abundance seems complete and irrevocable. Myron, beaten and cowed, shuffles around the house, quoting useless information from the paper, hoping to win the lottery, seeking refuge in the past. Abundance is clearly out of place in Myron's world; the only reward for his lifetime of hard work is the proverbial apple, which indicates banishment from the Garden.

Nevertheless, the conviction that America had been betrayed by the dream of material success is never without an optimistic counterpart in Odets' early plays. At the end of Awake and Sing!, Moe seduces Hennie with a utopian vision of "a certain place where it's moonlight and roses. We'll lay down, count stars. Hear the big ocean making noise. You lay under the trees. Champagne flows like..." (98). It is significant that Moe figures such an escape in consumerist terms; his vision is hedonistic and transformative. Indeed, one hears in lines to Hennie like "There's one life to live! Live it! and "Make a break or spend the rest of your life in a coffin!" (99) the kind of exhortations to personal transformation advertisers connected with the consumer goods. To buy a product—in this case, a "[ten day luxury cruise to Havana] or [ritzy hotels, frenchie soap, champagne]" (68)—is to buy a chance at paradise. Happiness is no longer measured by productivity but by consumption.

Moe stakes his future on the belief that redemption is possible: "Paradise, you're on a big boat headed south. No more pins and needles in your heart, no snake juice squirted in your arm. The whole world's green grass, and when you cry it's because you're happy" (99). He attempts to extricate the vision of utopia offered by consumer culture from the ideologies of the Calvinist work ethic, to enter the Garden on his own terms. Of course, critics have suggested that Moe and Hennie's leaving does not really change anything, that they are guided by dubious motives and act irresponsibly toward Hennie's baby. But even if valid, such objections ignore the profoundly utopian language in which Odets drapes their escape. Their leaving is an act of faith far more than one of reason; it is a compromise, a wager, or as Moe says, "one thing to get another" (100).

Even more idealistic than Moe and Hennie, Ralph applauds their decision to leave because he believes it mirrors his own plan to "fix it so life won't be printed on dollar bills" (97). He views their escape as an individual manifestation of his larger goal. Of course, the juxtaposition of his Socialist vision with the couple's consumerist paradise suggests underlying moral differences between the two visions of paradise. Nevertheless, Moe's dream is made to appear quite similar to Jacob's—and therefore to Ralph's—even if Moe's is more explicitly identified with individual consumption than social change. He asks Jacob early on, "Ever see oranges grow? I know a certain place—One summer I laid under a tree and let them fall right in my mouth" (50). Ultimately, Moe and Hennie's escape is idealistic and future-oriented. Even his nickname for her, "Paradise," is both ironic and earnestly romantic.

Others in the play also attempt to escape the confines of a narrow life. Jacob repeatedly seeks refuge in his records, a refuge tinged with the sadness of a lost idealism. Amid the Berger struggles, Jacob maintains his fervent, sentimental idealism, though as Odets notes in his character description he has "no power to turn idealism to action" (38). Jacob's fondness for his records—Caruso's recording of O Paradoso especially—indicates concretely the gap between the promised "paradise