

The glass menagerie



All the characters of Glass Menagerie are living in a dream-like world. The play portrays the life of the Wingfield family: Amanda, Laura and Tom. Another character is Jim, the gentleman caller. The three characters live in a dream-like world since they are unable to face the present reality and work on from there. The mother, Amanda is so caught up with her past that she failed to live in the present. In most of her conversations with her children, she would take pride in herself by telling them that she was one of the most beautiful damsels of Blue Mountain. She said that she knows how to entertain her numerous gentlemen callers. She would rattle off the numerous names of her suitors and she would recount their consequent fame and fortune after some years. However, she would always refer to her husband with a note of regret and sadness. Amanda also failed to accept the disability of her daughter, Laura, who is a cripple, so she refused to face the reality that Laura would naturally have fewer suitors due to this disability. Instead, she would say that there must be a typhoon on a certain day since Laura has no gentleman callers. Amanda also exercises considerable control over her children. For instance, Amanda demands that Tom, her son should join them during meals. One of her dreams is that Laura gets to marry a fine gentleman. She also wants Laura to study the typewriter and practice the shorthand so that the gentlemen callers will perceive that she is well-bred. Laura has a low self-esteem as shown by her deep sensitivity to the negative perceptions of other people. She also seems to have an unstable mental condition. Instead of braving the negative perceptions of her classmates at the Business College, she instead chose to stay at home and be comforted by the presence of her glass collection. Hence, she settled for a less daunting feat: playing with beautiful glass figurines everyday. She admitted

that she is not as popular to gentlemen callers as her mother was when her mother was still a young girl. She told Jim, the gentleman caller that what interests her most was her glass collection. She dabbles her time by listening to records and cleaning the glass figurines and putting those against the light so that these figurines would then appear to be very beautiful.

Tom, is a regular shoe worker who cannot seem to shake off her mom's pervasive influence over him. His mother demands him to quit smoking and to join them at the dinner table. He is terribly disappointed with his everyday ordinary work. However, he tries his best to shrug off his mother's influence but this was of no avail. Tom also wants his sister, Laura, to marry a good man. So he decides to help her sister by talking to his office mate, Jim O'Connor. However, Jim tells her that he is already engaged and thus makes her sad. Tom also gets to leave the family and never returns to them again. This play is a perfect example of a make-believe world that people create in order to make up for their inadequacies and regrets. This dream-like world can be woven, enriched and re-woven but it never lets them attain the truth about themselves.