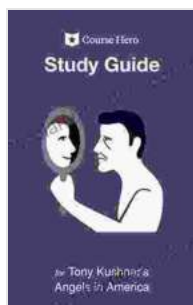


Study Guide for Tony Kushner's Angels in America: Explore Themes, Characters, and Symbolism

to Angels in America

Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* is a groundbreaking two-part play that premiered in 1991. It tells the story of a group of people in New York City during the AIDS crisis and the rise of the Reagan administration. The play explores themes of love, loss, identity, and the search for meaning in a tumultuous time.

Angels in America won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1993 and the Tony Award for Best Play in 1994. It has been praised for its powerful storytelling, complex characters, and insightful exploration of American society.



Study Guide for Tony Kushner's Angels in America (Course Hero Study Guides) by Joshua Jacob

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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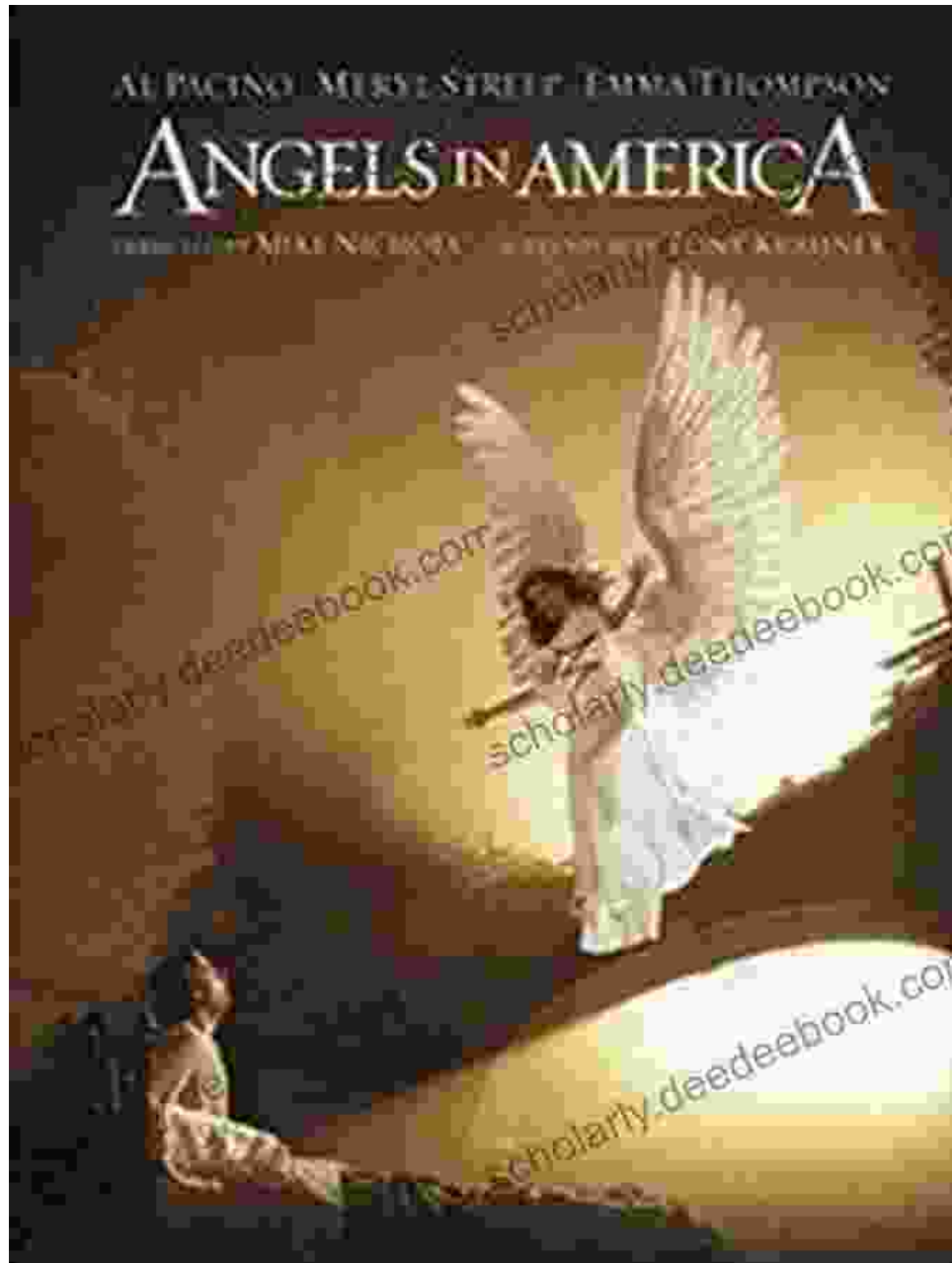
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Themes of Angels in America

Angels in America explores a wide range of themes, including:

- **Love and Loss:** The play follows the relationships of several couples as they navigate the challenges of love, loss, and infidelity.
- **Identity:** The play explores the struggles of individuals to find their place in society and to come to terms with their own identities.

- **The AIDS Crisis:** The play depicts the devastating impact of the AIDS crisis on the lives of its characters.
- **Political Polarization:** The play explores the political polarization of the Reagan era and its impact on American society.
- **Religion:** The play explores the role of religion in American society and the search for meaning in a secular world.

Characters of Angels in America

Angels in America features a complex and diverse cast of characters, including:

- **Prior Walter:** A young gay man who is diagnosed with AIDS.
- **Louis Ironson:** Prior's lover, who struggles to come to terms with Prior's illness.
- **Harper Pitt:** Louis's wife, who is addicted to Valium.
- **Joe Pitt:** Harper's husband, a conservative Mormon lawyer who is running for office.
- **Roy Cohn:** A ruthless and homophobic lawyer who is diagnosed with AIDS.
- **Belize:** A former drag queen and Prior's nurse.
- **Angel:** A mysterious and ethereal figure who appears to Prior.

Symbolism of Angels in America

Angels in America uses a rich array of symbols to explore its themes and characters. Some of the most important symbols in the play include:

- **Angels:** Angels represent both hope and judgment. They appear to Prior as messengers from God, but they also confront him with his own mortality.
- **The Book of Mormon:** The Book of Mormon is a symbol of Joe Pitt's conservative Mormon beliefs. It represents his struggle to reconcile his faith with the realities of the modern world.
- **The AIDS Quilt:** The AIDS Quilt is a symbol of the collective grief and loss caused by the AIDS crisis. It represents the lives of those who have died and the ongoing struggle to find a cure.
- **The Emerald City:** The Emerald City is a symbol of Prior's dreams and desires. It represents his longing for a better world, free from pain and suffering.

Study Guide Questions

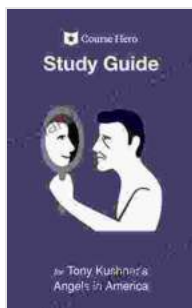
To help you study *Angels in America*, consider the following questions:

- What are the major themes of *Angels in America*?
- How do the characters in *Angels in America* navigate the challenges of love, loss, and identity?
- What is the significance of the AIDS crisis in *Angels in America*?
- How does *Angels in America* explore the political polarization of the Reagan era?
- What is the role of religion in *Angels in America*?
- How does *Angels in America* use symbolism to explore its themes and characters?

- What are your thoughts and reactions to Angels in America?

Angels in America is a powerful and moving play that explores the complex themes of love, loss, identity, and the search for meaning in a tumultuous time. Its complex characters, rich symbolism, and insightful exploration of American society make it a must-read for anyone interested in theater, history, or the human experience.

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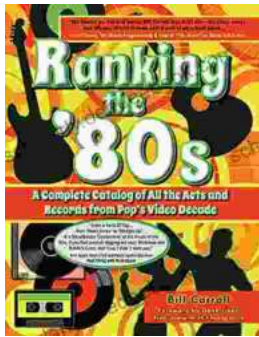
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