

The Character of Mickey - Transcript

Edward: 'I thought, I thought we always stuck together. I thought we were...were blood brothers.'

Mickey: 'That was kids' stuff, Eddie. Didn't anyone tell y'?

But I suppose you still are a kid, aren't y'?

Mickey: 'An' I wish I could be as well Eddie'...

'But I can't, because while no one was looking I grew up.'

'An' you didn't, because you didn't need to.'

Presenter: In this scene from Willy Russell's *Blood Brothers*, Mickey asks Edward a rhetorical question - 'you still are a kid, aren't y'?' - which hints at Mickey's frustration.

He believes that he 'grew up', whilst his friend, Edward - his Blood Brother - didn't need to because of the life his privileged upbringing made possible.

The frustration grows throughout the play, as their contrasting social classes cause the two boys to take two very different paths.

When we first meet Mickey, he is a fun-loving child, full of warmth and charm, who quickly bonds with Edward.

However, the contrast in their upbringing and education is clear from the start - 'in the what?' Mickey says at Edward's mention of a dictionary.

In the years that follow, a teenage romance between Mickey and his childhood friend, Linda, leads to a pregnancy that brings a lot of responsibility his way.

He soon loses his job, leaving him feeling frustrated and hopeless, telling Edward...

Mickey: 'Since you left I've been walking around all day, every day, lookin' for a job.'

Presenter: Blood Brothers was written at a time of high unemployment in Thatcherite Britain - including in working class Northern areas like the one in Liverpool where the play is set - so Mickey's frustration is realistic... and his change of character is shown through his language.

He uses more swear words and slang as his bitterness grows deeper.

At the close of the play, Mickey's frustration and dismay peaks when he realises that Edward is in fact his real brother, reaching a tragic conclusion.

Seconds before Mickey shoots Edward, he yells out...

Mickey: 'I could have been him!'

Presenter: The ending focuses on a central question of the play.

Could Mickey have been Edward, in another life? Or is the playwright suggesting that Mickey's fate is inevitable, due to his lower social class?