

By the end of studying **Act 3, Scene 2** I need to know;

Plot: Later, on the same day of the raid, the officers are eating their 'reward' meal and drinking heavily to 'celebrate'. Raleigh eats with the soldiers in the trench instead. This angers Stanhope and they have a row.

Ideas: Stanhope expresses his anger, over the death of Osborne, towards Raleigh. This is fuelled by alcohol. It is seen as an insult that Raleigh would choose to eat with men lower than his rank. This is one of the only times that we see all the officers in a 'happy' place. We see how quickly soldiers are replaced after death.

Vocabulary	<p>'feather in our cap' - well used phrase for receiving a reward in the army. The feather was placed on the cap when you achieved something. This was from pre WW1 times.</p> <p>Prominent - projecting from/important Mam'sel - mademoiselle (French for Miss) Pince-nez - a pair of glasses with no arms M.C - Military Cross 'fresh as a daisy' - wide awake Crockery - plates/dishes Resent - bitterness</p> <p>uproarious - very loud/passionate baleful - watchful scraggy - thin/bony plucky - brave ominous - something bad is going to happen prigs - someone who thinks they're better than others swine - pig</p> <p>distended - swollen husky - hoarse/croaky Bethune - city in Northern France palpitations - rapid heartbeat undismayed - not discouraged repulsive - disgusting impatient - can't wait</p>
Context (To inform interpretation)	<p>British Class System - Here we see that Sherriff refers back to the hierarchy of the British Class system. In this scene, the fact that Raleigh is eating with the private soldiers rather than with the officers, gives Stanhope a 'hinge-pin' for his anger and frustration over Osborne's death to surface. 'Are you telling me - you've been feeding with the men?' (Stanhope Act 3, sc2). The fact that Raleigh has eaten some food with the men causes Stanhope to accuse Raleigh of leaving them 'with barely enough for each man' from their 'rations'. This is in stark contrast the festivities that are being had by the officers where a full dinner of chicken, champagne, whiskey and cigars are being had. Sherriff emphasises that the war did not make the men equal even though they had to fight together, again emphasised through Mason, who is clearing up after the Officers have eaten. The first audiences of the play would have been able to relate to this very well.</p>
Themes	<p>Loss/Realities of War - Stanhope's loss of Osborne is demonstrated in the scene through his behaviour. Partly, we expect him to behave in the way he does - drinking and celebrating, as if to 'forget' the events of the last 24hrs. We recognise by this point in the play that Stanhope deals with grief and fear through his use of alcohol and the event of losing Osborne is of no exception. He has turned his energies to making his men laugh 'He has just made a remark which has sent Hibbert and Trotter into uproarious laughter.', yet Stanhope 'listens with a smile.' This links back to the first scene when Hardy tells us that 'he's a good chap' who 'drank a whole bottle' and 'you can't help, somehow, admiring a fellow who can do that...'. We also see in this scene that Raleigh has truly had his eyes open to what the war was really about, in direct contradiction to the propaganda at home. We see that Raleigh, in contrast to his ardent desire to get involved prior to the raid, now seems to have lost his 'appetite' for war demonstrated through his physical loss of hunger for the celebratory meal 'I - I wasn't hungry.'</p> <p>Comradeship - The loss of Osborne has affected all the officers slightly differently. In one way, he has brought the men together more so than we've seen before. Hibbert is now on a more equal footing with the other officers as he regales them with his stories about women back home. However, Stanhope's berating of him and dismissal of him to bed shows how their comradeship formed in Act 2, sc 2, is not very secure. The change in Hibbert is commented on by Trotter when he states 'Never seen 'im so cheerful before out 'ere.' We also see that the tension of losing Osborne means that Stanhope is even more tempestuous. He has lost his closest ally and confidante throughout the war. There was nothing he could do about it and so at the slightest annoyance, he blows in a way that shocks Hibbert, Trotter and Raleigh. Trotter demonstrates loyalty and commitment to Stanhope with news of his new role of 2nd in command - 'I won't let you down'.</p> <p>Heroism - Through this scene it can be viewed that Stanhope has fallen from the pedestal of hero worship in the eyes of Raleigh. His act of eating with the men and his comment of 'And yet you can sit there and drink champagne...' shows just how much impact the raid and Osborne's subsequent death has had on Raleigh, his view of Stanhope and the actuality of what being a 'hero' in WW1 means. Additionally, Stanhope exhibits disappointment in both Hibbert and Raleigh in the second half of this scene, yet this can also be demonstrable of the disappointment he feels in himself that he couldn't save Osborne, therefore being the furthest away from a hero as he could imagine. 'Oh, for God's sake forget about that...raid! Think I want to talk about it?'</p>

Reading:

Read to the punctuation.

Acknowledge the stage directions for full understanding of meaning and motivation of characters.

Links across the text:

Raleigh is very different in comparison to before the raid.

Stanhope's drinking is even more evident as a coping tool. This is foreshadowed by the first scene.

Trotter is realised as an emotionally consistent character who deals with the stress of war through eating and humour - this scene is no different.

Hibbert is very different in this scene - but quickly regresses when Stanhope loses his temper with him again.

Deeper understanding

Raleigh sees that death occurs in an instant and doesn't always occur in a heroic act of battle. The reality is a lot more grotesque; death within WW1 occurs as a response to the orders of the commanding men and in spite of your level of experience. Raleigh's shock at this is demonstrated by his refusal to sit with the officers at meal time to 'celebrate'. For the audience it also exemplifies why soldiers didn't always spend time getting to know each other at war, as the emotional cost was too high. This links also to the level of responsibility that Stanhope feels for Raleigh and why his is so abrasive towards him; he simply cannot cope with more responsibility for men that have an emotional link to him. Osborne's death highlights this level of responsibility further. Instead he feels that it is easier to avoid the emotional impact through the use of alcohol as a coping mechanism.

We also see here the expectations of leaders within the army. Roles are changed quickly - Trotter is now 2nd in command - and you are easily replaced in the eyes of the army. It is Stanhope's job to maintain a certain level of morale amongst the men; the level of humour and festivity at the start of the scene shows this in action. However, we also see that the long term effect of doing this is taking its toll. This is demonstrated through the snapping of Stanhope at Hibbert as he appears to bark orders at him 'Get out of my sight!'. The demand that Hibbert leaves and the quick regression to Stanhope's detestation towards Hibbert, demonstrates that Stanhope isn't stable in his emotional leadership of the group. This is further exemplified in his interaction with Raleigh where we see that his speech is halting - 'The one man I could trust - my best friend - the one man I could talk to as man to man -' - which demonstrates how broken Stanhope has become. At this point the tension is high and uncomfortable for the audience. They are caught in the true reality of war. They may feel frustrated with Stanhope as they can see that he isn't treating the other men fairly; yet Sherriff has successfully thrust them into an honest picture of the tension that the men went through during WW1 and the rawness of the emotion that the men were expected to deal with.

Although this scene should feel like the climax, we know structurally that it isn't over. There is not time to mourn Osborne's death either. Dramatically, this emulates the true structure of the war; it was a continuation of metaphorical gunfire - persistent little bursts of tension interspersed with the high drama of full attacks. Soldiers, potentially desensitised to the loss of friends and comrades, carried on knowing that the next death could be them. In fact, links can be made between the presentation of this scene and that of The Last Supper - the meal eaten by Jesus and his disciples the night before his execution. The audience know that they are still awaiting the big attack and that the ending won't be good. The fact that the play is only over three days emphasises just how long things felt for the men who lived it.

Impact of Osborne's death- Osborne's death as clearly had an impact on Stanhope; he states at the end of the scene that Osborne was 'the only man I could trust... the only man I could speak to man to man' which solidifies the level of reliance Stanhope placed upon Osborne. There are subtle clues through this scene and the next about how his death has impacted him. His hair is described as 'ruffled' and he 'lounges across the table'- a far cry from the depiction of him at the start with his 'hair carefully brushed' and how his uniform is 'cared for' despite being stained by war. Equally, despite the big attack the following morning he has his men drink 'whiskey on top of champagne' with the hope of forgetting about the raid at 'sunrise'. The old Stanhope would have ensured his officers were well-prepared for the big attack; but now it's clear that Stanhope has given up. His behaviour also appears to hint at attempts to adopt more masculine values as a way of coping- perhaps believing that by becoming more 'manly' he will be able to cope/ or at least hide his emotions. The scene opens with him telling a story to Trotter and Hibbert about a French girl refusing him- 'not in these trousers', it certainly would be unlike Stanhope to tell a story about seducing a woman- yet it is an expectation of masculinity. The extent to which this story is true is up for debate, but it is clear that he is attempting to indulge in a masculine-fuelled world in an attempt to cope with the realities of war. The fact he quickly becomes frustrated with Hibbert's 'disgusting little mind' when he regales them with a tale of picking up a 'couple of tarts' and showcasing his cards with pictures of nude women on suggests that he does not really possess these values or opinions that he is outwardly showing; that this is an act. This sense of his actions being a façade is further reinforced through the lighting. It is deliberately jarring- the scene is 'festively lit with candles', which juxtaposes the sadness of Osborne's death at the previous scene. To Raleigh, this suggests that the soldiers don't care. However, if light symbolises happiness and hope that artificial light here reflects the artificial happiness Stanhope (and the other officers) are projecting. Indeed, after Stanhope orders Hibbert to go to bed he 'blows out three candles...leaving one'- Stanhope is no longer pretending he feels happy.

Hibbert- Hibbert is interesting in this scene. As Trotter remarks he 'Never seen 'im so cheerful before out 'ere.'; this isn't a coincidence. Hibbert is clearly drunk- having in Act 2 Scene 2 been provided with that coping mechanism by Stanhope. We, as the audience, can see the temporary impact this has- Hibbert appears 'cheerful'. However, he still has 'pale fingers' according to the stage directions: the fear is still there only hidden. It isn't a solution- again allowing us to compare the effectiveness of this coping mechanism with Trotter's and Osborne's. This comes to fruition in the following scene- Hibbert attempting to delay going up in the line and his face being a 'picture of misery' reflecting the only temporary solution alcohol provides.

Trotter-

Quotes and references	<p>In addition to the quotations above:</p> <p><i>'His hand tremble so violently that he can scarcely take the cigar between his teeth.'</i> Stage direction about Stanhope.</p> <p><i>'Always the same am I? (He sighs) Little you know'</i> Trotter, too, hides his true feelings.</p> <p><i>'his voice...nearly breaking'</i> - Stage directions about Raleigh breaking emotionally.</p> <p><i>'the impatient grumble of gunfire that never dies away'</i> Stage directions as a reminder that the war carries on regardless.</p> <p><i>'You resent my being here.'</i> Raleigh to Stanhope</p>
Terminology	<p>Personification - to discuss the gunfire at the end of the scene.</p> <p>Metaphor - how the gunfire represents the structure of the war</p> <p>Halted/broken speech - use of hyphens to show the tense emotion of Stanhope, Raleigh and Hibbert</p> <p>Realism - the dramatic genre of the play.</p>