What Heroin meant to the Musician taking drugs(pp. 93-94)

"When she was singing before," said Sonny, abruptly, "her voice reminded me for a minute of what heroin feels like sometimes-when it's in your veins. It makes you feel sort of warm and cool at the same time. And distant. And- and sure." He sipped his beer, very deliberately not looking at me. I watched his face. "It makes you feel-in control. Sometimes you've got to have that feeling."

"Do you?" I sat down slowly in the easy chair.

"Sometimes." He went to the sofa and picked up his notebook again. "Some people do."

"In order," I asked, "to play?" And my voice was very ugly, full of contempt and anger.

"Well"-he looked at me with great, troubled eyes, as though, in fact, he hoped his eyes would tell me things he could never otherwise say-"they think so. And if they think so-!"

"And what do you think?" I asked.

He sat on the sofa and put his can of beer on the floor. "I don't know," he said, and I couldn't be sure if he were answering my question or pursuing his houghts. His face didn't tell me. "It's not so much to play. It's to stand it, to be able to make it at all. On any level." He frowned and smiled: "In order to keep from shaking to pieces."

-Sonny’s opening up his mind to his brother by explaining what the drug was to him.

-Music was a kind of positive equivalent of heroin, a relief from pain, suffering, helplessness, and loneliness.