis). Of particular significance to this thesis is the *shame-anger* bind, which is also called “humiliated fury” and “narcissistic rage” (Adamson 13). Tomkins explains that in the shame-anger bind,

shame, as a single affect can reach such painful points of overload that it modifies into the more tolerable and instrumental anger.

In John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1956) and Mahmoud El Lozy's<sup>3</sup> *Bay the Moon* (1998), the overriding emotion is anger. Though the playwrights' historical backgrounds are different, each is a contemporary of his protagonist's generation of 'angry young men,' who are victims of their similarly unstable socio-economic and political environments. The protagonists' postwar despair represents their respective generations' mind-set, which explains how the Angry Young Men movement was the dominant state of mind in post World War Two Britain and post-1967<sup>4</sup> war Egypt. Both plays are allegories of their turbulent postwar periods when social alienation reflected the decline and eventual loss of a national purpose and a steady economy, hence, the protagonists' vulnerability. Despite the playwrights' devastating commentary, they accurately relayed their generations' trauma. It is indeed fascinating to find in these plays the fertile postwar shame that nurtures the protagonists' anger. These sterile and emotionally confused characters are thus symbolic of the uncertainties of post-war life, and the fragmentation of personal and family life. Indeed, affect theory's psychoanalytical approach offers a fresh perspective on these plays and contributes to our understanding of the Angry Young Men tradition because it dissects each protagonist's self and detects the innermost shame.

When reviewing the secondary literature on *Look Back in Anger* and its protagonist, I realized that Jimmy Porter's anger became the focal point for the critical terrain that generated and cultivated the Angry Young Men movement. Even though there

is no secondary material on El-Lozy's play or its protagonist, Ali's anger certainly reiterates Jimmy's. I find, however, that examining the protagonists' equally *visible* anger is an uncomplicated approach that requires affect theory's comprehensive analysis for better understanding what unleashes their anger.

For this project, I re-examined the easily identified and exhaustingly discussed emotion *anger* in *Look Back in Anger* and by using affect theory, discovered that in both plays this anger's igniting force is in fact *shame*. When studying the postwar human psyche, applying such an overarching theoretical framework that focuses on the inherent nature of shame to El-Lozy's play is crucial for understanding and appreciating *Bay the Moon's* comparable dynamism. By employing Silvan Tomkins' Affect Theory and Donald Nathanson's Compass of Shame, this thesis will demonstrate how the depiction of each protagonist as the 'angry young man' is in fact an *affective* response to the crisis of how intolerable postwar generational shame was pushed beyond reasonable limits. Both Jimmy and Ali suffer from a painful overload of postwar generational shame that triggers anger as an affect distinct from, but often accompanying shame as an important defense against it. By extracting the affective patterns in both plays, I will show how the protagonists' unsuccessful shame management attempts trigger their recurring angry tirades that intensify throughout the plays without effecting any shame-relieving change.

Both Osborne and El-Lozy have been criticized for presenting the angry-at-everything protagonists who spread their attacks so widely that the possibility of change is impractical. The intensity of their frustration is best captured in drama where these (anti) heroes do outgrow the structure of the plots, and their words dominate the plays. In

the anti-heroes' words, the audience could hear "the authentic new tone... desperate, savage, resentful and, at times, very funny... the words are intense, angry, feverish, undisciplined and even crazy... they are young, young, young" (Carter 25). Both playwrights are motivated by a defiant and almost shameless will to expose shame, the emotion that 'strikes deepest in the human heart' disguised as anger.

In 1956, *Look Back in Anger's* explosive performance made it an immediate success, one that crystallized the floating dissentient mood of England's post World War Two decade. In his book The Angry Decade: a Survey of the Cultural Revolt of the Nineteen-Fifties, Kenneth Allsop's list of the multiple overtones that the phrase Angry Young Men carries is, by and large, an accurate representation of the protagonists' postwar temperament:

Irreverence, stridency, impatience with tradition, vigour, vulgarity, sulky resentment against the cultivated and a hard-boiled muscling-in on culture, adventurousness, self-pity, deliberate disengagement from politics, fascist ambitions, schizophrenia, rude dislike of anything phoney or fey, a broad sense of humour but low on wit, general intellectual nihilism, honest, a neurotic discontent and a defeated, reconciled acquiescence that is the last flimsy shelter against complete despondency – a wildly ill-assorted agglomeration of credos, which although without any overall coherence, do belong to this inherent period of social upheaval. (Allsop 18)

While this comprehensive list describes the angry young men's conduct, it does not offer any insight beyond the visible manifestation of their social rebellion. Kenneth Allsop, as well as several critics writing in the late 1950s and early 1960s, was simply looking at the ever-broadcast and easy to comprehend anger. John Russell Taylor emphasizes the play's importance in his *Casebook* and writes that "wherever it may ultimately stand in twentieth-century British drama... *Look Back in Anger* has its unarguable importance as



the beginning of a revolution in British theatre, and as the central and most immediately influential expression of the mood of its time, the mood of the ‘angry young men’” (Taylor, *Look* 11). Indeed, Jimmy Porter was the extreme embodiment of a particular state of mind, and studying him is key to understanding the state of mind of that period.

It was a time of anger, particularly the anger of the young postwar generation. The significance of the Angry Young Men movement was highly acclaimed by Alan Carter who wrote:

The work of the “Angry Young Men” revitalized English literature because by expressing a conception of how life actually was and by suggesting what that life could possibly be, they rejected a pattern of existence which had become too firmly entrenched in our society. In doing this, they pushed us further away from the “self” which dominated our lives. They made knowledge gained through experience an important acquisition. This knowledge and this experience is the “real stuff” of literature. (Carter 30)

*Look Back in Anger* is a play about Jimmy Porter’s protest as it challenges his unresolved quarrel with the universe in order for the audience to think ‘What is this young man angry about?’ This approach makes Jimmy’s visible anger *all* that requires to be noted, and it should be seen as the major ailment of his postwar generation. In turn, Osborne was seen as the man whose “honesty in exploring the ambiguities and weaknesses of anger” is such that he allows familiar questions such as “What are young men angry about?” and “Can’t they take it like men?” to transpire (Dyson 30). However, these questions form a trap for the “moral cripples” who do not reflect on the origins of this excessive anger (Dyson 30). In his article, “Whatever Happened to John Osborne?,” Arnold P. Hinchliffe wrote that Osborne was “interested in the suffering hero, and in the sense of failure, and his plays illuminate that suffering rather than explore causes or offer solutions” (Hinchliffe 54). For

Osborne, admiring Jimmy uncritically was both distorting and immature. This lack of reflection would end in merely questioning the validity of Jimmy's anger and its intensity instead of taking a mature in-depth look at its causes.

Actually, most critics merely focused on interpreting the intensity of the anger in *Look Back in Anger*, its protagonist, and its playwright, in view of the contemporaneous political instability and socio-economic decline. Others, such as A.E. Dyson adopted a moral evaluation and wrote that anger is a

... chameleon emotion, changing colour and mood unnoticed, and subtly allowing the best in a man to offer sanctions to the worst... Anger is good when it is selfless, compassionate, and allied to positive action; evil when it is selfish, or tainted with frustration, malice, and the desire to destroy. (26)

The juxtaposition of "compassion" and "malice" in this emotion's make-up is perhaps what makes Jimmy's presence on stage both magnetic and unendurable. However, the dominant explaining-anger criticism imposes a moral exploration of the forces that trigger Jimmy's outrage. His motives are then questioned and hopelessly mixed: Is Jimmy's anger with Alison a genuine desire to save her from her superficial family, or is it an ugly type of possessiveness? Does he lash out at Cliff for being ignorant or because Jimmy suffers from a "persecution complex"? While John Osborne's concern is to offer the truth of the situation without offering any final moral reflections, such one-dimensional questions inevitably bring about absolute answers, or rather moral judgments. Consequently, those who were critical unfavourably assessed *Look Back in Anger* and considered it a play that merely offers permanent moral insights.

While Osborne, in the socio-political arena, became the author of the all-purpose hero who was able to 'speak up' and articulate the angry postwar generation's anxieties,

Jimmy's domestic arena was bombarded with angry critics. Responses such as, "Jimmy becomes convinced that he is the only one who really *knows* what suffering is, and that he has the right to scourge those less agitated than himself" lacked depth of character analysis and were mostly vindictive (Dyson 26). Perhaps these critics found it 'safer' to attack the play that threatened their postwar society's docility. In their written attacks, Jimmy Porter's critics could not accept the legitimacy of his painfully representative domestic arena, one which encapsulated the torments of their society's postwar shame-ridden failure. Accordingly, Cecil Wilson wrote in his review in *The Daily Mirror* that Jimmy's monologues "produce a fine flow of savage talk" that was "basically a bore because its reasons are never clearly explained" (Dyson 37). Wilson also wrote that Osborne was expected, after composing these "laborious shock tactics," to write a better play once he got *Look Back in Anger* "out of his system and let a little sunshine into his soul" (Dyson 37). Accordingly, Jimmy Porter's frustrated enthusiasm was misinterpreted and he was labeled, "mean, arrogant, self-pitying, [and] cruelly abusive," one who "did not persuade [the audience] that they [Jimmy and Osborne] 'spoke for' a lost, maddened generation" (Dyson 37-8). Most of the disapproving criticism involves Jimmy's relationship with his wife, Alison:

There are marked symptoms of a persecution complex in his readiness to see his wife's continued correspondence with her parents in terms of conspiracy and betrayal. His tenderness for his wife is unable to dispel the restless suspicions which turn love into conquest, marriage into revenge, and the normal reticences of others into insult. More sinister than this, he has the iconoclasm peculiar to the most dangerous type, the frustrated messiah, who because he cannot save the world comes to feel the desire to destroy it instead. Much of the time, his deeds and imagery are deliberately calculated to shock. In attempting to hurt his wife, he outrages every decency of love and of life itself, the certainty of his moral mission to her merely justifying savagery of tone and mood he can command. (Dyson 26-7)

Such criticism undermines Jimmy's torment and fails to see how his anger is at the root of his passionate character, one that both deserves and strives for success, but finds none. His anger has in it the elements of honesty and courage, yet it emerges when he challenges his shaming powerlessness as an individual in a dysfunctional society. His marriage is the *only* solid pillar in his life, and although Alison does desert him for a few months, he finds that Helena cannot replace Alison. In fact, Jimmy's only revelation in this play is that he *cannot* live without Alison<sup>5</sup>, the only one whose image of Jimmy is always the "knight in shining armour" (Osborne 45). Even though the play's performance was highly acclaimed, Jimmy Porter, the character received no sympathy, his anger was unjustified, and he was considered a 'phoney intellectual.' Since most criticism failed to look *beyond* the frequency, the intensity, and the targets of Jimmy's outbursts, his character was inadequately examined. For this reason affect theory will further analyze the anger and allow Jimmy's and Ali's character to emerge profoundly multi-layered.

The fact that anger is considered one of the most important defenses against shame explains why Jimmy and Ali (unknowingly) dwell in anger in an effort to "resist the experience of the head and face lowered in shame" (Tomkins, *Affect* 1:70). This famous passage by Tomkins condenses the significance of shame in terms of all the affects:

If distress is the affect of suffering, shame is the affect of indignity, of transgression and of alienation. Though terror speaks to life and death and distress makes of the world a vale of tears, yet shame strikes deepest into the heart of man. While terror and distress hurt, they are wounds inflicted from [the] outside which penetrate the smooth surface of the ego; but shame is felt as an inner torment, a sickness of the soul. It does not matter whether the humiliated one has been shamed by derisive

laughter or whether he mocks himself. In either event, he feels himself naked, defeated, alienated, [and] lacking in dignity or worth. (Nathanson, *Shame* 146)

Jimmy and Ali are excruciatingly aware of their generations' shame and their realization makes them angry at the injustice surrounding them. Unable to change their societies' "alienating" and "defeating" hostility, the protagonists remain isolated even as they earnestly (attempt to) manage the toxicity of such shame-bound affects. The theme of isolation, I think, is significant because both plays show how some postwar societies *isolate* human beings who try to preserve their individuality. In accordance with Donald Nathanson's Compass of Shame, I will explore how both protagonists rotate between the isolating poles in an attempt to reduce the toxicity of the tormenting shame. Moreover, unlike the idle majority, both Jimmy and Ali are desperate for a self-directed life that would reward them with recognition and love; instead, they are caught in a vicious circle of self-loathing and they end up defeated and alone. They are indeed angry young men, but this anger is the product of inescapable postwar melancholy. It is a plea for justice, but above all, it is the escalation of shame into toxic anger and contemptuous self-pity.

In the remainder of this thesis, I show how when the protagonists are repeatedly caught in a 'moment of shame,' they are fixed to a shame-control psychological crossroad bifurcating into submissive *acceptance* and/or inexhaustible *defense*. My purpose is to give a detailed treatment of the *reactive* phase of shame that, depending on the reaction, is a major factor in the architecture of character structure.

In the first chapter, "Shame and the Angry Young Men Tradition," I explain Tomkins' Affect Theory, with special emphasis on the affects *anger-rage* and *shame-humiliation*. I will also introduce Donald Nathanson's Compass of Shame and its four

affect management poles. I will briefly review the background of the Angry Young Men movement, as well as the main elements that caused the socio-political and economic stagnation in the playwrights' postwar societies. The brief historical review will explain the helplessness and futility that motivated Osborne and El-Lozy to write their plays. Instead of focusing on the external 'anger' that characterized the Angry Young Men movement, I will explain how shame is the principal force that stirs up the anger. The unresolved postwar socio-political and economic struggles for both playwrights generated the quiescent sizzling shame, which I will explain using Affect Theory.

In the second chapter, "Toxic Rage: *Look Back in Anger's* Affective Resonance," I demonstrate how the play's impact on the audience is a result of its transfixing *affective resonance*. The intensity and co-dependence of Jimmy's and Alison's "scripts" make their separation impossible. By the end of the play, due to their emotionally draining collisions, they retire in the Compass of Shame's *avoidance* pole in an effort to "escape" their turmoil. This ending is in keeping with Osborne's objective: to give the audience the opportunity to look for the solution(s) for the problems themselves.

In the third chapter, "Riddle Me This, Riddle That: Affect and Survival in *Bay the Moon*," I show the aspects that make Ali a victim of shame. Over the course of the play, he tries many shame-control strategies by shifting between all the poles in the Compass of Shame. Unlike Jimmy's full-blown rage at the beginning of the play, the reader witnesses Ali's generational resentment develop into helplessness that ends in physical and emotional exile. I will be looking closely at how the song lyrics function as between-scene commentary that further illustrates Ali's ordeal. Therefore, as the play progresses,

Ali moves from an emotional to a physical war-zone that catalyzes and magnifies his already-painful turmoil.

Donald Nathanson points out that shame is often confused with guilt, which is a related but quite different discomfort. He explains that “whereas shame is about the *quality* of our person or self, guilt is the painful emotion triggered when we become aware that we have acted in a way to bring harm to another person or to violate some important code. Guilt is about *action* and laws” (Nathanson, *Shame* 19). In legal proceedings, we are adjudged ‘guilty’ or ‘not guilty’. No such easy system exists to facilitate our return from shame. Failure – at any age – tells us something about our size, our skill, and our dependence on others. It is a measure of incompetence, and therefore a major stimulus to shame” (Nathanson, *Shame* 180). Since Jimmy and Ali are immersed in failure, they are unable to effectively relieve themselves from shame, so they resorted to embracing the less painful affect, anger.

By concentrating on the self, affect theory provides an original perspective for character-analysis, which certainly contributes to psychoanalytic literary studies. With its intricate classification of emotion, affect theory enables literary scholars to re-examine postwar drama with a new vocabulary and a comprehensive framework. Surely, when looking beyond the visible anger connected with postwar turmoil, affect theory brings to light the shame that inhabits the depths of postwar trauma. In addition to the literary contribution, affect theory will also better account for postwar plays’ socio-political contexts, given that the plays are in fact depictions of the playwrights’ *actual* experiences.

Thus, both the characters and the audience can be explored via affect theory when analyzing postwar drama.



## Chapter One

### Shame and the Angry Young Men Tradition

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Donald Nathanson explains in simple terms how “each success brings some measure of pride, while each failure is capable of bringing shame” (Nathanson, *Shame* 180). Nathanson explains, “Success – at any age – tells us something about our size, our skill, and our growing degree of independence from those who previously have performed these tasks on our behalf [namely the mother/caregiver figure]. In normal development, independence is inextricable linked with pride. It is a measure of competence. Failure – at any age – tells us something about our size, our skill, and our dependence on others. It is a measure of incompetence, and therefore a major stimulus to shame” (Nathanson, *Shame* 180). Living in torment, both Jimmy and Ali feel incompetent (size and skill) and they suffer from an overwhelming sense of helplessness (dependence/independence), which steadily triggers the painful affect shame-humiliation.

While *Look Back in Anger* shows the impact of the glorious past on the dreary present, without paying much attention to the future, *Bay the Moon* looks forward in fear, anticipating a bleak future dictated by a horrible past and a confusing present. “There is no future, only survival” is the underlying theme and the main source of generational shame that is articulated by the angry protagonists where their respective generations were helpless to effect any (positive) change in their postwar lives. In both plays, the irresolvable tensions between longing for security and desire for change overwhelm the protagonists who represent their generations’ shameful futility. As well, the frustration of

being denied power and the fear of abusing it lead to self-loathing and demonizing the 'other,' including lovers, parents and confidantes. Jimmy's and Ali's alienation is symptomatic of their societies' hostility to individuality. Though the protagonists unleash their fury with raw and highly-articulate language, neither playwright glamorizes the anger. Still, this 'humiliated fury' is the main (if not the only) channel through which Jimmy and Ali attempt to heal their wounded and fragmented identities. In short, given that shame can *only* exist in terms of other affects, all these factors bring about the metamorphosis of this ever-increasing *inherent* shame into incessant anger. The Angry Young Men movement embodied the crisis of how intolerable generational shame made anger-rage the dominant state of mind in post World War Two Britain and post-1967 war Egypt.

Before I provide an overview of the plays' tense socio-economic and political settings that instigate the easily detected and exhaustingly discussed *anger*, I would like to introduce the theoretical framework that explains how *shame* can be the igniting source of this anger. Silvan Tomkins' Affect Theory deals with emotion as an amalgam of cognition, perception, memory, motor function, bio-chemical processes, and how these components of the emotional complexes influence behaviour, motivation, and cultural valuation (Nathanson, *Shame* 47-9). Unlike animals, human beings are *affectively* equipped "to want to remain alive and to resist death, to want to experience novelty and to resist boredom, to want to communicate, to be close to and in contact with others of their species, to experience sexual excitement and to *resist the experience of the head and face lowered in shame*" (Tomkins, *Affect* 1: 170, my emphasis). When an affect is

“triggered” some “definable stimulus has activated a mechanism that releases a *known pattern of biological events*,” in other words, affects “make [previously] good things better and [previously] bad things worse”(Nathanson, *Shame* 49; 59). Indeed, affects control the way we think, so that whenever we are “*motivated*, it is because an affect has made us so, and we are motivated in the direction and form characteristic of that affect. Affect is the engine that drives us” (Nathanson, *Shame* 59). Therefore, studying how affects influence the protagonists’ behaviour is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of their motivations.

Tomkins identified nine innate affects as building blocks of the emotional complex, they are: interest-excitement, enjoyment-joy, surprise-startle, distress-anguish, fear-terror, anger-rage, and shame-humiliation. Each may be regarded as a pattern of expression or a specific package of information triggered in response to a particular type of stimulus. There are two positive affects: interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy.<sup>6</sup> Tomkins explains affects in terms of the density of neural firing<sup>7</sup>. Interest-excitement, for example, is caused by a certain increase in neural stimulation, while enjoyment-joy is triggered by a sudden decrease in stimulation (Tomkins, *Exploring* 76). Certainly, both positive affects are important because without them human beings would show no interest in, or attachment to, the world or those around them. Not only do these positive affects ensure the formation of bonds between infants and their caregivers<sup>8</sup>, they are also the very basis of social unity that maintains an integrated sense of personality in individuals. Next is the neutral affect surprise-startle, or the affect of instant readiness. It acts like a “circuit breaker, or interrupter mechanism” that resets all previously assembled responses so that

the individual is able to take in new data, and then retrieve the appropriate affect (Tomkins, *Exploring* 69). For instance, Jimmy's and Ali's sudden and unprovoked outbursts are attempts to 'reset' the other characters' passivity into a more *affective* response that would (hopefully) comfort them.

The negative affects are greater than the positive affects in number, and they function to produce a state of urgency about certain negative states. They are: fear-terror, distress-anguish, anger-rage, dissmell, disgust, and shame-humiliation. Fear-terror, when triggered, brings recollections of frightening scenes that cascade at a rate guaranteed to produce increasing amounts of fear that can reach the toxic levels of terror (Nathanson, *Shame* 93). Though less toxic than fear, distress-anguish is a fundamental human affect primarily because of the omnipresence of human suffering. Generally, it is expressed in the form of the 'crying response,' which is both a biological and an auditory manifestation of this highly empathic affect; however, it could be internalized, sustained grief.

Anger-rage, according to Nathanson, is triggered to announce/broadcast that something needs to change in order for the infant/subject to be released from its discomfort. In the case of anger, the affect system says, "change has to be damn quick" so that stimulus density is reduced enough for the subject to reduce its (positive) posture (Nathanson, *Shame* 104). Anger is an instrument of change; it makes things happen with tremendous expenditure of energy. Therefore, anger-rage manifests itself physically upon the body because it is only *effective* when broadcast or, as in Jimmy's and Ali's cases, when it is *imposed* on others. When "too many angry thoughts about too many issues are

left too long unresolved” until something/someone brings relief, anger is called a *disorder*, which is what both protagonists suffer from, or rather dwell in. Therefore, their anger is *instrumental* as it attempts to make things improve, yet they never (radically) change during the course of the plays.

Within the emotional complex, both dissmell and disgust function as signals and motives to others, as well as to the self, of feelings of rejection. They are innate auxiliary defensive responses to the hunger, thirst, and oxygen drives (Tomkins, *Exploring* 399). They readily accompany a wide spectrum of entities that need not be tasted, smelled, or ingested. The early warning response via the nose is dissmell, and via the mouth or stomach is disgust (Tomkins, *Exploring* 399-400). In other words, both dissmell and disgust are involved with what Tomkins calls *decontamination scripts*<sup>9</sup> in which some “impurity is introduced into [someone’s] life” that requires an “immediate strategy of purification” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 391). For instance, Jimmy’s wife, Alison, when pregnant moves into a brief decontamination script, which operates on the drive auxiliary responses of (self) disgust. After losing the baby, she is decontaminated, and can then resume the positive affect/scene. Contempt, the least attractive of human responses, is a composite of anger and dissmell. It is used in hierarchical relationships, especially when the one who has the power is the one who, figuratively passes the judgment *and* carries out the punishment on the submissive other. Contempt means to hurt, demean and evoke self-dissmell in the other by degradation (Tomkins, *Exploring* 394-5).

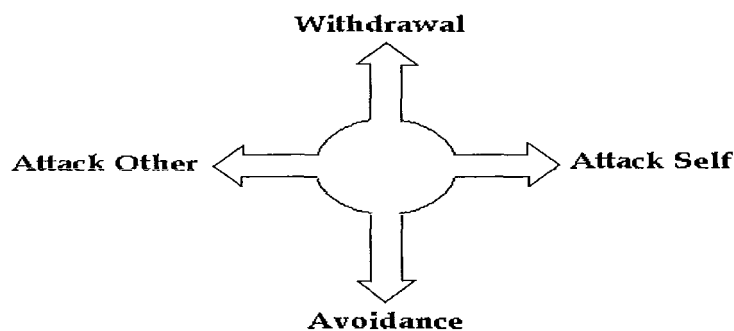
Finally, and most important for this thesis, shame-humiliation is triggered by any impediment to positive affect, namely interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy. Its function

is to *instantaneously* reduce interest in the shame-inducing object by reducing or limiting positive affect. “Shame affect,” as Nathanson summarizes Tomkins’ findings, “is a highly painful mechanism that operates to pull the organism away from whatever might interest it or make it content,” and it is “painful in direct proportion to the degree of positive affect it limits” (Nathanson, *Shame* 138). Generally, shame induced is directly proportional to shame feared and detested. This painful affect is intimately tied to our identity, to the extent that “shame is the shaper of modern life<sup>10</sup>” (Nathanson, *Shame* 149). Léon Wurmser, a leading psychoanalyst, who speaks of the shame experience as a ‘family of emotions,’ suggests that shame can range from the “mildest twinge of embarrassment to the searing pain of mortification” (Nathanson, *Shame* 19). For example, the shame produced from mistakenly greeting a stranger from a distance will cause a fleeting embarrassed blush. In the protagonists’ case, however, being subjected to postwar turmoil will certainly produce overwhelming shame that *must* be repaired, modified, or diminished by an enduring affective response such as, laughter, anger, or withdrawal. Shame often follows a moment of exposure, and what has been exposed is something that is better kept hidden because it is usually something of an intimate and personal nature.

“Shame,” says Nathanson, is the “fall from grace, [or] the loss of face” that one would avoid being exposed to at any cost (Nathanson, *Shame* 144). However, the social manifestation of shame, namely through the interaction with others, is the *principal* component in the development of a sense of self and of self-image. Nathanson explains how shame is an indispensable affect:

Life is full of impediments to positive affect, impediments that cause the acute and fleeting as well as the chronic and the indwelling experiences of shame that so influence our lives and the development of our personalities... [A]ny mechanism capable of causing a painful limitation of what we most enjoy is a mechanism capable of involvement in nearly any aspect of human existence. (Nathanson, *Shame* 138)

Shame forms an undeniable link with character formation and the essence of self-definition such that every time an episode of shame is triggered a predictable affect management script ensues. Four major defensive scripts/strategies govern people's reactions to shame. They are grouped in Donald Nathanson's Compass of Shame:



The four poles of the Compass of Shame function as libraries that house some of the most important internal<sup>11</sup> affect management scripts including the “who, what, why, when and where” of the impediment that triggers the shame affect (Nathanson, *Shame* 313-4). This Compass suggests the extraordinary range and complexity of the ‘detoxification’ methods of the intrinsically painful affect shame-humiliation. Nathanson categorized eight types of experiences in which shame affect will be triggered, and failure in one category is likely to instigate a chronic sense of shame. The list of the eight shame-triggering categories consists of: Matters of size, strength, ability, skill; Dependence/Independence;

Competition; Sense of self; Personal attractiveness; Sexuality; Issues of seeing and being seen; Wishes and fears about closeness (Nathanson, *Shame* 306). Léon Wurmser called shame a ‘layered emotion’ and he pointed out that during the moment of shame, certain thoughts that cluster around several issues occur:

I am weak, I am failing in competition; I am dirty, messy, the content of my self is looked at with disdain and disgust; I am defective, I have shortcomings in my physical and mental makeup; I am defective, I have lost control over my body functions and my feelings; I am sexually excited about suffering, degradation, and distress; watching and self-exposing are dangerous activities and may be punished. (Nathanson, *Shame* 143-4)

Such thoughts involve the cognitive phase of shame that hinder any positive thoughts in or about one’s self. According to Nathanson, the experience of affect is independent from and precedes the cognitive phase. Thus, when the experience of shame is (cognitively) interpreted it produces a conscious “sense of incompetent self.”

The Compass of Shame involves the progression of the *reactive* phase of the shame experience, which is essential to the birth and development of self-image and self-worth. At each pole, the shame affect is experienced differently since the poles compare and contrast in how they assimilate the toxicity of shame. In fact, one may begin at one pole and, depending on its effectiveness in dissolving shame-humiliation, subsequently shift to another quadrant of the Compass. In terms of affect, *withdrawal* is likely to be accompanied by distress-anguish and fear-terror. At this “escape” pole, shame is submissively accepted because of fear of isolation and abandonment in case the individual adopts an aggressive strategy. Those who adopt the *withdrawal* pole avoid dealing forthrightly with shame, and they are by definition very much alone. *Attack-self* is likely to be accompanied by self-disgust and self-dismell, where shame is modulated by



“guaranteeing affiliation [with others] through the willing acceptance of controlled amounts of shame” (Nathanson, *Shame* 340). *Attack-self* is usually a transient pole, where victims are submerged in *decontamination* scripts where they usually suffer from a terrifying sense of helplessness. At the expense of their self-esteem, *attack-self* victims fear abandonment and embrace subservience. They demean themselves by deliberately placing themselves in a dependent relationship with a more powerful person. *Avoidance* is likely to be accompanied by interest-excitement, enjoyment-joy, and (in some severe cases) fear-terror. Here, shame internalized in a profound sense of personal defect instigates distraction strategies such as narcissistic display and competitive pretense. Housed at the *avoidance* pole are ceaseless competition and the constant search for excitement in thrills and danger. Denial and disavowal are the main methods for implementing *avoidance* self-defeating tricks.

*Attack-other* is Jimmy and Ali’s main pole, although they *do* shift to other poles depending on the circumstances. *Attack-other* is always accompanied by anger-rage, and it treats the recipient of the verbal/physical/psychological ‘attack’ with anger, disgust, and dismissal in an effort to induce in the other distress, fear and, above all, shame. It is a system of externalization of the target of anger-rage. Since the *attack-other* pole feeds mainly on blame, those who adopt it are weighed down with paranoia. They attempt to stop the progress of *anything* that would reduce their vulnerable self-esteem (Nathanson, *Shame* 370). In other words, *attack-other* scripts define one in relation to others on the basis of size, strength, ability, and skill, which constitute the “realms of self-definition most associated with real danger to life and limb” (Nathanson, *Shame* 362). For that

reason, a burst of rage proves power, competence and size; however, while this “alienating” rage repairs one form of shame, it leaves the individual “alone and unloved, shorn of personal companionship, highly visible, ugly, and cursed with a form of sexuality in which [he/she] experiences no mutuality” (Nathanson, *Shame* 365). In order to prevent the momentary sense of inferiority, anything that brings shame can be defined as insult that *must* be handled by a retaliatory *attack-other* tactic in the form of verbal or physical abuse, bullying of any kind.

Competent adults are those who are able to both recognize and process their affects, particularly the negative ones. For this thesis, shame is the negative affect that is recognized by Osborne and El-Lozy who in their plays show how shame is an impediment to the protagonists’ individual well being<sup>12</sup>. In John Osborne’s *Look Back in Anger*, Jimmy Porter’s explosion of anger on the Royal Court Theatre on May 8, 1956 described England’s dire postwar condition. Jimmy came to represent Osborne’s post World War Two generation of Angry Young Men (AYM), a catch-phrase that gained rapid currency as the defining image of a lost generation. Despite the play’s short-lived success, *Look Back in Anger* and its AYM truism was soon considered by many critics to be the turning point in postwar British theatre. Osborne was reputed to be the playwright who liberated modern British drama from the “genteel explorations of upper-middle class life and who opened the door to English social and political realities” (Denison x). Osborne began a dramatic revolution not in form but rather in content. His technique was not to attack a particular system directly but to change the way people felt and, therefore,

thought about the play's uncensored truths that caught, crystallized, and communicated a floating postwar mood, namely social stagnation.

Consequently, *Look Back in Anger* became the voice of all the bright, disillusioned AYM who found themselves disoriented and in pain a decade after the end of World War Two. The play is key to understanding this period because it candidly articulates the social alienation of a generation trapped in a world of meaningless codes and customs. Osborne's generation was energetic and motivated, they strived to fulfill their individual ambitions but found only monotony in postwar England. Unlike the rest of their society, the Angry Young Men were conscious of their ambitious desire to be successful. Unable to accept England's general postwar disintegration, these Angry Young Men were helpless to effect any (positive) change in their lives and their vulnerability nurtured their shame that was articulated as anger. In the past, when England's class system had come under fire in the satires of Wilde and Shaw, raw and shaming statements such as Osborne's were avoided due to restrictions from the Lord Chamberlain's Office (Philips 103). Censorship, however, did not discourage Osborne's theatrical innovation, which illustrated how artificial British theatre had become. Osborne and Jimmy, author and creation, soon became one in the public mind, a fusion which gave a powerful boost to the authenticity that is at the heart of the play (Sierz 139). The play thus earned the reputation as one that "kick started modern British drama," and as the "bomb that would blow a hole in the old theatre and leave a nice-sized gap too big to be patched up" (Philips 100; Rusinko 37). Jimmy Porter's anger was both real and spontaneous and it was congruent with Osborne's generation's temperament in 1956.

Jimmy was a man “raging for a life of feeling and enthusiasm in a society which appears inert and bereft of feeling” (Barnes 175). Its success was due its legitimacy in substance. It was not merely a work of fiction; it was a genuine drama about real events and people who are truly suffering. The “cheerful malice and savage humour” of Jimmy Porter are thus Osborne’s ways of “widening the range of response of a country in increasing trouble and unable or unwilling to confront it” (Denison 39). Hailed by Arthur Miller as “the only modern English play,” *Look Back in Anger* was accepted as a “landmine that exploded the old theatrical conventions” (Innes 98).

After this huge success, and having been labeled a “member of the Continental School of Pessimism,” John Osborne made known his objective: to make people “recognize the texture of ordinary despair” presented in his plays (Carter 2). Unlike Beckett’s view of the ‘world beyond’ with an audience merely shrugging its shoulders, Osborne’s focus is on the volatile troubles of the world before them. Alan Carter explains that if Osborne’s heroes “sometimes go to the very edge of the abyss then it is only to prevent us from falling in it” (Carter 2). The politics implied here by this ‘original kitchen-sink drama’<sup>13</sup> centre on “its gestures of negations, as well as its pervasive sense of powerlessness” (Sierz 139). Despite the strong presence of continental drama on the margins of popularity, it was anger, expressed through naturalism that won mainstream English audiences. For them, one way of developing a secure identity was to value ‘kitchen-sink’ realism and to reject upper-class aloofness, avant-garde modernism, and homosexual sensibility (Sierz 144).

However, Osborne's concern is not with providing answers to the audience's social problems. Instead, he was trying to show them, through profound emotional involvement (affective resonance) the *end result* of those shame-charged problems in order to emphasize life's common, yet overlooked dangers. His plays present evidence or statements of facts; they do not contain answers. He makes this assertion in an epilogue to his play *A Subject of Scandal and Concern*:

This is a time when people demand from entertainment what they call a "solution". They expect to have their little solution rattling away down there in the centre of the play like in a Christmas cracker. For those who seek information it has been put before you. If it's meaning you are looking for, then you must start collecting [it] yourself... (Carter 4)

Although some critics found profound hope in his sincere and conscious approach, others attacked him as a "ruffian and an intellectual upstart who was doing the unthinkable in the drawing room, threatening the good manners and comfortable illusions of middle-class life" (Carter 11). Obviously, the audience's intense and sudden exposure to Jimmy's painful tirades was a test of their society's tolerance for its postwar ailments. Categorized at the time by Kenneth Allsop as an 'emotionalist,' Osborne not only explored such feelings, he also flung them at the audience.

Certainly, when Jimmy, the sweet-seller 'looks in anger' at his present situation as a result of a delayed postwar shock, he is "generationally situated as [the] voice of a contemporary youth" attempting to respond to England's changing and accumulating ills (Denison 40). His personal way of looking back is congruent with his country's way of looking back: both share assumptions about explaining current woes by contrasting them with an idealized past (Sierz 138). English society, after the Second World War, began to

collapse as the prevailing political attitude in the 1950s was opting out. They were years of gradual recovery in which little seemed to be happening. The decolonization process that began in the 1940s was in a decade that affected Britain's socio-economic fabric. Numerous changes relating to the empire took place and Parliament and the media were bombarded with contentious issues such as problems of housing, labour shortages, as well as racial hostilities and riots (Bhatia 395). It was a period of slowly rebuilding and redirecting British industry after the war. Unsurprisingly, it was (psychologically) hard to adjust from a wartime situation, when there were still causes to fight for, to a peacetime one when causes could prove "merely quixotic or excuses for bullying" (Elsom, *Criticism* 73-4). Those Angry Young Men decided, as individuals, to contract out of the monotony that does not suit them in modern British society. They decided to brew their anger in a life without causes. Jimmy Porter's speeches strategically turned into truisms in 1956, the year *Look Back in Anger* was produced. 1956 was the year of Hungary and Suez<sup>14</sup>, one that was rich in causes for agitation which made Jimmy Porter the "hero of the dissatisfied young" (Taylor, *Look* 15). Hence, the paradoxical mixture of Jimmy's verbal power and his practical impotence reflects England's postwar prevailing hopelessness as seen in J.B. Priestly article for *Today* magazine entitled "What's wrong with Britain Today":

... far too many of the men running this country today have the wrong background, the wrong education and training, the wrong outlook. They may be nice, honest, intelligent fellows, but they are no more fit to run up-to-date Britain than I am to perform the Royal Ballet... We know vaguely that we are no longer top dogs in the world, but apart from that we don't know what kinds of dogs we are. We are in danger of turning into a *faceless* nation. (qtd. in Carter 19)

Clearly, England's image was changing from idle on-looker on Russia's imperialist aggression in Hungary to the adventurous former imperialist nation that still seeks foreign treasures. While the spectacles of Hungary and the fiasco of Suez carried on, the best policy seemed to be national resignation and neglect.

Combined with the nostalgic longing for the security and the 'innocence' of Britain before the First World War, the sense of futility and doom that reigned over Osborne's lost generation in 1950s left it unavoidably marginalized. Indeed, this prevailing futility is undeniable because those 'alienated' intellectuals were neither economically oppressed nor exploited; rather they experienced a frustration born of a lack of challenge, recognition, and honour (Cairns 203). They were a "significant segment of the educated, talented, sensitive, conscientious men... who would be capable of giving leadership and direction to the causes they shared with others" (Cairns 203). These Angry Young Men, being thus alienated from society, and in particular from its inner circles, looked at the postwar situation with sheer realism and objectivity. These "Angries" were

...a necessary ingredient of the period from which they grew, for they drew attention by their very 'publicity' to the need to express, by the written and spoken word, a view of life which corresponded to the reality of that life. No one attempted to say what changes were needed. What they did do was to describe the injustice which existed, and to stress, in plain everyday language the desperate need for *some* change. These angry young men were not prepared to accept what was offered, and more quite right not to do so. (Carter 29-30)

Still, the severity of the reality they witnessed soon became overwhelming disenchantment that turned their objectivity to cynicism. Unsurprisingly, out of the seven titles that Osborne penned, six are variations on the theme of anger: *Farewell to Anger*,

*Angry Man, Man in a Rage, Close the Cage Behind You, My Blood is Mile High* – and *Look Back in Anger*.

Kenneth Allsop explains how these “new dissentients” feel unassimilated because they display neither “enthusiasm for their elevation [because of their education] nor comradeship towards the idealists who put them where they are” (Allsop 27). In fact, opportunity was sparse in their society and the AYM became a “new rootless, faithless, classless class” who felt “misplaced and misprized” and eventually became “strangers in their own sort” (Allsop 27). Embittered by their peripheral position, those AYM found no refuge in any salvaging future. Moreover, the Empire was for them a lost certainty, as Jimmy explains, “If you’ve no world of your own it’s rather pleasant to regret the passing of someone else’s” (Osborne 17). Indeed, the Empire may be then the yearned for, yet absent guarantor of purpose, hence the undeniable sense of shameful futility that triggers their anger. Overall, what gives Osborne’s portrait of his angry protagonist its power is that it also exposes the deep-rooted shame that was caused by postwar national malaise.

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*Bay the Moon*<sup>15</sup>, written forty-two years after *Look Back in Anger*, also shows how men’s destiny is dictated by a dysfunctional government, a reality that Mahmoud El-Lozy substantiates with Ali’s futile patriotic quest. The play, though written in 1998, looks back at the anxieties of El-Lozy’s generation in the early 1970s when Egypt was on the brink of war with Israel. El Lozy, having the luxury of being an only son and therefore exempt from military service, examined the confusions of his less fortunate contemporaries and crystallized them in his play. He said that Osborne’s masterpiece was



one of his “favourite plays,” and that he identified with Jimmy’s anger and frustration and found that these mechanisms would work quite well with an Egyptian audience who still recalled the bitterness of the 1970s (El-Lozy e-mail).

Ali, the protagonist, is an engineer in the reserves. His small architecture business is barely surviving the economic instability of the ‘no-peace, no-war’ condition. His statement, “there is no future, only survival,” describes his struggle between the remote goals of serving his country and the aspiration to fulfill his personal ambitions (El-Lozy 15). Such bold and uncensored statements, an accurate recounting of the turmoil of Ali’s generation, resulted in the intervention of the Bureau of Censorship, which led to the cancellation of all performances on October 12, 2000 - two days before opening night. Having been El-Lozy’s assistant director, I still recall his remark to the cast members the night the play was banned: “Don’t let them see you bleed.” Unable to control the bitterness of defeat, El-Lozy developed a heart-condition later that year, and resumed his teaching at AUC.

After this ordeal, the play gained much popularity inside El-Lozy’s own academic crowd both in Cairo and the United States. On Wednesday May 16, 2001, there was a staged reading of *Bay the Moon*, directed by Tim Scholl, at the Studio Theatre University of California, Santa Barbara. El Lozy’s Ph.D. supervisor, Bob Potter, relayed to him in a consoling e-mail that the staged reading was “highly successful” and that he would have “been pleased with the cast’s acting, the directing, and proud of the strength and with the emotional power of the script in performance” (Potter e-mail). He added that the arc of the play, with Ali’s transformation from a “breezy yuppie into an embittered and disabled

ex-soldier [left] a very powerful impression” on the multicultural audience, but would have been more compelling for an Egyptian audience (El-Lozy’s primary interest group, of course).

When President Anwar el-Sadat came to power in the 1970s, he proposed reorienting Egypt’s economy through what is known as Infitah or “open-door” policies. When Sadat imposed an unrestricted opening of the economy to foreign imports and investment, this new direction in economic policy gradually reintegrated Egypt into the international capitalist system (Hinnebusch Jr. 57). However, in the early 1970s Egypt’s economy and agriculture were stagnant, and with the rapid population growth the country quickly lost its ability to feed itself (Hinnebusch Jr. 58). Egypt’s economy could not endure the ‘no-war, no-peace’ state that had cost it US\$ 8-9 billion since 1967 to rebuild and retrain its forces, mainly because tourism income was negligible and the Suez Canal revenue had ceased in 1967. As a result, the country’s morale was falling, and government corruption was more pervasive than it had ever been in Nasir’s 1950s. Thus, the eventual manifestations of the economic, social, political, and intellectual malaise were blamed on Sadat’s ineffective policy (Amin 9). These factors accumulated and eventually led to the 1973 October War with Israel that was waged to end the Israeli occupation of the Sinai Peninsula.

Sadat believed that Infitah was inseparable from his foreign policy. He feared losing the material and moral support that Egypt had been getting from other Arab nations, especially those in the oil-exporting countries. He also needed the respect and cooperation of the superpowers. Soon, Egypt became a net exporter of its own people;

peasants, as well as engineers, doctors, teachers, plumbers, and electricians went off to wealthier Arab lands to earn higher wages (Goldschmidt 149). The government cancellation of subsidies on goods that were not necessities for the poor caused fierce rioting against Infitah and increased the inequality it caused.

The most overt manifestation of this crisis was the ‘student movement’ which spilled over from the campuses in massive demonstrations and unrest in Egypt’s cities in early 1972. Sadat’s failure to deliver a promise that 1971 would be the ‘year of decision,’ that is, of war with Israel, was openly ridiculed by the passionate students. For them, this ‘no-peace, no-war’ state was intolerable as they were subjected to the prospect of interminable military service that made planning a normal life or career almost impossible (Hinnebusch Jr. 51). Like Ali in *Bay the Moon*, they were left in limbo between the call of duty and personal ambition. All they asked for was closure: by going to war, they would revive their national sense of worth, free themselves from the hovering military service, and hopefully assemble their lives and find an opportunity for *personal* achievement.

In accordance with El-Lozy’s attempt to capture these generational anxieties, *Bay the Moon* takes place in Cairo between September 1973 and April 1974, a period charged with protests and uncertainties about the outcome of the 1973<sup>16</sup> October War. However, the play was written in 1998, 27 years after Sadat failed to fulfill his promise. El-Lozy explains the significance of the delay:

By 1998 it was obvious that Egypt had been had. No national dignity, no prosperity, no peace, nothing. Just surrender. The coming generations will have a heavy burden to carry. (El-Lozy e-mail)

Sadat maintained command by explaining that he was not against fighting to regain Sinai, but that it was a matter of timing (Aker 14). Ultimately, Sadat's unchanging policies were ineffective, which catalyzed the 1972-3 'student movement' whose members were not unlike Osborne's Angry Young Men. In an effort to stop severe rioting, students were allowed to present their demands to Parliament. Their demands included "release of arrested colleagues, freedom of the press, withdrawal of intelligence personnel from campus, and permission to reconstitute banned youth organizations" (Arnburst 123). Sadat, who was then Speaker of Parliament, assured them that they had nothing to fear and gave them his personal phone number in case they had any trouble. They were arrested at home that evening. These students wanted to revive Egypt's celebrated past but their post-1967 intensifying contempt (composite of anger and dissmell) confirmed that an "impurity was introduced into [their lives] that required an "immediate strategy of purification" (Tomkins, *Exploring* 391).

Since, shame-humiliation is triggered by any impediment to positive affect, namely interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy, its function is to *instantaneously* reduce interest in the shame-inducing object by reducing or limiting positive affect. Sadat's unfulfilled promise to fight for Egypt's land and dignity caused these students to yearn for victory and for a progressive livelihood, which, if realized would certainly diffuse their shame. In an effort to alter their stagnant lives, the student demonstrations were undoubtedly an authentic expression of Egyptian patriotism that were spontaneous and largely classless, directed neither by right nor left ideologies. Like the Angry Young Men, these students were situated between longing for a denied experience and living with

consuming contempt. For example, they spoke nostalgically of ‘sweet Egypt’ and ‘beloved Egypt’, and their heroes were men like Ahmed Orabi, the minister of war who in 1882 gloriously led the Egyptian army against Khedive Taufik and the British invasion. Sadat’s docility rekindled their contempt and therefore, their unrelieved shame was “painful in direct proportion to the degree of positive affect it limits” (Nathanson, *Shame* 138).

The student movement was a product of the disillusionment after the 1967 defeat by Israel that ended with Israel occupying Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula. This national ‘scarlet letter’ lingered among the passionate students who were committed to restore Egypt’s land and dignity, but their army lost its resources because of the defeat. Instead, their weapons were posters, leaflets, sit-ins, petitions and massive demonstrations that demanded a free parliament and condemned the sterility of the Arab nations. El-Lozy, who is a few years younger than his protagonist – not an entirely different generation – recaps this awkward condition:

~~We were all caught in that trap. There will have to be a war, but it looks like the leadership won’t fight it and in the meantime we are all rotting on the front. No future. Nothing. And we wanted to fight. We were no pacifists. That’s for the generation that came after us and were brainwashed by Sadat. Their children will have to fight for their survival now. (El-Lozy e-mail)~~

More often than not, the government blamed such uprising on a ‘minority’ both to undermine the rebels’ credibility and to reassure the misinformed public. Compared with a rough estimate of 6,733,000 (mainly young people between the ages of twenty and thirty) who John Osborne was both representing and depicting, the student movement of 1972-3 reached unprecedented levels. Despite government propaganda, neither in

England nor in Egypt were these 'rebels' peripheral. There were 60,000 undergraduates of Cairo University alone<sup>17</sup>, not to mention other higher-learning institutions (Cairns 194; Hirst 128). The Higher National Committee of the National Student Movement held the students' petitions in reserve, and not a word reached the pages of the Cairo press. Soon the protests were not confined to the university campus and the students swarmed into the heart of Tahrir (Liberation) Square throwing stones and shouting slogans. After hundreds of them were arrested, Sadat delivered his verdict by publicly dishonouring them: The Higher Committee of the National Student Movement became the 'Committee of National Treason' (Hirst 128). They were considered a "deviationist minority," and society was encouraged to "eradicate this disease from its midst" (Hirst 129).

In Egypt, after the 1973 October War, Sadat was hailed the "hero of the crossing" and a popular military leader in his own right (Hopwood 108). However, he was struggling with internal economic affairs, as well as major international obstacles to reach a peace between Israel and all the Arabs. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 1978, U.S. President Carter intervened and invited President Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Begin to Camp David, Maryland, "to seek a framework for peace in the Middle East" (Hirst 302). This meeting was considered the "last chance for peace that would determine the fate of the region for many generations, either by peace or endless struggle" (Hirst 303). In March 1979, after long negotiations, a peace treaty was signed between Egypt and Israel, which agreed to "withdraw from Sinai within three years of the treaty, normal diplomatic and trade relations were to be established, and Israeli ships would pass unhindered through the Suez Canal" (Hopwood 110). However, since Israel could not agree nor settle on the

autonomy of the Palestinian people in the West Bank, Sadat was branded by the Arab world as a 'traitor' and his peace treaty was rejected among many Arab nations. Egypt's gradual isolation decreased Sadat's popularity, so he reacted to criticism by imprisoning his opponents and strengthening censorship. All his promises and policies were falling in ruins and that led to his assassination in October 1981.

Unlike *Look Back in Anger's* thorough and immediate post World War Two examination, *Bay the Moon* is not a commentary on Egypt's post-1967 Arab-Israeli war condition, but on the post-separate 1979 peace with Israel. El-Lozy started writing a play in 1981 as a "response to Camp David and Egypt's betrayal of itself and its history" (El-Lozy e-mail). While no one in real life speaks as eloquently as Jimmy and Ali do, their language works at the much-needed level of fantasy or wish-fulfillment.<sup>18</sup> Thousands of people wanted to be filled with their intense energy, to survive by being immune to prevalent postwar complacency, and to have some, if not all, of the postwar youths' qualities evident in *Look Back in Anger*:

All the qualities are there, qualities one had despaired of ever seeing on the stage - the drift towards anarchy, the instinctive leftishness, the automatic rejection of "official" attitudes, the surrealist sense of humour, the casual promiscuity, the sense of lacking a crusade worth fighting for, and underlying all these, the determination that no one who dies shall go unmourned. (Carter 27)

Though writing about *Look Back in Anger*, Carter's postwar qualities can also be seen in *Bay the Moon's* protagonist who ardently 'rejects all "official attitudes" and yearns for a "crusade worth fighting for." Nevertheless, Jimmy admits, "the heaviest, strongest creatures in the world seem to be the loneliest" (Osborne 94). Fully aware of their *difference* or being apart from the herd, these two (anti)heroes are alone and they know it

– their final fear is that no one will listen to their frustrated contemplation about life and its futility. Thus, their persistent articulation of their postwar anxieties leaves them in despair and isolation.



## Chapter Two

### Toxic Rage: *Look Back in Anger*'s Affective Resonance

*Look Back in Anger* is conventionally structured in three acts. Jimmy Porter and his wife, Alison, live in a tiny attic flat in the Midlands of England with a close friend, Cliff Lewis. It is the 1950s, and Jimmy and Cliff run a sweets stall. Jimmy's background is lower-middle class. He has been educated and is well read and extremely articulate. Alison's background is upper middle class. Generous, affectionate, loyal, and ingenious, Cliff is one of life's givers, and so he tolerates, as does Alison, much of Jimmy's verbal abuse. Throughout the play, Cliff serves as a buffer between Jimmy and Alison in their domestic strife. Alison finds out she is pregnant but she does not tell Jimmy. The arrival of Alison's actress friend, Helena, makes the whole living situation intolerable. Helena arranges for Alison's departure with her father, Colonel Redfern. Helena takes Alison's place and stays with Jimmy for several months. Eventually Cliff, who tells Helena that things between Jimmy and Alison would have been over long ago were it not for his presence, leaves. Alison returns, weak and exhausted after losing the baby and, soon after, Helena announces her departure. The buffers have gone, and now Jimmy and Alison only have each other. The play ends with their embrace (Rusinko 38-9).

Loaded with anger, Jimmy Porter is not merely the critic of his society, he is also the object/victim of criticism. He is the person who will demonstrate England's social malaise, which he himself is suffering from. In *Look Back in Anger*, Jimmy Porter laments, "I suppose people of our generation aren't able to die for good brave causes any

longer. We had all that done for us, in the thirties and the forties, when we were still kids. There aren't any good brave causes left" (Osborne 84). This speech has become central to many readings of the play, especially those which see it expressing the social sterility of the 1950s for which Jimmy is the rebel spokesman. Contrasted with the underlying nostalgia, the purposelessness and lack of commitment of this angry generation produced the isolation and alienation that characterized the 1950s. The dire postwar era caused a general absence of interest in local and international political causes. As the nation lost its Empire and its prominence in global affairs, instead of bringing together a sympathetic public, new cause for resentment and alienation on the domestic front emerged (Smith 199). Jimmy Porter's political life encapsulates the process of marginalization of the intellectual. The commitment to "good brave causes" has lapsed before his generation, rather than never having been present. Hence, Alison and Helena describe Jimmy by saying, "he was born out of his time" and "there's no place for people like that any longer – in sex, or politics, or anything. That's why he's so futile" (Osborne 90). It is precisely this shameful absence of social and political commitment that produced Jimmy's anguish and anger in the play.

Ashamed to be part of this society and frustrated at its stagnation, he puts on a show of verbal attacks. Through him, Osborne opens up a much wider subject than just rebelliousness or youthful anger, since social alienation or the feeling of being trapped in a world of meaningless codes and customs is the cause of the tension in the play. Tomkins explains that the "angry individual" is also a "loving, excited, enjoying, fearful, ashamed, distressed, disgusted person as well as an angry person" (Tomkins, *Affect*

3:111). Without knowing Tomkins' definition, Osborne does *capture* these juxtaposed qualities when he imposes Jimmy's detailed exposé on the audience:

He is a disconcerting mixture of sincerity and cheerful malice, of tenderness and freebooting cruelty; restless, importunate, full of pride, a combination which alienates the sensitive and insensitive alike. Blistering honesty, or apparent honesty, like his, makes few friends. To many he may seem sensitive to the point of vulgarity. To others, he is simply a loudmouth. To be as vehement as he is to be almost non-committal. (Osborne 9-10)

Obviously, the audience suspects a wave of unpredictable behaviour; however, Jimmy's outbursts are carefully planned yet his delivery is spontaneous because his mind-set is in constant flux.

The anticipated anger, though, is problematic because of the affect's negative social consequences. While terror, distress, and shame are initially internalized, anger, and especially rage are distinctly threatening to the receiving other. Moreover, anger, the most urgent of all affects, in view of the fact that it combines the "highest level of sustained neural firing," guarantees that bad matters will turn even worse (Tomkins, *Affect* 3:111-5). Thus, whilst the audience members are trying to keep up with Jimmy's tirades, they are also caught in the tight grips of *affective resonance*. *Look Back in Anger* was such an unparalleled success because its *affective resonance* had such a strong impact on the audience.

*Affective resonance* is a form of attention-grabbing empathy that occurs *only* when one resonates with another's broadcast affect(s) and (implicitly) agrees to *actively* interlock in that transfixing affective experience (Nathanson, *Shame* 110). In the play's intimate indoor setting, Jimmy broadcasts his full-blown affect anger-rage to capture his

audience's undivided attention via affective interaction. As the anger increases, so does its affective urgency; as the intensity of Jimmy's rage increases, the audience remains in uninterrupted *affective resonance*. Therefore, Osborne, who believed that his audiences are mostly "fashionable turnip-heads,' who laugh at the wrong places and snigger when a character says 'something particularly outspoken,'" intended this intense encounter to make sure that Jimmy's fiery 'message' reached them (Allsop 107). During the play, both Osborne and Jimmy attempt to "provoke an audience response through increasingly energetic and elaborate acts of performance" (Egan 414). Through Jimmy, Osborne helps the audience pay attention to the insecurities they were unable to articulate.

Experiencing *Look Back in Anger's* economic disclosures is a rather painful process that reveals to the audience their society's ailments. The play is set in Jimmy Porter's one-room flat in a large Midland town. The bed-sitting-room setting is important both realistically and symbolically. All domestic functions (except bathroom) exist within one space: eating, entertaining, and sleeping. The absence of a compartmentalized household shows that Jimmy is young and poor, and the play is thus the antithesis of the pre 1950s (comfortable) 'drawing-room drama' (Wandor 41). To further expose the society's troubles, Jimmy is never lost for words in his meticulously structured tirades, which keep the audience always under his control. Osborne was bombarded with critics disgruntled with Jimmy's "blistering honesty" that was considered "unthinkable" at the time. According to them, it "threatened the good manners and comfortable illusions of middle-class life" (Carter 11). The painful feelings of shame-humiliation usually follow a moment of exposure or an uncovering that reveals aspects of the self (or of society) that

are peculiarly sensitive, intimate, and vulnerable. The play was in fact an explosion that smashed those “comfortable illusions” to smithereens by exposing the society’s shame, by crystallizing its disillusionment, and, above all, by *allowing* the audience members to be angry at it. *Look Back in Anger*’s success was the result of producing “the right play in the right place at the right time” (Carter 21).

Living in emotional exile, Jimmy Porter’s main script is *nuclear* because it represents his tragic and futile vision of an un-idealized life that remains unchanged in spite of his mounting anger. According to Tomkins, a *nuclear* script is about living tragedy and is characterized by “an intense internal ‘dialectic’ between what is *desirable* and what is *actualized*, or greed (inflation of positive affect seductiveness) versus cowardice (inflation of negative affect by intimidation, contamination, or confusion)” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 376, my italics). In a *nuclear* script, “the self victimizes itself into a tragic scene and captures itself into a lifelong war that need never have been waged,” against enemies (including the angry self) who are not as dangerous as they have become for the *nuclear* self (Tomkins, *Exploring* 377). In brief, *nuclear* scripts oscillate between trying to fix what is wrong with one’s life and life’s inevitable failure: they are “inherently involved in idealized *defenses* against idealized *threats* to idealized *paradises*” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 377).

In Osborne’s portrayal of Jimmy’s character, the juxtaposition of “greed” and “cowardice” is evident. The personal tirades of this articulate intellectual, one who has nothing to look forward to and, indeed, no one against whom to vent his anger, except those who are closest to him, present the audience with an *absolute nuclear* script.

Furthermore, the essential auditory quality that gives anger its urgency is available only in performance. Thus, Jimmy's fully developed anger *nuclear* script has an immediate effect on the audience – an advantage that readers cannot fully experience.

*Nuclear* scripts are paradoxically two-valued because they are required to simultaneously minimize negative affect and maximize positive affect instead of finding optimizing strategies. Such bifurcating action strategies make *nuclear* scripts alternate between extreme scenes. Whereas greed requires a maximum of reward, cowardice requires a minimum of punishment – this double maximum *cannot* be achieved and the *nuclear* script consequently fails in *both* respects (Tomkins, *Exploring* 381). Jimmy neither attains the prize nor escapes the defeat. Because of his position of social inferiority, Jimmy hungers for power but his helplessness leaves him with a sick and bitter taste of defeat. His education at a red-brick university – or “white tile” as he calls it – rewarded him with an intelligence left agonizingly idle. He is weighed down with longings and aspirations totally at odds with his circumstances. He earns his living minding a sweets stall in a dull Midland town. His ambitions, which he constantly re-defines, are thus thwarted, and he is left not knowing what he wants, and/or not getting there. Jimmy clearly sees the limitations of playing a “normal” active role “in the world and [he] launches vicious but essentially ineffective attacks upon this world from his ironically passive position as sweet-seller” (Dixon, 521). Therefore, Jimmy's personal failure produces a sense of incompetent self. Living in a *nuclear* shame-ridden cycle, his accumulating frustrations turn into self-loathing and are re-directed outwards into aggression against the other characters, especially Alison.

Moreover, *nuclear* script formation is also magnified by *multidimensionality* where the individual is engaged in trying to understand what has happened, why it has happened, what might have prevented it, how responsible he was for what happened, how responsible the other was, or both...etc. (Tomkins, *Exploring* 382). Jimmy constantly engages in exhausting rhetorical pursuits trying to explain to the audience their society's troubles that need change. However, by obsessing over excessive analysis he further complicates the *nuclear* scene and adds yet another ingredient to his sizzling frustrations!

The following passage illustrates how Jimmy's logic coils into more complicated interpretations that ultimately transform his idealized paradises into hells:

Why on earth I ask I don't know... Why do I spend ninepence on that damned paper every week? Nobody reads it except me. Nobody can be bothered. No one can raise themselves out of their delicious sloth. You two [Alison and Cliff] will drive me around the bend soon – I know it, as sure as I am sitting here. (Osborne 15)

While living in a *nuclear* life-long war, Jimmy tries to find a reason for all this futility. Instead of succumbing to "delicious sloth," he deliberately contaminates this scene in an effort to resist being a "turnip-head" like his fellow-citizens. He then progresses into his *nuclear* scene by wishing for an (unattainable) positive affect:

Oh heavens, how I long for a little ordinary enthusiasm. Just enthusiasm – that's all, I want to hear a warm, thrilling voice cry out Hallelujah! I'm alive! I have an idea. Why don't we have a little game? Let's pretend that we're actually human beings, and that we're actually alive. Just for a while. What do you say? Let's pretend we're human. Oh, brother, it's such a long time since I was with anyone who got enthusiastic about anything. (Osborne 15)

Jimmy ends most of his spiral speeches in despair, and he eventually diverges into a nostalgic recollection of a 'better' past or a wish for a more tolerable present. Regardless

of the incident, Jimmy *always* demands an immediate change, yet Osborne wants to prompt the audience to find change not on stage, but in their own lives – he simply presents the problem, not the solution.

Melancholic reminiscences are another characteristic of *nuclear* scripts given that the victim is unable to recover what has been lost. For instance, Jimmy remembers Madeline, who was ten years older than him and his lover when he was eighteen. The only time Jimmy's stage direction reads "quietly" is when he recalls being with Madeline. On another occasion, he yearns for his old friends and for "Hugh's mum." Therefore, it is important to note that *nuclear* scripts do *not* attempt to recover the original good scene, but rather aim at recovering or producing an *idealized* good scene, and that is precisely what Jimmy is doing by recollecting the unattainable glorious past – thus, he looks at his present in anger and contempt.

Sovereign in his *nuclear* script, Jimmy further victimizes himself by looking with anger back at his past, namely at his father's death. His pain is deep-rooted, going back to a father who came back from the war in Spain when Jimmy was only ten years old, and whom Jimmy watched slowly die over a period of twelve months. Actually, Jimmy develops his *nuclear* script during these early years:

But *I* was the only one who cared! Everytime I sat on the edge of his bed, to listen to him talking or reading to me, I had to fight back my tears. At the end of the twelve months, I was a veteran.

*He leans forward on the back of the armchair.*

All that that feverish failure of a man had to listen to him was a small, frightened boy. I spent hour upon hour in that tiny bedroom. He would talk to me for hours pouring out all that was left of his life to one, lonely, bewildered little boy, who could barely understand half what he said. All I



could feel was the despair and the bitterness, the sweet, sticky smell of a dying man.

You see, I learnt at an early age what it was to be angry – angry and helpless. And I can never forget it... I knew more about – love... betrayal... and death, when I was ten years old that you will probably ever know all your life.

*They all sit silently.*

(Osborne 58)

This speech is a testament to how he accumulated enough bitterness early on in his life and triggered a *nuclear* script. He grows unable to “purify or integrate what has become intolerably contaminated or conflicted, and to simplify or to unify what has become hopelessly turbulent in complexity, ambiguity, and rate of change” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 376). Not only is Jimmy angry at his helplessness as a child, he is also frustrated that his helplessness still lingers years after. As a young boy, he felt “angry and helpless” without knowing *why*, but now he is delivering to the audience his understanding, which revealed his generation’s post World War Two shame. In other words, with his father’s death, Jimmy reaffirms his futile postwar present as he realizes that all “good brave causes” of England’s glorious past died as well.

After this bitter recollection, he further victimizes himself by redirecting his anger at Alison who, instead of supplying him with the comforting *affective resonance* he needs, agrees to go to church with Helena. Her passivity and silence catalyzes his anger and he launches another escalating verbal attack:

**Jimmy:** (*not looking at her, almost whispering*). Doesn’t it matter to you – what people do to me? What are you trying to do to me? I’ve given you just everything. Doesn’t it mean *anything* to you?

*Her back stiffens. His axe-swinging bravado has vanished, and his voice crumples in disabled rage.*

I rage, and shout my head off, and everyone thinks “poor chap!” or “what an objectionable young man!”

Perhaps, one day, you may want to come back. I shall wait for that day. I want to stand up in your tears, and splash about in them, and sing. I want to be there when you grovel. I want to be there, I want to watch it. I want the front seat. I want to see your face rubbed in the mud – that’s all I can hope for. There’s nothing else I want any longer. (Osborne 58-60)

Enraged, Jimmy begins by accusing her of deliberate neglect and indifference. In accordance with the development of a *nuclear* scene, Jimmy perceives Alison’s silence as deliberate neglect and indifference, which he uses as an ‘idealized threat,’ one that would rekindle more anger as an ‘idealized defence.’ He then finishes off his outburst by cursing Alison to ‘contaminate’ her good scene with negative affect to force her to engage in his much-needed *affective resonance*. Thus, Jimmy’s marriage is the most turbulent part of his domestic life. When recalling how they hurried on their wedding day, Jimmy explains/contaminates that good scene by saying, “We were in a hurry...Lusting for the slaughter!” (Osborne 54). Jimmy intentionally alienates Alison by such remarks, yet he is in constant need of her both emotionally and sexually. He even confesses to her, “There’s hardly a moment when I’m not – watching or wanting you” (Osborne 15). However, Jimmy considers his vulnerable emotional dependence on Alison (yet another) ‘idealized threat’ in his *nuclear* script. Therefore, in order to magnify his *nuclear* scene he must instigate a *counteractive nuclear* subscript while taking on the *attack-other* mode in the Compass of Shame.

According to Tomkins, *counteractive nuclear* subscripts are attempts to reverse the sign of the affect in the scene via recasting. So, the individual who had been terrorized would attempt to terrorize the other, or if humiliated would attempt to humiliate the

other...etc.(Tomkins, *Exploring* 383). The negative affects involved are usually the ‘masculine’ affects of anger, disgust, and dissmell. Counteraction may take the form of “atonement of guilt, or increased skill to reduce shame, or toughening of the self to better endure distress” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 383). Since anger is the dominant affect in the play, the characteristics of the *attack-other* pole in Nathanson’s *Compass of Shame* is yet another way by which Jimmy’s hostile behaviour can be explained.

Jimmy’s aggressive behaviour fits perfectly with Nathanson’s *attack-other* pole, where the individual reacts after a string of stored sequences has unlocked a “door, behind which lies anger” (Nathanson, *Shame* 366). Jimmy’s anger is not unprovoked; it is triggered when he recounts society’s postwar turbulence. Osborne’s generation, distilled in Jimmy’s action (or inaction in that case), is tainted with shame related to matters of power, competence, and size. It was a time marked by a “shrinking number of jobs, increased immigration from the ex-colonies, and an increasing awareness of race relations in a postcolonial Britain that had to redefine itself as a declining world power” (Bhatia 392). Thus, Osborne’s play captured a particularly painful moment in Britain’s history.

Throughout the course of the play, Jimmy repeatedly engulfs himself in alienating rage, which makes him end up feeling “alone, unloved, deprived of personal companionship, highly visible, ugly and cursed with a form of sexuality in which [he] experiences no mutuality” (Nathanson, *Shame* 365). In other words, rage repairs one part of shame, while it magnifies most of the problems associated with the remainder of it. To enter the realm of an *attack-other* mode is to advance from one form of attack to another: from being “recipient of” to “source of” attack. The inevitable failure of this cyclical

pattern demonstrates how Jimmy is trapped in a *nuclear* script that sizzles rather than soothes the shame-anger bind.

*Attack-other* scripts foster systems of externalization, blame, and paranoia as methods for the ‘detoxification’ of the intrinsically painful affect *shame-humiliation* – the Angry Young Men’s curse. Jimmy usually feels endangered by the depths to which his self-esteem has been reduced; therefore, he embarks on an *attack-other counteractive nuclear subscript* to reduce the negative affects and resume the (nonexistent) *idealized* scene. Therefore, in a scene when Jimmy is reminiscing over the peaceful and unattainable past relationship with Madeline, he becomes vulnerable due to his temporary calm state – even though neither Cliff, his friend and buffer, nor Alison attempted or even dared to interrupt his brief musing. Jimmy then realizes how, on a shallow and purely economical scale, Alison’s friends are better than his, and he decides to wreak havoc. He turns this entrenched sense of lack into a *nuclear* scene because he cannot re-live Madelaine’s *idealized* good scene. Despite Alison’s “earnest” plea, Jimmy’s outburst shifts abruptly:

**Jimmy:** ... None of your other friends have got [guts] either.

**Alison** (*very quietly and earnestly*). Jimmy, please – don’t go on.

*He turns and looks at her. The tired appeal in her voice has pulled him suddenly. But he soon gathers himself for a new assault. He walks C., behind Cliff, and stands, looking down at his head.*

**Jimmy:** Your friends – there’s a shower for you... They’re either militant like Mummy and Daddy. Militant, arrogant and full of malice. Or vague. She’s somewhere between the two. (Osborne 19)

He continues his enraged monologue while Cliff and Alison listen in silence. In keeping with his *nuclear* script, Jimmy considers their silence a form of affective indifference that

would ignite more rage. The stage directions at the temporary halt in his tirade of contaminating the recollection of the *idealized* Madeline read:

*There is no sound, only the plod of Alison's iron. Her eyes are fixed on what she is doing. Cliff stares at the floor. His cheerfulness has deserted him for the moment. Jimmy is rather shakily triumphant. He cannot allow himself to look at either of them to catch their response to his rhetoric, so he moves across the window, to recover himself, and look out.... He's been cheated out of his response, but he's got to draw blood somehow.*  
(Osborne 21)

In other tirades, stage directions read, “He has lost them, and he knows it, but he won’t leave it,” and “he sharply looks for a response, but there isn’t any” (Osborne 14). In many ways, Jimmy is longing for *any* response that would affirm his victory; yet his paradoxical script formation reacts to their replies with patronizing wit and sarcasm, and he gets back at their silence with more abuse. Thus, they are all living in a vicious circle.

Since there are no gradations in *nuclear* scripts, the sense of self, or self-image, constantly fluctuates as the good scenes turn bad and vice versa. Hence, Jimmy’s sense of self shifts from bitter self-inflicted abuse to sarcastic praise of his defective self. For example, he says, “Old Porter talks, and everyone turns over and goes to sleep” (11), “Sometimes, I wonder if there isn’t something wrong with me,” and “Why *don't* we brawl? It’s the only thing left I’m any good at?” (53). Then, his sense of self becomes brutally negative and shocking and says, “... letters in which I am not mentioned at all because my name is a dirty word” (36). In this case, Jimmy’s behaviour shows evidence of another *nuclear* subscript known as a *celebratory* script. These scripts describe, explain, and celebrate the *nuclear* scene that was once so wonderful and then turned so bad. While still experiencing the continuing ripples of his *nuclear* scenes, Jimmy, who

during the course of play wins numerous *nuclear* victories by contemptuously punishing his idealized enemy, will react as an “omnipotent” hero. But the same celebratory script may dictate surrender to total “ignominious defeat” moments later, to be followed by the negative celebration of the sequence of how the mighty have fallen (Tomkins, *Exploring* 382-3). Perhaps the only way he can control his imperfect self-image is by mocking himself so that no one else will mock him, so he calls himself “rotten bastard,” “fool,” and “stupid” and many more names. Of course, Jimmy fluctuates between victory and defeat in endless verbal attacks on everyone, everything, and sometimes nothing. However, he celebrates winning when his intellectual competence prevails over the characters’ verbal clumsiness, and he celebrates his defeat, because it reaffirms his already-established pessimistic views about living in dire postwar England.

Alison and her family represent everything that Jimmy and his generation despise. Unlike Jimmy, she is the product of a well-off army family, a member of the middle-class, and her family is socially secure. With an ‘enemy’ in his camp, he creates his own war-zone and his own targets. Namely, his attacks on the old class system and its past lifestyle focus on her family; nonetheless, she does not react to Jimmy’s taunts about her middle-class background. For Jimmy, marrying Alison will test his value-system, which he aggressively imposes on her to substantiate its validity. When we first see Alison in the play, she is implanted in the scene, already part of the set, “standing below the food cupboard, leaning over the ironing board” (Osborne 10). The stage directions emphasize the marginal impression Alison makes:

Hers is the most elusive personality to catch in the uneasy polyphony of these three people. She is turned in a different key, a key of well-bred malaise that is often drowned in the robust orchestration of the other two. Hanging over the grubby, but expensive, skirt she is wearing is a cherry red shirt of Jimmy's, but she manages somehow to look quite elegant in it. (Osborne 10).

This description establishes that Alison is yet another unresponsive 'piece' in Jimmy's few collectibles; her voice (if any) is "drowned" in Jimmy's tirades, besides, she is wearing one of his shirts while ironing another. The operative word here is "manages," one that Jimmy confirms by saying that "she's a great one for getting used to things" (Osborne 16). Unsurprisingly, her first line in the play is "What's that?" which she says "absently," to further indicate her passive resignation as Jimmy's wife in his household (Osborne 11). Some of the stage directions that describe her 'physical actions' are, "without looking up," and "leans against the board and closes her eyes" (Osborne 22-6). Alison's dominant affect is *distress-anguish*, and her main script is a *limitation-remediation* script that combines *commitment / resignation* script elements, as well.

According to Tomkins, *distress-anguish* is a fundamental human affect primarily because of the omnipresence of human suffering. It is less toxic than fear, yet still a negative affect that motivates human beings to solve disagreeable problems, without a probability of running away from the many problems that confront them (Tomkins, *Exploring* 73). The crying response, which is the most visible manifestation of distress-anguish, is both biological and auditory. It must communicate to the organism itself and to others that 'all is not well,' and being an auditory stimulus, it provides a considerable safety factor for the otherwise helpless infant/human. Not only does the cry contain

information for the self and others about a “variety of matters needing alleviation, but it also motivates the self and others to reduce it” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 75).

Alison, in *Look Back in Anger*, physically cries at the end of the play, yet throughout the play she is carrying the White Woman’s Burden, as Jimmy puts it, of sustaining all the negative affects imposed on her by Jimmy that cause her *distress-anguish*. She is melancholic, yet determined to survive, which explains why her main script is *commitment / limitation-remediation*. The latter addresses those aspects of the human condition perceived by the subject to be imperfect, to which some enduring long-term response *must* be made and which, it is believed, *can* be remedied (Tomkins, *Exploring* 349). These scripts involve an optimizing strategy, where the subject divides the scenes into good and evil and by striving for one and at the same time striving against the other.

Alison is fully aware of Jimmy’s imperfections as well as the drawbacks of marrying him. When she describes her love-hate relationship with Jimmy, she mentions being attracted to him for his going “into the battle with his axe swinging round his head-frail, and so full of fire,” and admits that she had “never seen anything like it,” but she sadly concludes that it is “the old story of the knight in shining armour – except that his armour didn’t really shine very much” (Osborne 45). Despite her generally passive position with Jimmy, Alison realizes that this “spiritual barbarian” suddenly threw her down and away from her previous “happy, uncomplicated life” into the “challenge of marrying him” (Osborne 67). It is precisely this high degree of the characters’ receptiveness in the play that makes *affective resonance* successful. In other words,



Osborne wants the audience to be responsive and, like Jimmy and Alison, be able to dissect the problems at hand.

Moreover, Alison's perseverance whilst living with Jimmy involves a *commitment* script that is based on "courage and endurance to invest and bind the person to long-term activity" (Tomkins, *Exploring* 350). It also involves magnifying the positive affect in such activity by absorbing and neutralizing the various negative costs of such committed activity. Such unswerving commitment, in fact, implies the acceptance of any negative affects, as well as the convoluted promise of reward for the suffering. Representing this scenario, Alison endures Jimmy's emotional abuse, his pipe's foul smell, and his verbal tirades. She brawled with her parents for weeks over Jimmy until she decided to cut herself off from them, from her friends, and everyone just to be with him 'for better or for worse.'

In general, *commitment* scripts are essentially positive because the subject's suffering will (hopefully) be rewarded once the positive affect prevails. However, when the subject's primary task is neutralizing the unyielding negative affect, such commitment is analogous to that in a master/slave relationship. Indeed, Alison willingly accepts the draining task of neutralizing Jimmy's anger-rage hoping that he will appreciate her as the 'good' slave. Osborne substantiates Alison's capacity to absorb Jimmy's negativity by writing that she "manages" to look elegant in Jimmy's shirt. Alison is the most tolerant witness to Jimmy's verbal (and sometimes physical) abuse. She listens to his eloquent illustrations that aim at shaming and humiliating her to re-establish his victory. He says to Helena, "My wife – that's the one on the tom-toms behind me. Sweet and sticky on the

outside, and sink your teeth in it, (*savouring every word*) inside, all white, messy and disgusting” (Osborne 49). Alison, when overwhelmed by Jimmy’s abuse, resorts to Nathanson’s *withdrawal* pole on the Compass of Shame.

*Withdrawal* can become part of an affect-reduction script or an affect-avoidance script; in both cases, the actions involved are accepted in order to minimize the experience of shame. Retreating to this pole is accompanied by an amount of safety; therefore, when Jimmy’s anger triggers shame and distress in Alison she retreats. The following passage is the conclusion of one of Jimmy’s long and painful *attack-Alison* outbursts, and her reaction to it demonstrates a classic *withdrawal* strategy:

**Jimmy:** Here it is. I quote: Pusillanimous. Adjective. Wanting of firmness of mind, of small courage, having a little mind, mean spirited, cowardly, and timid of mind. From the Latin pusillus, very little, and anumus, the mind. (*Slams the book shut.*) That’s my wife! That’s her isn’t it? Behold the Lady Pusillanimous. (*Shouting hoarsely.*) Hi Pusey! When’s your next picture?

*Jimmy watches her, waiting for her to break. For no more than a flash, Alison’s face seems to contort, and it looks as though she might throw her head back and scream. But it passes in a moment. She is used to these carefully rehearsed attacks, and it doesn’t look as though he will get his triumph tonight. She carries on with her ironing. Jimmy crosses, and switches on the radio. The Vaughan Williams concert has started. He goes back to his chair, leans back in it, and closes his eyes.*  
(Osborne 22 )

Jimmy enjoys his almost uninterrupted victory by relaxing and listening to the music. His twofold triumph is Alison’s burden: she absorbs his explosive negativity, and resists collapsing in front of him. Without Alison’s endurance, Jimmy’s ‘victory’ is superficial. In an effort to reduce the toxicity of the Jimmy-induced shame, she unknowingly follows Nathanson’s *withdrawal* strategy of passivity. However, the decision to remain silent

when she is a target for shame has its drawbacks because withdrawal will eventually magnify the shame and confirm the affect-driven belief that isolation is justified (Nathanson, *Shame* 325). Nevertheless, the *withdrawal* system is beneficial because the realm and duration of isolation can allow the shamed/distressed Alison to regroup and recover her self-esteem while preparing for another inevitable outburst. Therefore, this isolation can foster healing as it protects from further injuries.

Alison adopts this strategy, and her *withdrawal* helps calm Jimmy (to some extent), but over time her sense of shame increases to intolerable levels and she switches from defense by *withdrawal* to defense by *attack-self*. Evidently, her pregnancy is a contamination<sup>19</sup> that adds to her *distress-anguish* and her *shame-humiliation* an additional and discomforting *fear-terror* affect. She reacts against her *withdrawal* by moving into a brief *decontamination* script, in which some “impurity is introduced into a life” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 391). Regardless of the nature of its source, the impurity or contamination is recognized by the individual as ‘bad’ as long as it has a negative impact on the individual’s present. Thus, a *decontamination* script operates on the dynamics of the drive auxiliary response of *disgust* that triggers disenchantment until the contaminant is effectively removed (Tomkins, *Exploring* 393).

*Look Back in Anger*, in structure and style, is like a conventional well-made play, where at the end of Act I the catalyst of the play’s dilemma is introduced. As well as the anticipated arrival of Jimmy’s “natural enemy,” Helena, Alison announces her pregnancy and the play from hereafter focuses on Jimmy’s reaction to these unexpected events. Without knowing Tomkins’ affect-control scripts, Osborne provided Alison with the

'scenes' that would take her out of *distress-anguish* and into *fear-terror*, and she says, "In the morning, he'd feel hoaxed, as if I were trying to kill him in the worst way of all. He'd watch me growing bigger every day, and I wouldn't dare to look at him" (Osborne 30). Therefore, Alison leaves and adopts an *attack-self* strategy that will help her overcome fear of isolation and abandonment by Jimmy. Initially she thinks she will completely withdraw from this 'nut-house' and collect the shattered remains of her self-esteem and live with her well-to-do parents. However, she loses the baby and, according to Jimmy's noncommittal character, she is thus decontaminated and can *resume* the positive scene. Alison's return crystallizes her *commitment* script that was briefly interrupted by her departure at the end of Act 1. However, she accepts the negative affect of losing the baby, and accepts her reunion with Jimmy as a reward for her suffering. Alison's unyielding acceptance proves that with or away from Jimmy, like a 'good' slave, she sustains her *commitment* script.

By the end of the play, Alison's friend Helena, another momentary contamination, and Cliff, an effective buffer and counterpoint to Jimmy, disappear from the Porters' madhouse. Helena was a source of triangular rivalry to Jimmy; she temporarily threatens his ability to control Alison. However, after Alison leaves, Jimmy takes Helena as a counteractive lover, rather than a passive wife. Cliff is dis-encharmed by Helena's presence in Jimmy's life, even though it made Jimmy relatively calmer. Moreover, Helena is a source of contamination for Jimmy; she imposes herself on his house, plans for Alison to leave, and above all, she physically attacks Jimmy by slapping him. The gentle Cliff could not accept Helena as a substitute wife for the aggressive Jimmy,

because this can disrupt Alison's *commitment* script. Cliff is responsible for neutralizing the negative as much as he can when he sees them both tearing the insides of each other out. Similarly, counteractive, contaminating, confusing, and intimidating Helena could not compensate for Alison's passivity because that would interrupt Jimmy's *nuclear script*. Therefore, Jimmy and Alison both need each other to resume their manifest scripts. Jimmy needs the constant fuel from the calm Alison rather from the potentially aggressive Helena. Alison needs the constant negativity to carry out her neutralizing *commitment* script. Unsurprisingly, the play ends with their much-needed reunion.

After years of silently enduring Jimmy's ordeal, Alison can not get rid of her innate *commitment* script by temporarily escaping Jimmy's 'nuthouse.' The play ends with a very stirring physical and verbal exchange that shows how they fear isolation and abandonment:

**Jimmy:** I may be a lost cause, but I thought if you loved me, it needn't matter.

*She is crying silently. He moves down to face her.*

**Alison:** It doesn't matter! I was wrong, I was wrong! I don't want to be neutral, I don't want to be a saint. I want to be a lost cause. I want to be corrupt and futile!

*All he can do is watch her helplessly. Her voice takes on a little strength, and rises.*

Don't you understand, It's gone! It's gone! That- helpless human being inside my body. I thought it was so safe, and secure there... I was in pain, and all I could think of was you, and what I'd lost. (*Scarcely able to speak.*) I thought: if only – if only he could see me now, so stupid, and ugly and ridiculous. This is what he's been longing for me to feel. This is what he wants to splash in! I'm in the fire, and I'm burning, and all I want is to die! It's cost him his child, and any others I might have had! But what does it matter – this is what he wanted from me!

*She raises her face to him.* Don't you see! I'm in the mud at last! I'm groveling! I'm crawling! Oh, God – *She collapses at his feet.*

(Osborne 95)

Upon Alison's return, everything is resolved without much fuss. She hesitates about staying and continuing her speech. Knowing that Alison will eventually break down, he pulls her up using his voice without holding her. In fact, Jimmy gently initiates her breakdown by blaming her for leaving him. Alison collapses and embraces the *attack-self* defense. She admits her guilt about leaving Jimmy, her physical and mental anguish regarding the child, and her intolerably negative self-image. Jimmy "watches her helplessly" as she continues to list their losses. Most importantly, Alison admits that leaving him was "wrong," and that is what calms Jimmy and makes him ready to receive her anguish with open arms – it is yet another celebratory *nuclear* scene for him. In effect, Jimmy's triumph is Alison's genuine loss of her child and her silent idleness.

### **Disenchanted Bears & Distressed Squirrels**

The bear and squirrel symbolism in the play is far from obscure; it is deep and it encapsulates the essence of Jimmy and Alison's characters. The images appear at the three moments that correspond to Jimmy and Alison's union, split, and reunion. Their game reasserts Jimmy's *reparative nuclear* subscript and Alison's *commitment-resignation* script. A *reparative* script is one in which the individual attempts to recover excitement and enjoyment, not via relief, not via revenge, but directly (Tomkins, *Exploring* 383-4). These scripts could be restricted to a level of fantasy and yearning to save the self and the other– which is what Jimmy and Alison go through. For Alison, the imagery represents a peaceful positive state that she wishes to restore. She explains animals' function while packing to leave at the end of Act 1 by saying:

It started during those first months we had alone together. It was the only way of escaping from everything – a sort of unholy priest-hole of being animals to one another. We would become little furry creatures with little furry brains. Full of dumb, uncomplicated affection for each other. Playful, careless creatures in their own cozy zoo. A silly symphony for people who couldn't bear the pain of being human beings any longer. And now, even they are dead, poor little silly animals. They were all love and no brains. (Osborne 47)

This revelation shows how unbearable life is in Jimmy's household. In a fantastical mini-setting, both Jimmy and Alison let loose all their discontents and use only their "furry little brains." Naturally, after Alison leaves, Jimmy "holds the teddy bear close to his face... picks it up gently... looks at it quickly and then throws it downstage" where it hits the floor with a "thud, and makes a rattling groaning sound," then he buries his face in the covers and cries (Osborne 63). This little piece represents how Alison's departure makes Jimmy shake and whimper with fear of being left alone like the teddy bear. Certainly, Jimmy and Alison's scripts are intertwined, and they cannot be substituted by other scripts. Jimmy cannot replace the passive Alison with the fiery Helena, and Alison cannot replace hot blooded Jimmy with gentle Cliff.

Only when she admits that her collapse is what Jimmy has been "longing for" does he hold her and orchestrate how this scene will end:

*He stands, frozen for a moment, then he bends down and takes her shaking body in his arms. He shakes his head and whispers:*

**Jimmy:** Don't. Please don't... I can't ---  
*She gasps for her breath against him.*

You're all right. You're all right now. Please, I—I... not any more...  
*She relaxes suddenly. He then looks down at her, full of fatigue, and says with a kind of mocking tender irony:*

We'll be together in our bear's cave, and our squirrel's dry, and we'll live on honey, and nuts – lots and lots of nuts. And we'll sing songs about

ourselves – about warm tress and snug caves, and lying in the sun. And you’ll keep those big eyes on my fur, and help me keep my claws in order, because I’m a bit of a sippy, scruffy sort of bear. And I’ll see that you keep that sleek bushy tail glistening as it should, because you’re a very beautiful squirrel, but we’ve got to be careful. There are cruel steel traps lying about everywhere, just waiting for rather mad, slightly satanic, and very timid little animals. Right?

*Alison nods.*

*(Pathetically).* Poor squirrels!

**Alison:** *(with the same comic emphasis).* Poor bears! *she laughs a little. Then looks at him very tenderly, and adds very softly.* Oh, poor, poor bears!

*She slides her arms around him.*

CURTAIN

(Osborne 95-6)

By repeating, “You’re all right. You’ll alright now,” Jimmy substantiates his need for Alison’s collapse. She is unable to safely retire in her *withdrawal* pole. Instead, she has adopted an *attack-self* script, which Jimmy finds more agreeable than his *attack-other* stratagem, hence, his gentle reassurance that she is “alright.”

Neither Alison nor Jimmy can live apart from the other’s suffering; they would be lost without it. In many ways, they are the authors of each other’s scripts. Through playful irony, they decide to retire to the dwellings of their respective furry animals as an escape from their turbulent scripts. Given that their scripts’ connection is inevitable, *together*, Alison and Jimmy reside at Nathanson’s *avoidance* pole, at which they use strategies of denial or disavowal in order to avoid the ‘knowledge’ and experience of their unbearable reality. They *must* adopt this game as a distraction from their painful scripts in order for them to maintain some level of excitement-joy. Still, the *avoidance* pole is contaminated



with an aspect of fear of losing this enjoyment – this fact makes their resignation in *avoidance* indeed heartbreaking.

Indeed, Jimmy's passive twisted anguish reflects the anxieties of his generation. The play successfully distilled the futility of Osborne's generation by portraying a 'household' that he describes as a "narrow strip of hell" (Osborne 60). *Look Back in Anger* begins with rage and ends with fantasy in a cyclical pattern, where the departure of Cliff and Helena and the loss of the baby makes it a deeply melancholic experience for the audience who see only losses unfold before them. This profoundly *un*-happy ending is meant to leave the audience unsettled in their *affective resonance*.

The absence of the possible mediators from the play makes the Jimmy-Alison denial of shame at the end comprehensible, and their resort to fantasy at the *avoidance* pole a *final escape* from the predictable collision of their turbulent scripts. Osborne succeeds in presenting his angry generation's turmoil by introducing a play in which this shaming and hostile society alienates Jimmy and Alison in their *own* homes. Away from their confidantes, and from their script-driven selves, they resort to fantasy, which if it persists will be the threshold to insanity. Even though Jimmy and Alison are 'united' at the end, this play is not about the survival of love or the perseverance of marriage against all odds. Despite its conformity to a well-made play's structure, *Look Back in Anger* is far from a play that will smoothly develop and merely entertain. *Look Back in Anger* is about Britain's postwar sterility, which is symbolized by loss of the Porters' baby. Actually, Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* was a long lecture, or a 'lesson in feeling' presented by Jimmy to an audience that will reflect on the play's truths.

## Chapter Three

### “Riddle Me This, Riddle Me That”: Affect and Survival in *Bay the Moon*

*Bay the Moon* is a play in two acts. The action takes place in Cairo between September 1973 and April 1974. Ali is an Egyptian engineer in the reserve and his American girlfriend, Carol, is a student at The American University in Cairo. Ali’s close friend, Ibrahim, is a student activist and a communist who disapproves of Ali’s recent carefree lifestyle and his living arrangement with Carol. Ali’s background is upper-middle class. A few years before the play’s action begins, Ali refuses to work for his father, quarrels with him, moves out of his parents’ house, and opens a small interior design office with Ibrahim. Once an activist himself, Ali is both well-read and extremely articulate. At the end of scene one, Ali is recalled to the barracks and leaves. In the meantime, Carol meets with Larry, an American agent who uses Carol as a low-level informer, who casually tells him about Ali and in particular about Ibrahim. Shortly after Ali leaves, the Egyptians cross the Suez Canal marking the beginning of 1973 October War. Despite Larry’s warnings, Carol resolutely decides to wait for Ali. While Carol and Ibrahim’s hostility gradually fades away, Larry tries to win Carol’s affection and she kicks him out of the apartment and cuts all ties with him.

A few months later, Ali returns injured and indignant. Hopelessly optimistic, his parents make every effort to reassure him that a bright future and a suitable bride await him. He accepts to meet the silly, Americanized Nadya who makes off after he wreaks verbal havoc on both her and Carol. At the end of play, General Abul Fadl reproaches Ali

for his “unorthodox” actions during the war, which will lead to his forceful exile. Ali informs Carol of his unceremonious banishment. After exchanging promises to see each other in the future, the play ends as they set the table for a cozy home dinner.

El-Lozy’s play’s title is taken from Julius Caesar’s famous quotation, “I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon, than such a Roman,” which is included as an epigraph to the play (El-Lozy 4). As the play’s title suggests, El-Lozy is an ardent opponent of any form of surrendering. He found Brutus’ character in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* interesting because, like *Bay the Moon*’s protagonist, Ali, he was “someone with integrity caught up in a world of conspiracy, lies, and treachery” (El-Lozy e-mail). In fact, both Jimmy and Ali heartily reject surrender to such an extent that they retaliate against their society’s ineffectiveness with verbal aggression. Their ‘angry’ words strike like daggers, but in the end they are merely ‘baying the moon’ in an attempt to survive their postwar turmoil *and* remain psychologically alive despite their devalued existence.

Over the course of the play, Ali tries many shame-control strategies by shifting between the poles in the Compass of Shame. Unlike Jimmy’s fully-developed rage at the beginning of the play, Ali’s generational resentment develops into a helplessness that ends in both physical and emotional exile. In fact, Ali loses and is shamed / attacked by his country, his parents, his confidante, and even by Carol, his lover. There are of course a few fleeting moments of *affective resonance*; however, they fall short of rescuing Ali from the inevitable affective exile. Living in an atmosphere contaminated by the still-lingering post-1967 shame, his life is now characterized by shame-related troubles which he must face *and* survive.

In *Bay the Moon*, song lyrics function as between-scene commentary that further illustrates Ali's ordeal. During scene changes, the songs' music and lyrics continually recap the previous scene's mood and/or prepare the audience for the approaching scene. Overall, the songs are cheerless and cynical; therefore, as the play progresses, Ali moves from an emotional to a physical war-zone that catalyzes and magnifies his already-painful turmoil. The first scene, which to some extent is an exposition, is saturated with shame, and Ali adopts all four poles for defense. The play begins with an underlying fear of the unknown: before the curtains rise, the audience listens to The Doors' song "Summer's Almost Gone," whose title, in keeping with El-Lozy's predisposition, is rather pessimistic. The song also generates a sense of suspense as it poses the question "Where will we be when the summer's gone?" numerous times, which is precisely what the Egyptians were asking in September 1973 at the peak of the 'no-war, no-peace' limbo state. Like Osborne, El-Lozy was trying to capture the nation's fears and uncertainties; no wonder the play's opening line is, "we've got to clear up this *mess* before iftar<sup>20</sup>!" (El-Lozy 7, my emphasis).

It was indeed a 'messy' time for Ali and his generation when "there [was] no future, only survival" (El-Lozy 15). Ali at the beginning of the play, adopts an *avoidance* strategy to minimize the shame inflicted on him from this 'messy' situation. Nathanson explains that those who choose the system of shame-avoidance live with *internalized shame*, which is caused by "sense of a defective self" (Nathanson, *Shame* 341-2). Anyone who has a personal defect works to make the 'judging other' concentrate on that of which the 'defective' individual is proud. In fact, El-Lozy was going to name the play *The*

*Defector*, a thought which demonstrates that the protagonist's defective self is an essential part of his character. However, he found that 'baying [at] the moon' was a more accurate depiction of Ali, whose outstanding ability to articulate his anxieties could not effect any (positive) change in his life.

In the *avoidance* pole, Ali undertakes strategies of 'display and competition' to distract the 'judging other' from his defective self. For instance, he interrupts Carol before she begins lecturing him on smoking:

**Carol:** (*coming into the room, wearing a light cotton dress*) I remember you saying you were going to take advantage of the fasting month to quit smoking. Don't you know that cigarettes are...

**Ali:** Real killers. They're very bad for my health. Do I want to die at the age of forty?

**Carol:** All right, all right, I won't say another word. (El-Lozy 7)

Here, Ali finishes her sentence, yet he remains both object and subject of criticism, which proves Nathanson's assertions that sometimes shame-avoidance strategies can use self-defeating tricks (Nathanson, *Shame* 337).

In fact, there are many incidents when Ali uses his oratory performance in a complex *attack-self / attack-other* defense tactic. In other words, he attempts to distract the 'judging other' from his defects, so he launches a verbal attack that intensifies his shame even when he attempts to reduce it. Not unlike Jimmy's agitation with Alison's background, for Ali, living with Carol is paradoxical because, as an American in 1970s, she is considered an 'enemy.' As a result, Ali unleashes several patronizing verbal attacks against her government and her people in an effort to exercise his mastery. The purpose of these attacks is twofold: it is a test of her perseverance and loyalty to him (or her

ability to absorb the negative affect), and his only way to retaliate against the political injustice, as shown in this exchange:

**Carol:** Why can't [Ibrahim] get it through his thick head that I personally didn't start the war in Vietnam or...

**Ali:** He only says that since America is a democracy, you are as much responsible for your government's actions as Nixon and Kissinger, and if that isn't true...

**Carol:** I am certainly not!

**Ali:** Then America is not a democracy.

**Carol:** That's an unfair conclusion, you have...

**Ali:** Dear, innocent Carol. You are finally coming face to face with the consequences of being an American.

**Carol:** And what's that supposed to mean?

**Ali:** That east of New York, and west of Los Angeles, being an American is not an asset, but a liability. The rest of the world doesn't love you as much as you love yourself or think you deserve to be loved.

**Carol:** Oh, I've learnt that. I learnt it the moment I took off from JFK.

**Ali:** But Ibrahim is right, you know. Nobody is innocent in a democracy. All are equally guilty by association. Unfortunately, for your tender souls, the right to vote and free elections have robbed you of your political innocence... You've lost your virginity... unlike us

Thus far, Ali has adopted a mild *attack-other* tactic that aimed at Carol's 'people.' Since this rather playful exchange takes place in the opening scene, it is obvious that El-Lozy is providing the reader with a sample of Ali's line of attack which will intensify as the play progresses. He continues, except now adopts an *attack-self* strategy that will prevent Carol from retaliation:

**Carol:** I hadn't heard that one before.

**Ali:** But it's true! We Egyptians have held on to our virginity for... what?... close to five thousand years now. I doubt anyone will be able to

break our record. And we have no intention of giving it up. Not yet. Not for quite a while. It's thoroughly satisfactory, really. It gives us the inalienable right to feel politically untainted... individually, that is... and complain, complain endlessly...

**Carol:** I hear you. That's one thing you and your friends are very good at.

**Ali:** Of course, and as a "traditional people" – you may want to check Reader's Digest for the most recent definition of the term – we cling to our political virginity with all the strength of our apathy. All right, "Enlightening the Barbarians" lesson of the day is over. Anyway, I'm sure you can handle Ibrahim. I confess that for a moment I thought you were considering calling the Sixth Fleet to your rescue. (El-Lozy 9-10)

In many ways, these attacks are *nuclear* in nature because by attacking an 'other', Ali asserts that he is indeed a (shamed) victim, so these distractions are complex *attack-other* / *attack-self* defenses. Ali, in accordance with an *attack-other* contempt strategy, is the superior speaker, and the purpose of his potent discourse is to induce shame in Carol. His bitterly eloquent presentation is actually a complaint; therefore, the uselessness of his protest makes him shift to an *attack-self* mode as a protective measure against a possible shame-inducing retaliation by Carol. Moreover, the *nuclear* victory of these attacks is accompanied by interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy, which are the main affects that govern the *avoidance* pole.

Like Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, *Bay the Moon* is El-Lozy's means to uncover the disillusionment of Ali's generation; as a result, Ali emerges as a highly-sympathetic character. He is El-Lozy's semi-autobiographical mouthpiece who, like Jimmy, must endure the consequences of the ailments revealed by his intellectual capacity. Ali also believes Jimmy's assertion that there are 'no good brave causes left' as long as Egypt is in the no-war, no-peace' state. He announces his resignation by saying, "I am not willing to sacrifice the little energy and optimism I still have left to fight a losing battle" (El-Lozy

17). However, the fact that he is in the army's reserve and can be called up any minute proves that such exclamations are futile. In fact, a few years before the play begins, upon realizing that the students' demonstrations were run by a "bungling idiot with dreams of martyrdom" he leaves the student movement (El-Lozy 14). He renounces the whole "cloak and dagger business" and decides to preserve the "little energy and optimism" he has left in a *carpe-diem* lifestyle that would at least dissociate him from *active* negative affects, and (hopefully) provide him with positive ones (El-Lozy 14).

Obviously Ali is in *denial*, which, in keeping with the lingering fear-terror affect in the *avoidance* pole, implies that he is trying to avoid a shame-inflicting scenario by resisting any active involvement in his unbearable political reality. Despite his full comprehension of the turbulent political situation, he retires and *denounces* the effectiveness of the once-noble student movement. As a result, he develops a sense of defective self, and his deep-seated pessimism proves to him that *any* active involvement in the 'cause' is futile. He becomes a cynical political analyst rather than a helpless political activist. However, unable to accept the futility of his generation, Ali recoils to an acute stage of the *avoidance* pole, *disavowal*, which is a more specific term that indicates "one's inability to comprehend information that remains unwanted because it triggers unwanted (namely negative) affect" (Nathanson, *Shame* 337). Therefore, when Ali receives a note to present himself at the barracks, he disavowingly downgrades the 'duty's call' and says, "Oh! damn! I'll have to cancel my squash game. What a nuisance!" (El-Lozy 23). He has no enthusiasm whatsoever to be part of this military façade. In an effort to reassure Carol, who worries that something might happen to him, he mocks the



army and says, “(laughing) Rubbish! It’s only maneuvers, I told you. Nothing’s going to happen. We do this every year. It’s all a game to keep us busy... Listen, we go through this damn routine every autumn. All we do is stage mock attacks with live ammunition. We play with our toys for a few days, make a lot of noise, then everyone goes back home. Okay?” (El-Lozy 24). Obviously, Ali’s politics are contradictory: he sleeps with the unarmed ‘enemy,’ denounces his over-enthusiastic ‘comrades,’ and scorns the never-accomplished national ‘cause.’ In the play, Ali bitterly fluctuates between denial and pessimism.

Overall, all the songs’ lyrics are a source of dramatic irony, but El-Lozy preserves the suspense because the play as a whole, as well as each individual scene, begins and ends with the fear of the unknown. Therefore, as the play progresses, Ali moves from an emotional to a physical war-zone that catalyzes and magnifies his already-painful turmoil. The essential exposition in Scene 1 ends with “laughter and the sounds of a pillow fight from within” their bedroom and The Doors’ song “I Looked at You” starts playing as the lights fade to blackout. The audience listens to the song’s playful tune and the words, “I looked at you. You looked at me. I smiled at you. You smiled at me. And we’re on our way. No we can’t turn back, babe. Cause it’s too late. Too late, too late. Too late.” These words indeed forecast the inevitability of Ali’s fate because he certainly “can’t turn back.”

During the few months that Ali spends on the front-lines, the play unravels more exposition for Carol. Like Alison in Osborne’s play, she is involved in a *commitment* script; however, Carol’s is much milder and can be easily suspended. Carol *does* love Ali,

and she insists on staying at his apartment until he returns, even when she loses all hope of his return. Besides, despite being a “low-level” government informer to Larry, she cuts all ties with him when he attempts to ‘replace’ Ali. In some way, Carol experiences a minor decontamination script by refusing Larry’s advances, which further confirms her commitment to Ali. She also makes peace with Ibrahim, and this makes her better-equipped to *receive* Ali, the bitter, shell-shocked veteran.

The play reaches its climax at the end of Act 1 with Ali’s dishonorable return. El-Lozy appropriately selected Blind Faith’s song “Can’t Find My Way Home” plays before the lights come up on his entrance:

Come down off your throne, And leave your body alone  
Somebody must change  
You are the reason I’ve been waiting so long, Somebody holds the key  
Well I’m near the end and I just ain’t got the time  
Well, I’m wasted and I can’t find my way home  
Still I can’t find my way home And I ain’t nothing wrong, but I can’t find  
My way home.

The words trigger feelings of confusion and helplessness that can only be delivered to the audience through the lyrics’ *affective resonance*. It is precisely at this point in the play that the audience will be emotionally transfixed as they witness Ali’s bitterness swell beyond reasonable limits in Act 2 after his dispirited return. El-Lozy points out that despite the general feelings of triumph, there were “many obscure moments in the war” (El-Lozy e-mail). Ali clarifies this remark and says sarcastically, “the fireworks didn’t end with the cease-fire” (El-Lozy 42). Ali’s return is contaminated with the bitterness of defeat, because he “took matters into his own hands” after the cease-fire in an attempt to salvage some of the dignity that was lost in the previous wars. As he explains

indifferently to Carol, he does so by “engaging some troops in an unauthorized operation after the cease-fire went into effect” (El-Lozy 92). Unfortunately, instead of being saluted for his courageous act, he is going into exile because he did not follow the proper chain of command. He is reprimanded for his *truly*, if not only, honourable accomplishment. The authorities disgrace him by calling it ‘mutiny’, thus he returns physically and emotionally traumatized with his head painfully lowered in shame.

Nathanson also explains that a person exposed to repeated sequences of a stimulus capable of producing surprise-startle, for example war veterans, will likely develop post-traumatic stress disorder, also known as shell shock. Sudden war-zone noises such as bursts of gunfire, the noise of bombs will be followed by a group of events triggering terror and helplessness. Recurrent episodes of the sequence “‘startle-terror-helplessness’ produce a family of memories that recur in toto whenever the affected individual is startled, even when the new experience of surprise occurs in a benign situation” (Nathanson, *Shame* 90-1). For instance, when Carol prepares a “steak” for dinner Ali smells it, and it triggers in him initial war-zone surprise-startle of smelling burning human flesh. His inability to remain calm manifests itself physically as both disgust and dismell, so he throws it out and vomits (even though he has not ingested any steak), while Carol is helplessly asking, “What did I do wrong?” (El-Lozy 44-5). After witnessing the horrors of war and the reality of government corruption, Ali is no longer immune in his playful *avoidance* pole tactics. He is now more vulnerable to the toxicity of the negative affects than ever before.

Act 1 ends with the brief, yet intense ‘steak’ scene, which leaves the audience suspended in unsettled *affective resonance*. El-Lozy takes advantage of their high level of attentiveness and plays Pink Floyd’s song “Wish You Were Here,” which actually scorns their comfortable distance and ignorance:

So, so you think you can tell Heaven from Hell,  
Blue skies from pain.  
Can you tell a green field from a cold steel rail?  
A smile from a veil?  
Do you think you can tell?

“Wish You Were Here” is almost like a dialogue, which adds to the significance of the lyrics especially with the constant alternation between an all-knowing speaker and a naïve listener. In fact, Ali’s traumatized character does alternate between these roles, a detail which further highlights his inner turmoil as shown in the next verse:

And did they get you to trade your heroes for ghosts?  
Hot ashes for trees? Hot air for a cool breeze?  
Cold comfort for change?  
And did you exchange a walk-on part in the war for a lead role in a cage?

Certainly, Ali sacrificed his convictions, his optimism, his energy, and his comfort for a lost cause. Now he is left with only bitterness. The song concludes with a plea for a bitter empathic ‘other’ who will join Ali and stir up the memory of all the losses:

How I wish, how I wish you were here.  
We’re just two lost souls, swimming in a fish bowl year after year,  
Running over the same old ground.  
What have we found? Same old fears.  
Wish you were here.

The lyrics’ subtext develops into a very effective prelude to the major transformations the audience sees in act 2. Ali’s excruciating shame repositions him from the active-display of *avoidance* pole to the most private *withdrawal* pole, which (regrettably) allows him to

be overwhelmed. *Withdrawal*, also known as “shame-simpliciter,” is accompanied by a certain amount of safety from any immediate increase in shame (Nathanson, *Shame* 318). It is a metaphor for escaping and remaining passive and in search of solace by “withdrawing to some deeply private space where the wounds of shame can be licked until the pain has decreased enough to permit re-entry into the ever-dangerous social milieu” (Nathanson, *Shame* 318). The much needed period of isolation will “allow [the] individual to regroup and recover self-esteem so that emergence into the world of others is facilitated or enhanced” (Nathanson, *Shame* 320). Therefore, to minimize the experience of shame, Ali avoids ‘being seen by a judging other’ in this demeaning state, and he takes advantage of *withdrawal* as an affect-reduction script (or affect-avoidance script) to protect him from further injury, as well as foster healing. Although, *withdrawal* is usually accompanied by distress, in some severe cases, fear-terror worsens the experience of shame by adding discomfort, which disrupts the ‘safety’ component in the pole. The intensity of Ali’s fear of being seen by anyone, even by Carol, makes him resort to an *attack-other* script, which strengthens her *commitment* script, and he eventually succumbs to her will.

Act 2 begins with Ali watching television while Carol is typing at the table. He is cold, unresponsive and his sentences are uncommonly brief, but he has not lost his sharp sarcastic edge. The following sequence shows how this vital scene transpires with Ali initially adopting *withdrawal* and how he shifts between the poles in an effort to reduce the toxicity of his postwar shame<sup>21</sup>. When the scene opens, he is somewhat calm in his *withdrawal* pole, trying to remain undisturbed in his shame-escaping pole, and refusing to

connect physically with Carol. Shortly after she goes to sleep, Ali tries to change the bandage on his leg injury. Unable to sleep, she returns and witnesses Ali's lack of ability:

**Carol:** Do you need any help with that?

**Ali:** (*Shoving the paper bag behind a pillow and pulling up his trousers*)  
What are you doing here?

**Carol:** I couldn't get any sleep.

**Ali:** Try counting camels.

**Carol:** It's not just a scratch, is it? (*Ali does not answer. Pause. She takes a step forward*). Here, let me take a look at it.

**Ali:** (*violently*): No! Stay away from me!

**Carol:** Please?

**Ali:** I said no!

**Carol:** Don't you think you ought to let a doctor do that?

**Ali:** I can take care of myself.

**Carol:** I know you can, but you're not a doctor. You need professional care.

**Ali:** I need to be left alone.

*Pause.*

**Carol:** You should go to a hospital and get proper treatment.

**Ali:** (*savagely*) I am not going to any bloody hospital!

The fact that his *withdrawal* intensifies and merges with an *attack-other* script when Carol offers to “take a look” at his wound substantiates how *withdrawal* is connected with ‘issues of seeing and being seen.’ If Ali allows her to “look” at his physical wound, he will further expose the severity of his unprotected shame. He is resisting being the object of shame at all costs, and the stage directions intensify from “violently” to “savagely.” In an effort to reduce Carol's persistence, Ali gives her a cynical account of how going to

the hospital will cause him a lot of agony. Also, how, according to his country's pretentiousness in this military charade, his "butchered leg" is in fact his own "personal badge of patriotism and courage" (El-Lozy 48). After a 'pause' Carol does not resign, so Ali employs an *attack-self* defense by recounting the horrors of the war-zone and how he wished he died with "the others" (El-Lozy 49). As the scene progresses, Ali's now-intense and cruel *attack-other* verbal outbursts remind the audience of his previous verbal playfulness in the opening scene:

**Ali:** I'm not going anywhere.

**Carol:** You need medical care and you're going to get it whether you want it or not.

**Ali:** Shut up! Don't throw your American goodness all over me!

**Carol:** What?...

**Ali:** Go practice your missionary spirit somewhere else. I don't need it... You hear me?... I don't need it. I'm a man. I can take care of myself. I'm still a man...

**Carol:** You're my man, and I'm not going to stand here and watch you bleed to death.

At this point Carol completely absorbs his verbal attack and takes control of the situation by calling Ibrahim.

*Carol goes to the bedroom to fetch the keys and comes back immediately.*

**Carol:** Let's go.

**Ali:** You're not going to leave me there?

**Carol:** I'm not going to leave you there

**Ali:** (*getting up*) You shouldn't have done this.

**Carol:** Yeah, but I did. Now let's go.

**Ali:** You'll pay for this.

**Carol:** I know.

*They exit as the lights fade to black out.* (El-Lozy 47-50)

Obviously, Ali adopts the three negative poles in the Compass. Although he detests being an object of pity, he “reluctantly” succumbs to Carol’s *commitment* script, which functions primarily on the much-needed *affective resonance*. He *knows* that she cares, but when he asks her, “You’re not going to leave me there?” he is testing her perseverance because of his inherent fear of isolation and abandonment. However, Carol *does* pass the test by staying in the apartment, and if he has *any* doubt that living with her will stir up his already-inflamed shame, then he would leave or ask her to leave.

In the above scene, Ali is resisting Carol’s effort to make him go *outside* his safe *withdrawal* shell; he is not resisting her kindness. He adopts the insulting *attack-other* script to trigger in her severe shame-humiliation that will cause her to end her imposing and shame-inducing *commitment* script. Unlike Alison’s yielding will in *Look Back in Anger*, Carol’s shame-free will is impenetrable, and she is in command of the scene. Unsurprisingly, as the lights fade to black out, John Lennon’s song “Look at Me” plays, and the words, “Look at Me. Here I am. Who am I supposed to be?” are repeated many times to confirm Ali’s helplessness and the inevitability of his shame’s exposure as he confronts the hostile eyes on his way to the hospital.

Three weeks later, Ali reluctantly goes to meet his parents at the Gezira Sporting Club for tea. Compared with Carol’s *affective resonance*, Ali’s parents are “selfishly attached to their petty individual concerns” (El-Lozy 15). They represent the money-oriented masses that profited from Sadat’s Infitah policy without paying much attention to Ali’s generation who, as his father puts it, “was caught in a most awkward bind” (El-Lozy



55). Ali's parents are, in fact, convinced that postwar reconstruction will repair the damage on the political and economic levels. They believe that money can heal all the wounds, and this shameless deflation of the war's psychological impact on Ali and his generation is an essential part of dreams of postwar rejuvenation:

**Father:** Now that the war is over, there will soon be amazing opportunities for foreign investment...

**Ali:** The Israelis are still in Sinai. The war is not over.

**Father:** That's a detail. It'll be worked out.

**Ali:** Quite a bloody detail, wouldn't you say?

**Mother:** No politics, please.

**Ali:** Very well. We'll keep it vague and ignore the unpleasant detail that produced the opportunity we are all interested in. (El-Lozy 56)

Ali knows that getting through to his oblivious parents is like fighting yet another a losing battle. His inability to renounce his independent lifestyle had compelled him to 'walk out' on them a few years before the action of the play begins. Nevertheless, they still want him to fulfill their long-awaited dream of becoming the 'ideal' son with the ideal family. His parents believe that Carol, the "American girl" who, according to his mother, "spends her life in pursuit of herself," is not a suitable candidate for marriage or building a family (El-Lozy 53). His mother's illusion is truly shameless:

**Mother:** Ali, it's over. The war is over. At least as far as you are concerned. You are out of it for good now. And you're still young. Don't think that these years have been wasted. You have all the time in the world now to pick up the pieces and build a happy, prosperous life for yourself. (*Pause*). I feel so sorry for you young men. I really do. Your generation has seen the worst of it. But as I already told you, it's over. Now is the time for healing and for making substantial plans about the future. Trust me. It will be alright. You'll be alright.

**Ali:** I envy you your optimism, mother, but I beg to differ. It's not over, not by a long shot. It won't be over for a long time... a very long time.

**Mother:** It's not for you to worry about anymore. You did what you had to do, now leave it to the politicians to sort it out.

**Ali:** (*laughing*) Then we're doomed.

**Mother:** Anyway, I didn't come here to discuss politics. It doesn't interest me. I actually find it all exceedingly vulgar. I'm here to talk about you, about us... as a family. (El-Lozy 53-4)

They both *attempt* to 'reach out' to Ali by sympathizing with him and by appearing to understand the psychological impact that war had on him. Despite their sincere efforts, their appeal is insignificant because they dismiss postwar anxiety with ignorance and optimism: a combination that leads to their chronic illusion which Ali cannot withstand.

Before the war, Ali tries to preserve his "little energy and optimism" in order to survive the hovering fear of the known. Unfortunately, going to war crystallizes this 'unknown' into a horrible reality that used up all his energy and optimism, and leaves him with nothing but shame, bitterness, and sarcasm. Therefore, if he follows his parents' idealistic schemes, he will be "skating away on the thin ice of the New Day" according to the words of the song that comments on this scene.

Ali begins this play *knowing* that "there is no future, only survival," but now he is not even equipped with the energy to survive. Instead of putting on compelling verbal performances and 'laughing' at his defects, he is now overwhelmed with shame and pessimism. His once- mischievous critiques are now explosive and cynical verbal attacks. In Act 2, El-Lozy carefully selects songs with lyrics that highlight Ali's intensifying emotional pain. In scene 9, after taking Ibrahim on an emotional rollercoaster, he launches a verbal attack on Carol; she slaps him, then they patch up, but The Rolling

Stones' song, "Paint it Black" substantiates his escalating wrath with its pounding rhythm:

I see a red door and I want it painted black.  
No colours anymore I want them to run black.  
I look inside myself and see my heart is black.  
May be then I'll fade away and not have to face the facts  
It's not easy facin' up when your whole world is black  
I have to turn my head until my darkness goes  
I wanna see the sun blotted out from the sky  
I wanna see it painted painted, painted, painted black.

Perhaps the only *truth* Ali's father speaks is that "this generation was caught in the most awkward bind" (El-Lozy 55). Evidently, Ali cannot survive the stark reality both outside and inside the perimeters of his defective self. He yearns for an eclipse that will relieve him of "facing the facts" and staring helplessly at his losses. In fact, once Ali 'paints everything black' his fragmented world will come together as a less painful, yet faceless "black whole." At this point of severe desperation, Ali is one scene away from receiving orders to go into forced exile.

Like *Look Back in Anger*, *Bay the Moon* ends in confusion and hopes of a meeting in a safer place sometime in the future:

**Carol:** What's going to happen to us?

**Ali:** After the surgery, I... (*Pause. Smiling*) I'll come knocking at your door.

**Carol:** You promise?

**Ali:** I promise.

*Pause. She looks him straight in the eyes.*

**Carol:** Very well I'll go back to the States in June. But if you don't show up, I'll come looking for you. I mean it, ya binti il-kalb. I'll find you, and when I do, I...

**Ali:** Please, please spare me the gory details.

**Carol:** As long as we're agreed.

*Pause. They smile at each other. Ali sits next to her and holds her hand. Carol smiles as she rest her head on his shoulder. They remain silent for a while.*

**Ali:** I'm hungry.

**Carol:** Let's have dinner.

**Ali:** Shall we go to the Rex?

**Carol:** I don't feel like eating out tonight.

**Ali:** There's not much left here.

**Carol:** I can fix us an omelet.

**Ali:** A Spanish omelet.

**Carol:** A cheese omelet.

**Ali:** A Spanish omelet.

**Carol:** Okay, you do the chopping.

**Ali:** Deal.

**Carol:** And the salad.

*Pause*

**Ali:** You set the table.

*Pause*

**Carol:** You choose the music.

**Ali:** Bach?

**Carol:** Bach.

*Ali gets up first. He plays Bach's Brandenburg Concert No. 6 in a B flat major. Carol starts setting the table. She takes plates, forks, and knives out of the sideboard. Ali joins her and helps her set the glasses. They continue setting the table in silence as the lights fade to blackout.*

(El-Lozy 93-4)

The play ends with both Ali and Carol retiring gently in *avoidance* but not in *fantasy*.

However, the move to classical music in the end adds a relaxed ambiance, one that

contrasts with the play's turbulent setting. This profoundly sad ending shows how Ali and Carol are trying to *seize* the few moments they have left, so they consciously *distract* themselves from the pain of separation and prepare a cozy evening for themselves. Unlike *Look Back in Anger's* articulated rage, *Bay the Moon's* is internalized simmering anger, which makes Ali a more sympathetic character than Jimmy, the latter having the luxury of the numerous venting tirades.

Unlike Jimmy's inaction and residing anger, Ali's action on the frontline is his attempt to escape his generational shame. He seizes the (only) opportunity to act; however, he learns the hard way that he has no control over his fate, that *any* action is futile, and that nothing will ever repair the shame. He simply wants to survive his generational ordeal and, if possible, to survive with dignity. Unfortunately, he is disrobed of all his self-respect while everyone helplessly watches him *affectively* 'bleed.' With this finality, Ali's drama ends with unmodified shame and numerous losses: Ibrahim is in prison, his parents are in denial, Carol is going back home, and his country is in irredeemable shambles. No one clears the "mess," no audience watches Ali's drama unfold, no one hears the compelling lyrics, and all the characters, except his lover-enemy, treat him with *affective deafness*. Therefore, while Jimmy's anger is heard and honoured, Ali's is merely trying to survive his pitiful 'bays [at] the moon'.

## **Conclusion**

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According to Léon Wurmser, shame is first an anxiety, or “the fear of disgrace”; second, it’s the “affect of contempt directed against the self by others or by one’s own conscience (Wurmser 67). Shame, which is the painful feeling of and response to exposed vulnerability, has a particularly interesting relationship to writing, which is potentially an act of the most dangerous exposure. Severe feelings of shame compel individuals to hide and conceal their inner reality from themselves and from others. Refusing to turn away or lie, creative writers counter the hiding response with an attitude allowing for the most resolute exploration of shame. Nathanson speaks of creative writers’ ability “to live with the soul naked to the light of truth,” of the courage and maturity” it takes to stare bravely into the light” (Nathanson, *Denial* 53). Indeed, both Osborne and El-Lozy are motivated by a defiant and almost shameless will to expose shame, the emotion that ‘strikes deepest in the human heart.’

Given that in literature any character’s ‘self’ is put on display, studying affect theory vis-à-vis literary texts in this thesis better explained the protagonists’ relations, emotions, and motivations. By concentrating on the self, affect theory provides an original perspective for character analysis, which certainly contributes to psychoanalytic literary studies. Since “affect is the engine that drives us,” studying how affects influence the protagonists’ behaviour is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of their motivations (Nathanson, *Shame* 59). With its intricate classification of emotion, affect theory enables literary scholars to re-examine postwar drama with a new vocabulary and a comprehensive framework. Surely, when looking beyond the visible anger connected

with postwar turmoil, affect theory brings to light the shame that inhabits the depths of postwar trauma. In addition to the literary contribution, affect theory will also better account for postwar plays' socio-political contexts, given that the plays are in fact depictions of the playwrights' *actual* experiences. Thus, both the characters and the audience can be explored via affect theory when analyzing postwar drama.

By employing Silvan Tomkins' Affect Theory and Donald Nathanson's Compass of Shame, this thesis demonstrated how the depiction of each protagonist as an example of the Angry Young Men generation is in fact an *affective* response to the crisis of how intolerable postwar generational shame was pushed beyond reasonable limits. The purpose of this thesis was to give a detailed treatment of the *reactive* phase of shame that, depending on the reaction, is a major factor in the architecture of character structure. In the previous chapters, I showed how when the characters, and in particular Jimmy and Ali, are repeatedly caught in a 'moment of shame,' they are fixed to certain shame-control strategies. Although the affect anger-rage was the protagonists' main defense during 'a moment of shame,' their vulnerability increased throughout the plays because they adopted self-defeating tricks as defenses. However, anger is an instrumental affect and, given that, it is easier to broadcast and articulate than shame-humiliation, Jimmy and Ali, by and large, embraced the Compass' *attack-other* pole and ultimately retired in the *avoidance* pole. By extracting the affective patterns in both plays, I showed how the protagonists' unsuccessful shame management attempts trigger their recurring angry tirades that intensify throughout the plays without effecting any shame-relieving change.

According to the intricate mechanisms that govern the way human beings behave, *affective resonance* plays a crucial role in the development of self-definition. *Look Back in Anger*'s success is based primarily on the intensity of *affective resonance*. The audience *and* the characters felt, heard and understood Jimmy – they all felt sorry for him. Surely, Jimmy's audience "responded nakedly" to his ordeal, at least while he was shouting it at them. Moreover, *Look Back in Anger*, written within the dominant theatrical form of realism, displays two central features of that form which bear directly on the nature of its socio-political analysis, namely empathy and closure. Empathy, according to Brechtian tradition, is a characteristic of the Realist, or what he calls 'Dramatic' theatre, and is defined as drawing in or involving the spectator in a stage-action, and making the spectator stand inside and experience the action with the characters. Since "JO [John Osborne] and JP [Jimmy Porter] are both truth-tellers, they unite an idealized tradition with a new icon of rebellion," the Angry Young Men (Sierz 139). Therefore, foregrounding Jimmy Porter's anguish produces 'empathic' identification, and members of the audience who belong to the same class fraction will undoubtedly look closely at the on-stage problem through *affective resonance*. However, as Jimmy unfolds his drama with intense *affective resonance* the audiences remain in its tight grip. Nevertheless, Jimmy Porter's impact comes from the immediacy of the content that combines both the audience's awareness of 'what is wrong' and the anxiety of trying to do something about it. In short, the play's profoundly *unhappy* ending does not offer the audience a cathartic closure and, in accordance with Osborne's objective, the audience will probably search for a solution themselves.



In fact, both plays paraded the protagonists' passionate anger; nonetheless, the playwrights' postwar societies remained stagnant. The anger was merely a ripple, a desperate cry. Though historically different, both plays deal with postwar trauma, which has shame at its core. Looking at each eloquent protagonist, I asked 'how can someone so passionate remain so impotent?' I was trying to find the *cause* for their vulnerability and their anger. In the first chapter, "Shame and the Angry Young Men Tradition," I explained Silvan Tomkins' Affect Theory, with special emphasis on the affects *anger-rage* and *shame-humiliation*. I also introduced Donald Nathanson's Compass of Shame and its four affect management poles, and a brief historical review of the Angry Young Men movement. Instead of focusing on the external 'anger' that characterized the Angry Young Men movement, I demonstrated how shame is the principal force that stirs up the anger. The unresolved postwar socio-political and economic struggles for both playwrights generated the quiescent sizzling shame, which is best explained using Affect Theory.

In the second chapter, "Toxic Rage: *Look Back in Anger*'s Affective Resonance," I demonstrated how the play's impact on the audience is a result of its transfixing *affective resonance*. The intensity and co-dependence of Jimmy's and Alison's "scripts" made their separation impossible. By the end of the play, due to their emotionally draining collisions, they retire in the Compass of Shame's *avoidance* pole in an effort to "escape" their turmoil. This ending is in keeping with Osborne's objective: to give the audience the opportunity to look for the solution(s) for the problems themselves.

In the third chapter, “Riddle Me This, Riddle Me That: Affect and Survival in *Bay the Moon*,” I showed how Ali, over the course of the play, tries many shame-control strategies by shifting between all the poles in the Compass of Shame. Unlike Jimmy’s full-blown rage at the beginning of the play, the reader witnesses Ali’s generational resentment develop into helplessness that ends in physical and emotional exile. In *Bay the Moon*, the cheerless and cynical song lyrics functioned as between-scene commentary that further illustrates Ali’s ordeal. Due to the cancellation of all performances, both El-Lozy and his protagonist experienced the effects of the absence of performative *affective resonance*. Even if the play had been performed in 2000, it was not going to be experienced by the wished-for 1970s audience. Therefore, *Bay the Moon* is an example of drama expressed in a “gesture of despair” that *did* maintain its dynamism because of its authenticity.

Despite their devastating commentary, both Osborne and El-Lozy successfully relayed their generations’ postwar trauma. It is indeed fascinating to find in *Look Back in Anger* and *Bay the Moon* the fertile postwar shame that nurtures the protagonists’ anger. These sterile and emotionally confused characters are thus symbolic of the uncertainties of post-war life and the fragmentation of personal and family life. Jimmy and Ali are excruciatingly aware of their generations’ shame and their realization makes them angry at the injustice surrounding them. Neither Jimmy nor Ali succeeds in reducing their generational shame; as a result, they repeatedly unconsciously employ the Compass’ affect-management poles to process the laborious shame. Like their countries, their

households are a place of conflict where the unsolved political and personal tensions intensify the protagonists' incompetence.

The theme of isolation, therefore, is significant because both plays showed how some postwar societies *isolate* human beings who try to preserve their individuality. These Angry Young Men rejected the stagnant pattern of existence that characterized their postwar societies. They are indeed angry young men, but this anger is the product of inescapable postwar melancholy. It is a plea for justice, but above all, it is the escalation of shame into toxic anger and contemptuous self-pity.

In the epigraph, John Osborne refers to the theatre as a “place where people spend much of their time responding nakedly – or failing – to the burden of trying to live, and preparing to die.” Like the Angry Young Men, these protagonists were situated between longing for a denied experience and living with consuming contempt as they futilely try to respond to their societies' ailments. Moreover, unlike the idle majority, both Jimmy and Ali are desperate for a self-directed life that would reward them with recognition and love; instead, they are caught in a vicious circle of self-loathing and they end up defeated and alone. Both Jimmy and Ali try to survive but their shame is a throbbing “inner torment,” a “sickness of the soul,” and they inevitably feel “naked, defeated, alienated, [and] lacking in dignity or worth.” (Nathanson, *Shame* 146) Eventually, they succumb to the “burden of trying to live” in their hostile societies and, in their respective *avoidance* strategies, Jimmy and Ali opt for the safest pole as they “prepare to [metaphorically] die.”

## Notes

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### Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Adamson explains that in recent years, new methodologies such as, deconstruction, New Historicism, cultural criticism, race, gender, and gay and lesbian studies, insisted on a predominantly ideological and political understanding of culture (2). In turn, being aware of our affective reality will enhance our understanding of the political, the cultural, as well as the personal behavioral patterns which, if ignored or undermined, would deny the emotional complexity and richness of human life.

<sup>2</sup> Silvan Tomkins research was focused mainly on infants and adults. The results of his studies are the groundwork for his culminating theory.

<sup>3</sup> Mahmoud Ahmed El-Lozy (1954 - ) has a fertile history in acting and directing in both educational and professional arenas. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Performing and Visual Arts at the American University in Cairo (AUC). In addition to translating plays and publishing articles, *Bay the Moon* (1998) is the first play he wrote. It was followed by a 'sequel' entitled, *And then went down to the ship* (2002). Both plays are unpublished.

<sup>4</sup> In 1967, Egypt was defeated by Israel and lost the Sinai Peninsula. This defeat caused permanent economic crises including Egypt's loss of major revenue sources such as the Suez Canal, the Sinai oil fields and tourism (Hinnebusch Jr. 35-6).

<sup>5</sup> This 'revelation' will be studied in detail in Chapter Two when examining Jimmy and Alison's co-dependent scripts.

### Chapter One: Shame and the Angry Young Men Tradition

<sup>6</sup> Note that the hyphenated terms reflect the **range of intensity** of that particular affect, from mild to extreme.

<sup>7</sup> Tomkins explains that by "density" he means the "frequency of neural firing per unit of time." There are three distinct classes of activators of affect: stimulation increase, stimulation level, and stimulation decrease. Each class further amplifies the sources

which activate them. Moreover, only positive affects are activated by stimulation decrease, while negative affects are activated by stimulation increase or by a “continuing unrelieved level of non-optimal stimulation” (Tomkins, *Exploring* 46-7).

<sup>8</sup> Both Tomkins and Nathanson explain the basic mechanism of the nine affects by referring to the earliest indications of affect formation, i.e. the infant/caregiver stage.

<sup>9</sup> Tomkins’ **Script Theory** assumes that the basic unit for analysis for understanding ‘person-ality,’ as distinguished from human beings, is the *scene* and the relationship between scenes. When related scenes are compiled together they are then called *scripts* (Tomkins, *Exploring* 313). Psychological scripts are formed when we assemble a set of related scenes for the purpose of generating responses that will control and direct the outcome of such (toxic) scenes. Scripts “take on their own affective climate, which, in turn, magnifies all of the affect contained within the scenes themselves” (Nathanson, *Shame* 311).

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix 1 for a portrait of painful shame episodes in modern life.

<sup>11</sup> Unlike the Compass’ poles internal affect management, drug addiction is an example of external self-reinforcing system that aims at reaching a normal range of affect.

<sup>12</sup> To my knowledge, both Osborne and El-Lozy were unacquainted with Affect Theory or its classification of shame as an affect. Nonetheless, they do recognize the burden of failing to diffuse this central emotion in a turbulent postwar setting, which they show in their protagonists’ ordeals.

<sup>13</sup> **Kitchen-Sink Drama** is a term which became popular in Great Britain in the middle and late 1950s. Often used derogatorily, it applied to plays which, in a realistic fashion, showed aspects of working-class life at the time. The implication was that the play centred, metaphorically (or psychologically) and in some cases literally, on the kitchen sink. The works of John Osborne, Arnold Wesker, and Alun Owen (among others) were all so described (Cuddon 444).

<sup>14</sup> In 1956, the people in Hungary rebelled against their Russian-imposed Communist government, and Russia put down the revolt by sending in tanks. The rest of the world, including Britain, were mere spectators and did nothing. In the Mediterranean, the

Egyptian government announced that it was taking over the Suez Canal, which was then run and owned by Anglo-French interests. Britain and France sent in troops to protect their interests in the Suez area and successfully reclaimed their control over the Canal Zone. Their aggression made them lose the world's support, and they had to hand their conquest over to the United Nations, who then handed it back to Egypt. (Taylor, *Look* 14-5).

<sup>15</sup> I would like to note that there are no secondary sources on *Bay the Moon* except an e-mail from El-Lozy's PhD. supervisor, Bob Potter, at University of California in Santa Barbara.

<sup>16</sup> "By 1973 Egypt had almost become the laughing stock of the Arab world. We claimed to be the leader and protector of the Arabs, but gave no lead to our own people and showed ourselves unable to protect our own territory... Each day that passed was a day of humiliation for Egypt" (Heikal, 205).

<sup>17</sup> Currently, there are about 155,000 undergraduate students at Cairo University.

<sup>18</sup> The fact that no one in real life speaks like the protagonists is especially true in *Bay the Moon*, because it is written in English, while El-Lozy and Ali's mother tongue is Arabic. In other words, he will be *articulating* his anxieties rather than actually *voicing* them. Ali's discourse, however, is very eloquent and, despite the façade of a 'language barrier,' he succeeds in communicating his angst by means of oratory and affective resonance.

## Chapter Two: Toxic Rage: *Look Back in Anger's* Affective Resonance

<sup>19</sup> According to Tomkins, "contamination takes the form of deep conflict, or turbulent multiple conflict and plurivalence, such that the individual suffers ambiguity and disorientation, as well as conflict, frustration, and threat" (Tomkins, *Exploring* 351).

## Chapter Three: "Riddle Me This, Riddle Me That": Affect and Survival in *Bay the Moon*

<sup>20</sup> **Iftar** is the time that Muslims break their fast during the holy month of Ramadan. The 1973 October war was fought during Ramadan.

<sup>21</sup> The full scene is available in the Appendix 2.

## Appendix 1

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*Shame*  
by Vern Rutsala

This is the shame of the woman whose hand hides her smile because her teeth are so bad, not the grand self-hate that leads some to razors or pills or swan dives off beautiful bridges however tragic that is. This is the shame of being yourself, of being ashamed of where you live and what your father's paycheck lets you eat and wear.

This is the shame of the fat and the bald, the unbearable blush of acne, the shame of having no lunch money and pretending you're not hungry. This is the shame of the concealed sickness – diseases too expensive to afford that offer only their cold one-way ticket out. This is the shame of being ashamed, the self-disgust of the cheap wine drunk, the lassitude that makes junk accumulate, the shame that tells you there is another way to live but you are too dumb to find it. This is the real shame, the damned shame, the crying shame, the shame that's criminal, the shame of knowing words like "glory" are not in your vocabulary though they litter the Bibles you're still paying for. This is the shame of not knowing how to read and pretending you do. This is the shame that makes you afraid to leave your house the shame of food stamps at the supermarket when the clerk shows impatience as you fumble with the change.

This is the shame of the dirty underwear, the shame of pretending your father works in an office as God intended all men to do. This is the shame of asking friends to let you off in front of the one nice house in the neighbourhood and waiting in the shadows until they drive away before walking to the gloom of your house. This is the shame at the end of the mania for owning things, the shame of no heat in winter, the shame of eating cat food, the unholy shame of dreaming of a new house and car and the shame of knowing how cheap such dreams are.

## Appendix 2

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*Bay the Moon.* Act 2, Scene 7.

*Two days later. Evening. Ali is watching television. Carol is typing at the dining-room table.*

**Carol:** There! I've finished at last. Ouch! My back hurts so much. (*She gets up and collects her papers*). Is the film almost over?

**Ali:** I don't know.

**Carol:** (*sitting next to Ali on the sofa*) Could you give me a back rub? I feel stiff all over.

**Ali:** I'm watching the film. Later.  
*Pause.*

**Carol:** What's it about?

**Ali:** It's too complicated to explain. You have to watch it from the beginning to follow.

**Carol:** I see. (*Pause*). I'm getting myself something to drink. Do you want anything?

**Ali:** No.

**Carol:** All right.

*Carol goes to the kitchen. Ali gets up, switches off the television set, gets a book from the bookcase, and sits at the dining-room table. Carol comes back with a glass of milk.*

**Carol:** Oh, is it over already?

**Ali:** Yes. No. I've seen it before, it's boring.

**Carol:** Oh, one of those. (*Pause*). It's getting pretty late. Shouldn't we be going to bed?

**Ali:** You go. I'll join you in a little while.

**Carol:** All right. (*Pause*). Don't be long.



*Carol goes to the bedroom. Ali reads his book. After a while, he goes to the bookcase and brings out a paper bag from behind one of the books on the shelf. Ali tires to take his trousers off. He is expressing difficulty. He takes a pair of scissors out of the paper bag and tries to cut the old bandage around his knee. Carol comes back. She remains standing by the bedroom door, her hands behind her back.*

**Carol:** Do you need any help with that?

**Ali:** *(Shoving the paper bag behind a pillow and pulling up his trousers)* What are you doing here?

**Carol:** I couldn't get any sleep.

**Ali:** Try counting camels.

**Carol:** It's not just a scratch, is it? *(Ali does not answer. Pause. She takes a step forward)*. Here, let me take a look at it.

**Ali:** *(violently)*: No! Stay away from me!

**Carol:** Please?

**Ali:** I said no!

**Carol:** Don't you think you ought to let a doctor do that?

**Ali:** I can take care of myself.

**Carol:** I know you can, but you're not a doctor. You need professional care.

**Ali:** I need to be left alone.

*Pause.*

**Carol:** You should go to a hospital and get proper treatment.

**Ali:** *(savagely)* I am not going to any bloody hospital! You don't know what it's like! You know what they do to you there? They drag in half-witted kids who offer you stupid presents to express their gratitude for getting yourself blown off on their behalf! They tell you what a hero you are! How proud they are of everything you've done for the country! They stare at you with adoring eyes and tell you with a tearful voice that your butchered leg is really your own personal badge of patriotism and courage! *(Pause)* It was a mine. A bloody mine. We drove over it. *(laughing)*. And it happened after the cease-fire. How stupid. How stupid. *(Pause)*. The others died. All of them. I wanted to die too. *(Pause)*. The pain... the pain was... *(Pause)*. We had run out of morphine.

*Pause. Carol sits on one of chairs around the dining-table.*

**Carol:** When are you going to stop feeling sorry for yourself?  
(*Ali does not answer*). Ali?

**Ali:** I don't answer stupid questions.

**Carol:** You have no reason to feel sorry for yourself. Actually, you should consider yourself pretty lucky.

**Ali:** Lucky?

**Carol:** Yes, lucky! You at least were about to come back... and in one piece. Others weren't that lucky, and you know it better than anyone else.

**Ali:** You don't know what you're talking about.

**Carol:** May be. But I know what I must do. I am taking you to a hospital.

**Ali:** No, you're not. I'm not going to any bloody hospital.

**Carol:** All right we'll go to private clinic. You must let a doctor see this leg.

**Ali:** I'm not going anywhere.

**Carol:** You need medical care and you're going to get it whether you want it or not.

**Ali:** Shut up! Don't throw your American goodness all over me!

**Carol:** What?...

**Ali:** Go practice your missionary spirit somewhere else. I don't need it... You hear me?... I don't need it. I'm a man. I can take care of myself. I'm still a man...

**Carol:** You're my man, and I'm not going to stand here and watch you bleed to death.

*Carol goes to the telephone, picks up the receiver, and starts dialing a number.*

**Ali:** What are you doing?

**Carol:** I'm calling Ibrahim.

**Ali:** (*trying to get up*) Get away from that phone!

**Carol:** You stay right where you are! I mean it. (*Ali sits back. Carol speaks in the receiver*). Hello, Ibrahim?... Carol... I'm sorry I'm calling so late. Did I wake you up? ... There's an urgent matter I need to see you about... No, there's no need to. I'll be over in ten minutes... Thank you. Bye now. (*She hangs up the receiver*). Where are the car keys?

**Ali:** It won't start.

**Carol:** I've been running it regularly in your absence. It will start. (*Ali remains silent*). They keys.

**Ali:** You've never driven in Cairo.

**Carol:** I'll learn. They keys, Ali. Now!

**Ali:** (*reluctantly*) In the ashtray by the bed.

*Carol goes to the bedroom to fetch the keys and comes back immediately.*

**Carol:** Let's go.

**Ali:** You're not going to leave me there?

**Carol:** I'm not going to leave you there

**Ali:** (*getting up*) You shouldn't have done this.

**Carol:** Yeah, but I did. Now let's go.

**Ali:** You'll pay for this.

**Carol:** I know.

*They exit as the lights fade to black out.*

(E1-lozy47-50)

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