**Rising Action/Tension building** (a series of events and actions that move the story to a climax)   
*Summary*  
*A few weeks pass. Catherine and Rodolpho have fallen in love and return from the cinema; Beatrice hopes they will marry but Eddie does not approve. Catherine tries to placate him, but he upsets her with accusations about Rodolpho.*

Eddie gives Beatrice several vague, reticent reasons against Rodolpho courting and marrying Catherine which range from concern for Rodolpho’s safety, which is obviously not the true reason, finally making Bea aware of his obvious dislike for Rodolpho. Miller’s characterisation of Eddie here is crucial to our understanding of his obsession with his niece.

We see that Eddie can't articulate why he doesn't like Rodolfo stating simply that - “***he gives me the heebie-jeebies***” and that he is *“a weird”*. He talks about his singing and then about the colour of his hair, all of which are hinting implicitly at Eddie’s suspicions about Rodolpho’s sexuality. Eddie is clearly questioning Rodolpho’s character and morals and is trying to turn Beatrice against him. Bea won't listen to his comments or hear anything against Rodolpho, in fact we see she appears to like him and considers him a good match for Catherine. When Eddie realises that he is not convincing Bea he becomes exasperated with her and tries to shame her for not caring enough about Catherine.

As the scene continues we learn more about the state of the Beatrice and Eddie’s marriage which helps us to understand how his feelings for Catherine, though perhaps subconscious, are in fact greatly altering his behaviour.

*After becoming annoyed with Beatrice, he* suggests that she never notices anything - *“everything is great with you.”* This enables the already frustrated Bea to demand - *“When am I gonna be a wife again, Eddie?”*. Eddie tries to say that he has not initiated sex with Beatrice because Marco and Rodolfo are in the house and their presence has upset him. Bea points out that it has been much longer than that – almost three months. Bea tries to get Eddie to talk about why he has not felt attracted to her, but Eddie can't answer. There is a hesitation as if Eddie wants to say something – but whether he is going to try and explain what he feels and can't or won't we don't know. Bea asks him a direct question and Eddie responds with a question – a very common avoidance technique. Eddie does back down a little and asks Bea to be patient with him – he is just worrying about Catherine. This is probably true, but Bea and the audience can read more into this than Eddie is able to. Bea takes the opportunity to be very frank with Eddie - *“I want you to cut it out now, you hear me?”.* This is an interesting role reversal – and shows the length of time they have been married and the role they play in each other's life – at times Bea must take the upper hand and make the decisions.

Eddie voices his concerns about Rodolpho to Catherine however she is evidently smitten with him and will not hear a bad word spoken against him. Conflict between them escalates when, in desperation, Eddie declares Rodolpho is only interested in her because he wants American citizenship.   
  
At first Eddie claims he dislikes Rodolpho because Rodolfo doesn't respect her asking, *“Katie, if you wasn’t an orphan wouldn’t he ask your father’s permission before he run around with you like this?*” We must remember that this is an integral part of the community and of a person's place in their community. You must be respected, and you must show appropriate respect. You do not show disrespect. It has far reaching consequences and it is instilled in the younger generations. Here Miller implies Eddie feels his role as patriarch and father figure is being undermined. When this appeal has no impact, Eddie reaches for a far more powerful weapon from his arsenal: the accusation that Rodolpho is using Catherine for citizenship. This is incredibly hurtful because it belittles what Catherine and Rodolfo feel for each other and suggests that Rodolfo is using her callously. It also suggests that Catherine is too naive to realise this.

Miller hints early in the play that Beatrice suspects her husband has feelings for their niece, such as when she behaves awkwardly after Catherine lights Eddie’s cigar and cannot meet his eye. Thus we understand why she advocates for Catherine to become more independent and to make it clear to Eddie that she is not *“a baby”*.

After the confrontation between Eddie and Catharine she speaks woman to woman with Catherine advising her to behave differently around Eddie. During this scene we see how cleverly Miller characterises Catherine who is either not understanding or not wanting to understand what Bea could be saying. The audience has great sympathy and admiration for Beatrice in this scene. Bea is trying to make sure that Catherine knows that it is OK to stand up to Eddie – but she is also trying to teach Catherine that she must take a stand against Eddie. She has to be honest, but this is a tricky call – she wants her niece to understand without her having to be too graphic and Bea actually loves Eddie, so she wants this situation to go before it gets worse. Bea is being pragmatic. She is aware that potentials must be stopped. Bea tells Catherine, “you can’t act the way you act no more”, pointing out things that Catherine has not been aware of as being inappropriate, walking about in skimpy clothes and going into the bathroom to chat to Eddie when he's getting ready. Interestingly, Bea puts the responsibility on Catherine's shoulder – she wants Catherine to help her with the situation: *"It means you gotta be your own self more."*. Eddie will just think Bea is nagging and moaning – unless Catherine takes her side. There is real poignancy when Bea is totally honest with Catherine. When the topic of Bea being jealous of Catherine arises and Catherine admits she has never thought of it, Beatrice says, *“(with a quiet sad laugh) Well you should have thought of it before ...but I'm not.”* Bea's strength is conveyed clearly in this scene – she is going to do everything in her power to sort the problem before it becomes an actual problem which can't be resolved. And she won't let anyone prevent this. She obviously believes in her marriage and has faith in her husband.

MORE KEY QUOTES:

* Eddie “He gives me the heeby-jeebies.”
* Bea:”Listen you ain't gonna start nothin' here.”
* Eddie “...But he's a kid yet, y'know?”
* Eddie “ Now I turn around, you're a big girl. I don't know how to talk to you.”
* Eddie “He don't respect you.”
* Eddie “He's only bowin' to his passport.”
* Eddie “Don't say that, for God's sake.”
* Eddie “Why don't you straighten her out?” and Bea “When are you going to leave her alone?”
* Bea “Look, I'm not tellin' you what to do honey...” and Catherine”I'm all mixed up...”
* Bea” ...but you're a grown woman and you're in the same house with a grown man. So you'll act different now, eh? (She reaches over to Catherine's hand, with a strained smile)
* Bea “You're a woman,...and you got a nice boy, and now the time came when you said goodbye. All right?”

*Summary  
Eddie goes to Alfieri, the lawyer and narrator of the play, to see if the law can stop the impending marriage between Catherine and Rodolpho; tension increases at home and Eddie teaches Rodolpho to box.*

The first meeting between Alfieri and Eddie is an important scene where we see Eddie struggling with his dilemma and his conscience. We also see Alfieri trying to give Eddie legal and personal advice. It is not Alfieri's place to give Eddie personal advice but since he is of the community he feels that he should – but it is not given directly, merely suggested. The scene leaves no doubts with regards to Eddie’s tragic flaw – that he will prioritise his own self-interests over everything else, even to the point of betraying the deeply-rooted honour codes of his own community. Miller's alludes to the beasts and monsters of classic Greek tragedy – Eddie appears almost possessed by a madness and though he can see it Alfieri is powerless to save him or to prevent what follows.

Alfieri’s description of Eddie during their first meeting tells us a lot about the character’s mood at this stage; *“His eyes were like tunnels”,* Here we learn that already an outsider can see how bleak and dark Eddie is and how great a toll the situation in his house is taking on him. Alfieri is an intelligent and trustworthy narrator as well as showing great compassion for Eddie, *“Only a passion that had moved into his body, like a stranger”.* He realises Eddie is no longer in control of his actions. He will do or say anything to break up the relationship. He just wants to get Rodolpho away from Catherine. As the scene progresses Eddie progresses his case against Rodolpho, seemingly wanting Alfieri, who is trying to explain how there is nothing illegal in a young man falling in love with a young woman, to collude with him. He emasculates Rodolpho by calling him “a weird” and referring to Rodolpho’s feminine skills which bring his sexuality into question. His ranting about Rodolpho fails to convince Alfieri who can see that he is simply motivated by jealousy. Alfieri points out that there is no need for a lawyer because there are no legal rules being broken but still Eddie refuses to listen to his reason. It is now very clear to Alfieri that Eddie is not so much against Rodolfo but against Rodolfo being with Catherine. Alfieri tries to gently explain the problem to Eddie because he also understands that Eddie hasn't worked this out, *“wish her luck and let her go... there's no law interested in this.”*

At this Miller conveys Eddie’s desperation through his stage directions and dialogue as he becomes more and more upset and angry, talking about Rodolpho being a “thief” and how he is *“stealing from me!”. His strong language,* “And now I gotta sit in my own house and look at the son-of-a-bitch punk like that...he puts his filthy hands on her"*, indicates the strength of his feelings and indicates he views* Catherine is an object that belongs to him. Alfieri, who is clearly worried about Eddie and disturbed by his demeanour, tries to shock Eddie into listening to his reason. To clarify the situation Alfieri mentions Rodolfo's illegal immigrant status. Alfieri knows that that is a line that no one in the community will cross. He is the representative of the American Justice system but has a clear understanding of the Italian community justice system – so turns a blind eye to this. No one says it, no one acknowledge it so there is nothing he must deal with. He mentions it to stun Eddie and stop him in his tracks. He advices Eddie to “let her go” - it’s not as though Eddie himself could marry Catherine. Eddie is shocked and repulsed by this suggestion because he is like a coiled spring and he has no understanding of why he feels so angry.

The scene leaves Alfieri with a sense of hopelessness - stating “I could have finished the whole story that afternoon” which shows Eddie only has one fate and that is one he has only brought on himself. Alfieri however worried he may be is unable to do anything because nothing has happened, but he realises that this is just the start of the trouble. Interestingly he turns to a woman in the community for advice. There is no solution available in the American system, since no real crimes have been committed – except one which is the only one Eddie won't do anything about. This scene clarifies several points – the extent of Eddie's obsession/feelings, Alfieri's dilemma being stuck between cultures, and the almost inevitability of the future events.

In the scene that follows, back in the claustrophobic setting of the Carbone apartment with everyone present, there are signs of the increasing tension in the house.

Eddie speaks only to Marco either ignoring or openly challenging Rodolpho, clearly resenting every time Rodolpho addresses him. When a joke Eddie makes turns sour he directs his anger at Rodolfo suggesting that Rodolfo doesn’t understand proper codes of conduct by staying out late with Catherine. Marco supports Eddie’s request for them to come home at an earlier time since this sounds reasonable however we see that his responses to Eddie are very guarded from now on. This suggests Marco will show Eddie respect when respect is due but is very level-headed and considered – he listens and observes before he acts. The boxing lesson is an important key incident that drives the relationship between Eddie and Marco. Eddie suggests a fight with Rodolfo – just for *“fun”*. We wonder at his motivations – Miller implies he is trying to humiliate Rodolpho in front of Catherine. She is unsure of what is happening so goes to make coffee – even in this Eddie can’t help but have a dig at Rodolfo *“make it nice and strong”*. This is a tense scene. Eddie tells Rodolfo not to *“pity”* him and encourages Rodolfo to hit him which then gives Eddie an excuse to hit him back. Eddie appears to feel a sense of pride – he did what he set out to do – humiliate and put Rodolfo in his place. There has been a physical outlet for his inner conflict. Catherine however shouts at Eddie and runs to Rodolfo. Bea makes Eddie stop by physically pulling him away. Marco has been observing and has clearly made up his mind about Eddie’s intentions with regards to his younger brother. To warn him discretely, Marco sets Eddie a challenge. Eddie tries and fails to lift the chair which Marco is then able to lift – with great control. Eddie comes to understand what Marco is doing. Eddie has crossed a line with Marco and Marco is warning him to go no further because he is not a match physically for Marco. Miller’s use of use of similes in the stage directions leave us with no doubt in our mind that Marco is Marco is letting Eddie know that he better back off and leave Rodolfo alone: *“MARCO is face to face with EDDIE, a strained tension gripping his eyes and jaw, his neck stiff, the chair raised like a weapon over EDDIE's head- and he transforms what might appear like a glare of warning into a smile of triumph, and EDDIE's grin vanishes as be absorbs his look”.* He is explaining to Eddie in terms of physical feats – since he has watched and seen how Eddie rates men on their masculinity. Eddie is left totally deflated. The rest of the room will also have seen Marco win over Eddie, and Eddie lose.