

*A Long Day's Journey Into Night* – Response Paper

In his dedication of *Long Day's Journey*, Eugene O'Neill states that he was able to at last "face my dead and write this play — write it with deep pity and understanding and forgiveness for ALL the four haunted Tyrones." It's hard while reading this play of incredibly harsh words to see the pity, understanding and forgiveness. As we've discussed in class, all four of the family Tyrone commit damnable offenses against each other and themselves. However, each of them also has their reasons for the things they say and do. Write a one-two page paper in which you explain the most "damnable offense" committed by ONE of the characters, and also explain why that offense can be understood, pitied and forgiven. This calls for some subjectivity, but most importantly it calls for textual support – you must have evidence to support your claims for understanding, pity and forgiveness.

A Hint: remember that this play is written about the past – O'Neill did not write the play in 1912, he wrote it in 1940-41 and set it in 1912. What does all of that time allow him to see differently? How does that change his perspective from an angry young Edmund to the successful Eugene? You might ask your parents how they see their own parents differently now than they did as younger adults.