

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 7. Issue.4. 2020 (Oct-Dec)

ISSN
INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
EN 1118
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

A STUDY OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS' TRAGIC VISION IN HIS PLAY
THE GLASS MENAGERIE

Dr. ANUM MIRZA

Currently working as Women Welfare Officer,
Under Ministry of Women & Child Development, Govt. of India.
Email: mirza.anum123@gmail.com



Dr. ANUM MIRZA

Article information
Received:30/11/2020
Accepted: 28/12/2020
Published online:31/12/2020
doi: [10.33329/ijelr.7.4.233](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.7.4.233)

ABSTRACT

Tennessee Williams (1911-1983) was an American playwright and a pragmatist in his real life. He presents the two facets of life in his works where we discover dream and the truth right next to each other. Likewise, in his play *The Glass Menagerie* he presents the depiction of the humankind where all the people face pain and a number of sufferings. They ultimately find no place to go where they can actually get peace and a sense of protection. This work of Tennessee Williams cannot be labeled as a play of great misfortune and disaster, yet it is brimming with sad occurrences and sufferings. This paper is going to be an intense study of the tragic vision of the author in his play *The Glass Menagerie*, where all the characters of the play remain dreamers all through their journey of life and discover satisfaction of their expectations in their inward world as genuine world and is too brutal to even think about living in.

Keywords: alienation, dreams, illusion, reality, characters

In *The Glass Menagerie* (1945) the writer is full of compassion toward his weak and incapable visionaries and has extended tragic and appalling vision of life. Amanda and her children are highly upset and dissatisfied from their lives and thus see harmony and joy in their own deceptions. Actually, contemporary man lives in a time which is harsh and very unjust. The Amandas, Blanches and Lauras have the qualities which supply existence with importance yet they come up short on the essentialness and power to protect these qualities against an unfriendly world.

The spouse of Amanda Wingfield has abandoned her and so she discovers it exceedingly hard to confront the unpleasant and brutal truth of life in solitary. Amanda's own unpleasant and distasteful life attached with the load of nerves of a girl of eligible age who is injured and crippled makes her uncomfortable constantly. All the characters in the play mostly and all the time concentrate in the disappointments. And, they find it difficult to convey their emotions and feelings to one another, which act as a major hurdle in their lives. Lack of proper understanding and incommunicado can be the reasons for their poor predicament. Present day world is egotistical which has crushed a lifestyle and a custom that once implied human advancement and has offered ascend to the general public which is immensely harsh, ruinous and oppressive as well. For Williams, the entire universe is the incredible rival power threatening just as intractable, pitiless and cruel. His works managed the ruinous effect of civilization on the non-conventionalist and delicate person. All the way through his shows, he has successfully brought under center the advanced society in totally differed angles. He has

depicted different characters who endeavor for superior existence yet they are destined to disappointment due to their powerlessness to accomplish more than dreams.

All the characters in this play are so befuddled and confounded that they waver between the universe of reality and imagination. In this way Williams makes an endeavor to give us the reality of life, however in the pretense of hallucination. One critic said that in the works of Tennessee Williams we hear reverberation of the call of the scared, the desolate and the untouchable. Thus, if there is a misfortune and heartbreak in Williams' works, it is the awfulness of conditions as opposed to of characters. The existing idea of tragedy treats even a normal and an average person as legend, in the event that he has chivalrous characteristics and languishes over no deficiency of his. Aristotelian misfortune lays accentuation on the status of the legend, a recognized character of higher esteem and position, who welcomes destruction or his disastrous end in view of some characteristic shortcoming in his character joined with the unfriendly conditions. So the current idea of misfortune is out and out unique in relation to that of Aristotelian.

Life is a big struggle ground and just an extreme and valiant contender can adapt to the hard real factors of life. The feeble willed and faltering individuals discover no spot in it. They are pushed to the mass of elimination or compelled to live in the realm of pretend. Sigmund Freud, once said in his work that:

Life, as we find it, is too hard for us; it brings us too many pains, disappointments and impossible tasks. In order to bear it we cannot dispense with palliative measures.... There are perhaps three such measures: powerful deflections, which causes us to make light of our misery; substitutive satisfactions, which diminish it; and intoxicating substances which make us insensible to it. (*Civilization and its Discontents*)

One such character is Laura and the plot of the play rotates round her, moth-like delicate young lady who can't adapt to the brutal universe of the real world. She is the most unfortunate character who looks for extraction from the antagonistic external world. Her mom is worried about her future joy and fears that she may not turn into another old servant old maid who lives on the kindness of others. Laura fears the rest of the world and needs escape from threatening, compromising present day life. She in reality experiences actual deformation and it exacerbates things for her in the wedding market. Laura is too sensitive and fears outside world and takes shelter in her internal self. Her pulverization, her last retreat into a pretend world, obviously, is generally contacting and makes it practically grievous. Jim tries to take out the lowliness and inferiority complex in his sister Laura and tried to improve her self-confidence and says that, "Somebody needs to build your confidence up and make you proud instead of shy and turning away..." (*The Glass Menagerie*).

Tom is likewise caught in a dreary world and he needs to escape into a universe of experience and energy yet the family duties and his responsibilities towards them secure him to an occupation which he doesn't care for, at all. "His nature is not remorseless, but to escape from a trap he has to act without pity" (*The Glass Menagerie*). But because his mom Amanda is intellectually upset and requests that her child Tom get back some noble man guest who may accept and take her daughter Laura home, after getting happily married. Tom feels irritated when his mother used to direct him on all the petty things like how to eat, how to comb etc. "I haven't enjoyed one bite of this dinner because of your constant directions on how to eat..." (*The Glass Menagerie*). He is likely craftsman, an artist yet he feels covered and squashed by his work and by his obligations to his family. He generally thinks about some getaway course so he may demonstrate his value as a craftsman and as an individual yet he is destined to disappointment in light of threatening conditions. His vulnerability that he was unable to impart duties to her mom and could be of no assistance to his sister namely Laura was actually an agonizing and unbearable encounter for Tom.

Amanda puts forth most extreme attempts to save her family from crumbling and keep the relations flawless regardless of her better half's desertation. Obviously, she has certain paltry qualities also. She is attached to recounting the narratives of her childhood and wears the clothes in an old-fashioned remnant of her early days when Jim calls her. Now and then, embarrassingly she plays the flirt as far as possible, so her little girl is all around got comfortable life via marriage. The best and most chivalrous character Amanda Wingfield is surely a deplorable character. A real and fearless lady who is all the time worried about her

crippled daughter namely Laura. Hence, we find that Amanda is one of the best portrayal in American dramatization. She is really a chivalrous and versatile character. Amanda does everything which harms her pride and confidence however she can't get away from the unforgiving truth of life. Unfortunately, she is caught in a world in which she is bound to confront mortifications and suffers aches of life isolated, without giving out the weight of family, as her spouse has also previously abandoned her. She emerges as a very bold character in the play who faces the difficulties of life strikingly and fearlessly and gets ready Tom to adapt to the situation and offer with her, family duties. Jac Tharpe in his work *Tennessee Williams: A Tribute* (1977) said that:

A woman is presented at a moment when frustration had led to a crisis. She has only two possible ways of acting: to face reality or to retreat into illusion. The significant question is whether she will face the crisis and choose to live in the real world, free of debilitating illusions and capable of compassion for others. (Tharpe Jac.L)

Amanda is misjudged by her own youngsters in light of the fact that there is correspondence and age gap between them. The issue in the play is that nobody comprehends the other. Laura and Tom can't comprehend their mom when she discusses Blue Mountain and cheerful bygone times. They don't have the foggiest idea about its full ramifications.

Williams' works manage the dangerous effect of society on the delicate, fragile and weak person. The threatening climate and the damaging powers of the world and civilization leave him squashed and trampled. His life is plagued with multiple issues, various difficulties along with countless agonies. He sees himself as a desolate figure where nobody has any sort of compassionate feelings toward the other. Thus, in *The Glass Menagerie* all the characters endure on account of adversarial conditions. Laura and Tom additionally make sensations of compassion in our heart. They can't adapt to issues of life and accordingly discover asylum in their inward universe of creative mind and fantasy. So this work includes sentiment rather than purgation. All the characters of the play have a place with a general public that has no thought for their fantasies and goals. Their existence is nothing but a story of hopelessness and misery.

The activity of the play comprises of a few occasions identified with one another. Outward occasions occur quickly in a steady progression. The internal occasions are the response of the outward occasions. Amanda's assurance to locate an appropriate counterpart for Laura on the off chance that she isn't keen on any expert work and her demanding Tom for a man of his word give you an idea about an external progress. Thus, *The Glass Menagerie* is certainly not a static play. It is a misfortune of current man portrayed through the personality of Amanda, Tom and Laura in the play *The Glass Menagerie*. The above facts confirm that *The Glass Menagerie* is very nearly a contextual investigation in frustrated endeavors at correspondence. Here we discover characters who put forth brave attempts to emerge from the tapping circumstance but stays a visionary all through. In this way all endeavors for common arrangement and correspondence to one another in a legitimate manner fall flat and that is the underlying driver of significant showdown with one another.

Works Cited

1. Freud, Sigmund. *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*. Translated by Strachey, James. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Hogarth Press. 1963. Print.
2. Tharpe, Jac L., ed. *Tennessee Williams: A Tribute*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 1977. Print.
3. Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie*. New York: Random House, 1945. Print.