

THE GLASS
MENAGERIE BY
TENNESSEE
WILLIAMS

PRESENTED BY MR. AMIR SUHAIL RASHID
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Tennessee Williams

(1911-1983)

- ▶ One of the most famous playwrights of the English Speaking world: won many awards.
- ▶ He was born in Columbus, Mississippi and later moved to New Orleans.
- ▶ He was born. "Thomas Lanier Williams 111" , but changes his name to "Tennessee" at the age of 28.
- ▶ The glass menagerie was the first successful play.
- ▶ And since this work of his was performed all over the world.

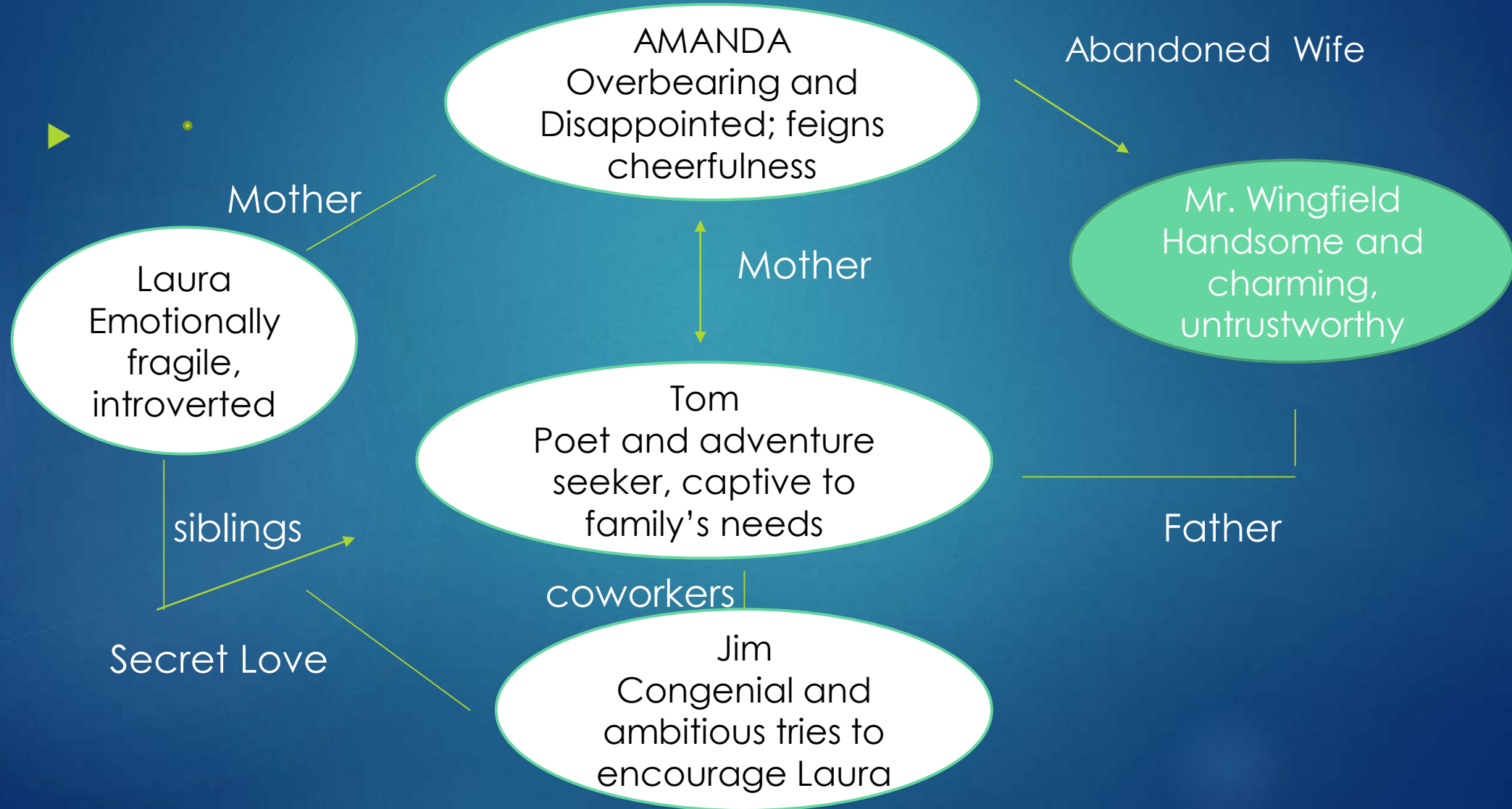
THE GLASS MENAGERIE

- ▶ The play is an autobiographical, representing William's own mother and sister. Tom represents Williams himself.
- ▶ The play was a huge success and continues to be very popular in American theatre. Several movie versions have been made by Hollywood.
- ▶ Type of work : Play
- ▶ Genre : Tragedy
- ▶ Language : English
- ▶ Tone : Tragic; sarcastic ; bleak
- ▶ Setting (place) : An apartment in St. Louis
- ▶ Protagonist : Tom Wingfield

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

- ▶ Written in 1944
- ▶ Seven scenes
- ▶ Comprised of the oppressed , the fragile , and the needful
- ▶ About human desperation and courage a memory
- ▶ It is a story of unhappy family life after being deserted by the father and the daughter has problem in socializing.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE



THE GLASS MENAGERIE (CHARACTERS)

There are four major characters :-

1. Tom Wingfield
2. Amanda Wingfield
3. Laura Wingfield
4. Jim O'Connor

And one minor characters:-

5. Mr . Wingfield

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

CHARACTERS DESCRIPTION

- ▶ 1. AMANDA WINGFIELD – Laura and Tom's mother. A proud, vivacious woman. Amanda clings fervently to memories of a vanished, genteel past. Grew up wealthy and beautiful, but now does not have much money to take care of her children. Husband left the family. Wants her children to have a good life.
- ▶ 2. LAURA WINGFIELD – Amanda's daughter and Tom's older sister. Laura crippled from a childhood illness. Twenty – three years old and painfully shy about his handicap. Isolated from the outside world. Has created a world of her own in her glass menagerie.
- ▶ 3. Tom Wingfield – Amanda's son and Laura's brother. An aspiring poet. Tom works at a shoe warehouse to support the family. He is frustrated by the number routine of his job and escapes from it through movies, literature and alcohol.
- ▶ 4. Jim O'Connor – An Old acquaintance of Tom and Laura. Jim was a popular athlete in high school and is now a shipping clerk at the shoe warehouse in which Tom works. He is unwaveringly devoted to goals of professional achievement and ideals of personal success.
- ▶ 5. Mr. Wingfield – Amanda's husband and Laura's and Tom's father. Mr. Wingfield was a handsome man who worked for a telephone company. He abandoned his family years before the action of the play and never appears on stage. His picture, however, prominently in the Wingfield's living room.
- ▶ 6. Betty – A girlfriend of Jim whom he is soon to marry.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

SUMMARY

The action of *The Glass Menagerie* takes place in the Wingfield's family apartment in St. Louis, 1937. The events of the play are framed by memory- Tom Wingfield is the play's narrator, and usually smokes and stands on the fire escape as he delivers his monologues. The narrator addresses us from the undated and eternal present, although at the play's first production (1944-5), Tom's constant indirect references to the violence of the Second World War would have been powerfully current.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

SUMMARY

The action of the play centers on Tom , his mother Amanda , and his sister Laura . In 1937 they live together in a small apartment in St . Louis . Their father abandoned them years earlier , and Tom is now the family's breadwinner. He works at the continental shoemakers warehouse during the day , but he disappears nightly “ to the movies ” . Amanda is a loving mother , but her meddling and nagging are hard to live with for Tom , who is a grown man and who earns the wages that support the entire family. Laura is a frightened and terribly shy girl , with unbelievably weak nerves . She is also slightly lame in one leg, and she seldom leaves the apartment of her own volition . She busies herself caring for her “glass menagerie”, a collection of delicate little glass animals.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

SUMMARY

Amanda dreams constantly of the long ago days when she was a young Southern belle and darling of her small town's social scene. She enrolled Laura in classes at Rubicam's Business College, hoping that a career in business would make Laura self – sufficient . She discovers that Laura stopped attending classes a long time ago , because the speed tests on the typewriter terrified her. After the fiasco at Rubicam's Amanda gives up on a business career for Laura and puts all her hopes into finding a husband for her.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

SUMMARY

Amanda's relationship with Tom is difficult . Tom longs to be free- like his father to abandoned Amanda and Laura and set off into the world. He has stayed because of his responsibility for them, but his mother's nagging and his frail sister's idiosyncrasies make the apartment a depressing and oppressive place . Tom also hates his job. His only escapes comes from his frequent visits to the movies, but his nightly disappearances anger and baffle Amanda . He fights with Amanda all the time , and the situation at home grows more unbearable.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

SUMMARY

Amanda sensing that Tom wants to leave , tries to make a deal with him. If Tom and Amanda can find a husband for Laura , a man who take care of her , then Tom will be free of his responsibility to them. Amanda asks Tom to bring home gentleman callers to meet Laura. Tom brings home Jim O'Connor , a fellow employ at warehouse . He is an outgoing and enthusiastic man on whom Laura had a terrible crush in high school. Jim chats with Laura , growing increasingly flirtatious , until he finally kisses her. Then he admits that he has a fiancé and cannot call again. For fragile Laura , the news is devastating.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

SUMMARY

Amanda is furious , and after Jim leaves she accuses Tom of playing a cruel joke on them. Amanda and Tom had one final fight , and not long afterwards Tom leaves for good. In his closing monologue , he admits that he cannot escape the memory of his sister . Though he abandoned her years ago , Laura still haunts him.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

THEMES

Themes of glass menagerie are

- 1.Freedom and confinement.
- 2.Duty.
- 3.Family.
- 4.Memory and the past.
- 5.Weakness .
- 6.Deception and lies .
- 7.Dreams,hopes and plans .
8. Abandonment.
- 9.Marriage.
- 10.Gender.
- 11.Love.
- 12.Drugs and alcohol.
- 13.The difficulty of accepting reality .

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

STYLISTIC ELEMENTS

- ▶ Symbols in the play:

Glass : Laura's Glass Menagerie / transparent to society.

Fire Escape : Tom's need for freedom .

Blue Roses : A happier time and place for Laura in school with Jim.

Jonquils : a reminder of Amanda's glorious past.

Gentleman caller : Jim .

Unicorn : Laura's uniqueness .

Scarf : Tom attempt to share his magic and desire for escape with Laura.

- ▶ Images on the screen :

picture set the mood .

Blue roses when Laura is talking about Jim .

Sailing vessel to showcase Tom's longing to escape for his life.

Music as Laura loves to play her father old records .

Amanda as a young girl to show his privileged past .

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

CONCLUSION

“ In life we struggle different kinds of hardships, rejection , abandonment ,deception, lies and even in our family we experience those. But always remember that there's no perfect family unless LOVE is the center of it , and no matter what happen when trouble comes , it's your family that support you always . So , it us who can decide where we should go to forgive and to forget ?

To accept things ! And even Tom , did not see the beauty of his family and still Laura is like a fragile glass menagerie , there still one thing stand in the end is that the Love of their Mother. Because , there's no perfect mother but they LOVE perfectly ! ”.