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Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*: Three Movies for One Play

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INTRODUCTION

The play *The Glass Menagerie*, written by Tennessee Williams in 1944, portrays the disintegration of a family. The three main characters are the mother Amanda Wingfield and the siblings Tom and Laura, the children of a “telephone man who fell in love with long distances”(5) who deserted them sixteen years earlier. The play is set in St. Louis, Missouri in the Midwest, at the end of the Great Depression¹. As the reader learns from the initial stage directions, they belong to the lower class: “*The Wingfield family apartment is in the rear of the building, one of those vast hive-like conglomerations of cellular living units that flower as warty growths in overcrowded urban centers of lower middle-class population and are symptomatic of the impulse of this largest and fundamentally enslaved section of American society*” (3).

Outside the apartment is a bleak fire escape where Tom can smoke a cigarette and where Amanda can take a deep breath making a wish to the moon; they have no garden in which to rest in the hot summer evenings: “*The apartment faces an alley and is entered by a fire escape, a structure whose name is a touch of accidental poetic truth, for all of these huge buildings are always burning with the slow and implacable fires of human desperation*” (3).

The first impression given to the audience is a sense of absolute degradation and suffocation: “*At the rise of the curtain, the audience is faced with the dark, grim rear wall of the Wingfield tenement. This building is flanked on both sides by dark, narrow alleys which run into murky canyons of tangled clotheslines, garbage cans, and the sinister latticework of neighboring fire escapes*” (3).

The interior of the apartment shows how they share a condition of deprivation and lack of intimacy: “*Nearest the audience is the living room, which also serves as a sleeping room for Laura, the sofa unfolding to make her bed.*”(4) Furniture seems inexistent and tiny transparent glass

¹ As Tom says in his initial monologue: “[I]n Spain there was Guernica”. This piece of information provides us with a precise time indication: 1936.

animals, which lie “[i]n an old-fashioned whatnot in the living room...” (4) are the only decoration of the house. One iconic presence fills his absence: the portrait of the runaway father: “A blown-up photograph of the father hangs on the wall of the living room, to the left of the archway. It is the face of a very handsome young man in a doughboy’s First War cap. He is gallantly smiling, ineluctably smiling, as if to say, “I will be smiling forever” (4).

According to Tennessee Williams’, “[e]xpressionism and all other unconventional techniques in drama have only one valid aim, and that is a closer approach to truth” (XIX). The play has been defined a *Memory Play*: “The scene is memory and is therefore nonrealistic. Memory takes a lot of poetic license. It omits some details; others are exaggerated, according to the emotional value of the articles it touches, for memory is seated predominantly in the heart. The interior is therefore dim and poetic” (3).

The devices utilized on stage “have to do with a conception of a new, plastic theatre which must take the place of the exhausted theatre of realistic conventions if the theatre is to resume vitality as a part of our culture” (Williams XIX). Williams’² new aesthetic of theatre sees him “experimenting with a more fluid dramatic structure that would to some extent emulate the cinematic technique of *mise-en-scene*, the method by which a film director stages an event for the camera” (IX). The result obtained by this innovation offers the audience a dynamic stage in which the sense of depth is given by the transparent walls and lights:

The audience hears and sees the opening scene in the dining room through both the transparent fourth wall of the building and the transparent gauze portieres of the dining-room arch. It is during this revealing scene that the fourth wall slowly ascends, out of sight. This transparent exterior wall is not brought down again until the very end of the play, during Tom’s final speech.” (4)

Light and music are equally meaningful for the success of the play and is Tom in his introductory monologue who tells the audience the metaphorical role of the fiddle in the

² Williams wrote: “I visualize it as a reduced mobility on the stage, the forming of statuesque attitudes or tableaux, something resembling a restrained type of dance, with motions honed down to only the essential or significant” (IX).

wings: “The play is memory. Being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental, it is not realistic. In memory everything seems to happen to music. That explains the fiddle in the wings”. (5) For instance, “«The Glass Menagerie» is used to give emotional emphasis to suitable passages” (XXI), and “[i]t expresses the surface vivacity of life with the underlying strain of immutable and inexpressible sorrow”(XXI). The non-realism of the play is played by the role of lighting that is not realistic. Lightning reshapes the figures of actors on stage where, “[f]or instance, in the quarrel scene between Tom and Amanda, in which Laura has no active part, the clearest pool of light is on her figure” (XXI).

One last important aspect of the staging of *The Glass Menagerie* is the screen device, which consists in the use of a screen on which are projected magic lantern slides bearing images or titles. For instance in scene one, before Amanda’s seventeen gentleman callers list, the tagline “[Screen legend «*Ou sont les neiges d’antan?*»” (9) introduces the audience in a moment of romantic memory that belongs to Amanda’s past. Tennessee Williams quotes:

The legend or image upon the screen will strengthen the effect of what is merely allusion in the writing and allow the primary point to be made more simply and lightly than if the entire responsibility were on the spoken lines. Aside from this structural line, I think the screen will have a definite emotional appeal, less definable but just as important. (XX)

After the introduction of the setting of the story, and the original expedients utilized by Williams to create a brand new theatre, a description of the five characters, Amanda, Laura, Tom, Jim and the narrator becomes necessary.

CHAPTER I

THE CHARACTERS

1.1 AMANDA WINGFIELD

She is it the head of the family. After her beloved husband left her sixteen years earlier, she has taken charge of their offspring. She is about fifty years old at the moment; her beauty has been suffering the ravages of time. Amanda hails from Blue Mountain in the state of Mississippi³ as she constantly recalls and she has arrived in Saint Louis after the marriage. She grew up in the deep south of the United States, among planters and sons of planters who were continually claiming her for a bride: “One Sunday afternoon in Blue Mountain—*your mother*⁴ received—*seventeen!*—gentlemen callers! ... My callers were gentlemen—all! Among my callers were some of the most prominent young planters of the Mississippi Delta—planters and sons of planters!” (8). These men have all reached the top position in society, planters and even wolves of Wall Street. She used to seduce men because she understood the art of conversation, an ability the girls of that time knew very well: “Girls in those days *knew* how to talk, I can tell you” (8), ironizing about the inability for modern girls to entertain a man in a proper way⁵.

Unfortunately, given that she was not a domestic girl, she did not use to obey her mother’s rules. Staying at home to recover from a malaria fever rather than attending all the balls of spring season was not even considered: “I had malaria fever all that spring. [...] «Stay in bed,» said mother, «you have fever!»—But I just wouldn’t. I took quinine but kept on going, going! Evenings, dances! [...] I had the craze for jonquils. Jonquils became an absolute

³ Nancy M. Tischler in her article “The distorted mirror: Tennessee Williams’ Self Portraits” writes: “Amanda represents the ideals of the Old South, the Puritan tradition, and a kind of meaningless conformity that destroys the individual without the consequence of enriching the world”(398).

⁴ Amanda talks about herself as if she was dissociated from her former self.

⁵ Amanda probably refers to Laura and her clumsiness

obsession. Mother said, “Honey, there’s no more room for jonquils.” And still I kept on bringing in more jonquils”. (54) What Amanda reached in her youth was the satisfaction of her feelings and sexual impulses. Maybe the planters might have had a good income to let her raise her family and on a large piece of land with plenty of servants, but the boy she met one day had plenty of charm, “[a]nd then I—[*She stops in front of the picture. Music plays*] met your father! Malaria fever and jonquils and then—this—boy...” (54). As a result, Amanda accepted the proposal of a simple worker of a telephone company, the man hidden behind the charming boy. If Amanda could have predicted her future, she would have not have married him, as she says: “That innocent look of your father’s had everyone fooled! He *smiled*- the world was *enchanted!* No girl can do worse than put herself at the mercy of a handsome appearance!” (46). “I married no planter! I married a man who worked for the telephone company! ... A telephone man who-fell in love with long distance!”(64). He deserted her and their two children soon after the marriage, going who knows where doing who knows what, bequeathing debts to pay and two children to raise.

She likes to relive her past with Tom and Laura listening to her monologues sometimes bored and sometimes enchanted, humoring her need to be admired. She misses her past because it was the most exciting part of her life; a carefree southern girl, who had only the duty to choose what to wear and what order to give to the *nigger* at her service. In the sixteen years that followed, Amanda has learnt how to get by and manage the home economics, working herself roping in subscribers for magazines⁶ and expecting Tom and Laura to help her in any way. C.W.E. Bigsby says: “Amanda scrapes together money by demonstrating brasseries at a local store, itself a humiliation for a woman of her sensibility. Otherwise, she has to suffer the embarrassment of selling subscriptions to women’s magazines over the telephone, enduring the abrupt response of those calls” (34).

⁶ Bigsby in his article writes: “She survives, ironically, by selling romantic myths, in the form of romance magazines, to other women” (38).

Tom, now elected the man of the house, works in a warehouse and with his sixty-five dollars a month sustains the equilibrium of the family. Amanda needs that money and it does not matter if her son is pleased with his job. Amanda relies a lot on him and she does not see, or does not want to see, that he has been charged with a role he is not willing to cover, indeed she does not lose any occasion to remind Tom about her needs:

I mean that as soon as Laura has got somebody to take care of her, married, a home of her own, independent- why, then you'll be free to go wherever you please, on land, on sea, whichever way the wind blows you! But until that time you've got to look out for your sister. I don't say me because I'm old and don't matter! I say for your sister because she's young and dependent. (35)

Amanda is so selfish that she does not understand how much Tom suffers his position at the warehouse and at home, but she calls upon him for *Spartan endurance*: "I know your ambitions do not lie in the warehouse, that like everybody in the whole world- you've had to- make sacrifices, but- Tom-Tom- life's not easy, it calls for- Spartan endurance!" (32). She orders and Tom obeys. Amanda has developed a strong sense of protection towards Laura, the eldest daughter. She worries about her not having a boyfriend and her being too domestic:

AMANDA: [*hopelessly fingering the huge pocketbook*]: So what are we going to do the rest of our lives? Stay home and watch the parades go by? Amuse ourselves with the glass menagerie, darling? ... What is there left but dependency all our lives? I know so well what becomes of unmarried women who aren't prepared to occupy a position. I've seen such pitiful cases in the South- barely tolerated spinsters living upon the grudging patronage of sister's husband or brother's wife! (16)

In fact, Laura represents the opposite of her mother, who probably at the same age had already married and had already become a mother. Amanda refuses to accept her daughter's handicap: she is lame in one leg, and refuses the definition of "crippled", a term utilized by both Tom and Laura: "Why, you're not crippled, you just have a little defect—hardly noticeable, even!" (17). Amanda is acquainted with Laura's shortcomings and wants her to find an occupation that forces her to socialize. Rubicam's Business College seems to Amanda the best solution, but

after a while, Laura gives up owing to her inability to face the reality outside her home. Here we have a good portrait of Amanda's disappointment at the beginning of scene two when she returns from the college:

Something has happened to Amanda. It is written in her face as she climbs to the landing: a look that is grim and hopeless and a little bit absurd. ... She purses her lips, opens her eyes very wide, rolls them upward and shakes her head. Then she slowly lets herself in the door. Seeing her mother's expression Laura touches her lips with a nervous gesture. ... [Amanda slowly opens her purse and removes a dainty white handkerchief which she shakes out delicately and delicately touches to her lips and nostrils.](11-12)

Bigsby explains Amanda's interpretation of life: "Early in the play Amanda is presented as an actress, self-dramatizing, self-conscious. Her first part is that of a martyred mother. When she removes her hat and gloves she does so with a theatrical gesture. She dabs at her lips and nostrils to indicate her distress before melodramatically tearing the diagram of a typewriter keyboard to pieces"(39).

Amanda understands that she cannot put demands on Laura in the same way she does with Tom; the need for money at home does not touch Laura's feelings, which are committed to her glass collection of animals and daily strolls across the city, in the zoo, art museum, the movies and the Jewel Box. The ultimate solution for Amanda is finding a proper husband for Laura who might take care for her, given that Amanda knows what is what: "Girls that aren't cut for business careers usually wind up married to some nice man. [She gets up with a spark of revival.] Sister, that's what you'll do!" (17). Since Laura seems not interested in finding one, Amanda in an act of desperate quest, repeatedly presses Tom to bring home a gentleman caller keen to see beyond her physical defect and queerness:

AMANDA: Tom! I haven't said what I had in mind to ask you... [Catching his arm-very impudently; then shyly]: Down at the warehouse, aren't there some-nice young men?... There *must* be-some... Find out one that's clean living-doesn't drink and ask him out for sister! ... For sister! To *me*! Get acquainted!... Will you? ...Will you?...Will you? Will you, dear?... [Amanda closes the door hesitantly and with a troubled but faintly hopeful expression](36)

Tom cannot disappoint Amanda and at last introduces Jim to the family. Amanda sees Jim as the deserved gift she has longed for long time and stages a Ballroom night, deluded to live again her glorious past. She re-arranges her modest house, and dresses up as a *belle* at her first party. Bigsby quotes “When the gentleman callers arrives for her daughter she changes roles, dressing herself in the clothes of a young woman and becoming a Southern belle, rendered grotesque by the distance between performer and role”(39). In fact, she steals the scene from Laura.

The date organized for Laura and Jim becomes Amanda’s exhibition of herself; like a *Diva*, she welcomes Jim to her home appearing from behind the curtains, wearing the mythical worn-out dress she had the night she met her husband, “the past represents her youth, before time worked its dark alchemy. Memory has become myth, a story to be endlessly repeated as a protection against present decline. She wants nothing more than to freeze time” (Bigsby 38). Amanda deludes herself by pretending to turn back time and have a second chance to display her beauty, “[b]ut at the end of the play all such pretences are abandoned. As we see but do not hear her words of comfort to her daughter, so her various roles shrewish mother, coquettish belle, ingratiating saleswoman, are set aside”(Bigsby 39). She forgets the fact that Jim is Laura’s gentlemen caller, not hers, and relegates Laura to a supporting role. She even directs the action demanding Laura: “Laura Wingfield, you march right to the door” (57) Amanda delights Jim brushing up her *art of conversation*, acting like a coquette at her first date but trying to address Jim’s attention to Laura: “Have you met Laura? [Has She] let you in? Oh good, you’ve met already! It’s rare for a girl as sweet an’ pretty as Laura to be domestic! But Laura is, thank heavens, not only pretty but also very domestic. I’m not at all. I never was a bit. I never could make a thing but angel-food cake” (64).

As the supper comes to an end, there is no more time left to catch up the date and Amanda in a sort of self-dethronement delivers Jim to Laura who, in the meanwhile has recovered from

a previous fainting: “I’m not exaggerating, not one bit! But Sister⁷ is all by her lonesome. You go keep her company in the parlor! I’ll give you this lovely old candelabrum that used to be on the altar at the Church if the Heavenly rest. It was melted a little out of shape when the Church burnt down (70)”. Amanda hopes Laura would do her best not to spoil the second occasion and, at the same time, she relies on Jim and his initiative to give a happy ending to the evening. Amanda blesses the two, even mentioning the Church, hoping on the blessing of a miraculous candelabrum. Bigsby writes: “The stage has been set and the lighting adjusted by Amanda as stage manager” (40). Unfortunately, Amanda has not foreseen that Laura, Jim and Tom have planned something different for themselves. Amanda’s calculations of having a married crippled daughter and a son who would find adventure in his career collapse in a definitive failure of her revenge with the gentleman caller kindly saying he will not call on Laura again:

JIM: No, Ma’am, not work— but Betty!

AMANDA: Betty? Betty? Who’s Betty!

JIM: Oh, just a girl. The girl I go steady with!

AMANDA [*a long-drawn explanation*]: Ohhhh....Is it a serious romance, Mr. O’Connor?

JIM: We’re going to be married the second Sunday in June.

AMANDA: Ohhhh—how nice! Tom didn’t mention that you were engaged to be married. (93)

As an experienced actress she dismisses Jim: “Yes, I know- the tyranny of women! [*She extends her hand*] Goodbye Mr. O’Connor. I wish you luck—and happiness—and success! All three of them, and so does Laura! Don’t you, Laura?” (94) She addresses all her frustration to Tom, the scapegoat of the Wingfields:

⁷ Judith J. Thompson in “Tennessee Williams’ Plays: Memory, Myth and Symbol” writes: “In reinforcement of her saintly aspect, she is referred to by Amanda, Jim and Tom as “sister”, the traditional address for a nun, and calls herself “an old maid”, the eternal virgin (19).

AMANDA: That's right, now that you've had us make such fools of ourselves. The effort, the preparations, all the expense! The new floor lamp, the rug, the clothes for Laura! All for what? To entertain some other girl's fiancé! Go to the movies, go! Don't think about us, a mother deserted, an unmarried sister who's crippled and has no job! Don't let anything interfere with your selfish pleasure! Just go, go, go, go to the movies! (95-96)

All the pretenses have collapsed. Amanda must face the truth and unwillingly admits the unbearable truth about Laura and her defect as Bigsby highlights:

At the beginning of the play she proscribes the word "cripple"; at the end she uses the word herself. It is her first step towards accepting the truth of her daughter's situation and hence of the need which she must acknowledge and address. . . . Deserted and betrayed, she stays and continues her losing battle with time in the company of her doomed daughter and, in what is virtually the play's final stage direction, Williams finds a "dignity and tragic beauty" in that sad alliance.(42)

She lets Tom leave the family as his husband did years before and she remains with Laura with a new life to start again.

1.2 LAURA WINGFIELD

Laura is two years older than Tom and "a childhood illness has left her crippled with one leg slightly shorter than the other" (XVIII). This trauma has put her in a condition of stagnation, "[b]ut she does represent the kind of person for whom the Romantics of the early nineteenth century felt increasing sympathy: the fragile, almost unearthly ego brutalized by life in the industrialized, depersonalized cities of the Western world" (Cardullo 161). Although she is a pretty girl, considering the loveliness of the young Amanda and the charm of her father, her leg has conditioned her life up to now, pushing her to linger at the corner of society and human relationships. Bert Cardullo explains: "The physically as well as emotionally fragile Laura escapes from the mid-twentieth urban predicament in St. Louis, [...], as someone of a Romantic temperament would, through art and music-through the beauty of her glass

menagerie, the records she plays on her Victrola, and her visits to the museum, the zoo, and the movies (161).

All that she cares about is her glass collection of animals: she washes and polishes them accompanied with the romantic music of the record player. Laura sees an analogy between their uselessness and hers, and only with them does she feel understood. Cardullo writes: “Like a romantic, Laura has a love for nature in addition to art- a nature that is artfully memorialized in her collection of little animals made out of glass [...] like the frail creatures of her glass menagerie, seems physically unfit for or adapted to an earthly life. She is too good for this world, the Romantics might say” (161-162).

At the age of twenty-four, without a High School diploma and without a job, Laura is trying to do her best not to disappoint her mother’s expectations and investments in the Business College she has been forced to attend. She pretends to study her typewriter chart when Tom and Amanda are at home and devotes herself to her glass animals when left alone. After a few days’ attendance Laura, paralyzed by a speed test, quits the lessons at school and instead goes hanging around the city: she goes to the zoo, to the movies and art museum, all places where reality seems rarefied, and her illness almost does not exist. She laconically justifies her choice to a bewildered Amanda:

AMANDA: Laura, where have you been going when you’ve gone out pretending that you were going to business college?

LAURA: I’ve just been going out walking [...] It is. It is. I just went walking [...] All sorts of places- mostly in the park [...] It was the lesser of two evils, Mother [...] It wasn’t as bad as it sounds. I went inside places to get warmed up. (14-15)

Laura keeps quiet until her mother finds out, but she does not regret her behavior and begs her mother to understand her:

LAURA: I went in the art museum and the bird houses at the zoo. I visited the penguins every day! Sometimes I did without lunch and went to the movies. Lately I've been spending most of my afternoons in the Jewel Box, that big glass house where they raise the tropical flowers.

AMANDA: You did all this to deceive me, just for deception?

[*Laura looks down.*] Why?

LAURA: Mother, when you're disappointed, you get that awful suffering look on your face, like the picture of Jesus' mother in the museum!

AMANDA: Hush! (15)

Unlike her mother, Laura has deliberately cut herself out from the man-woman seduction game, as Bigsby says: "In stepping into the fictive world of her glass animals, she steps out of any meaningful relationship with others in the present, [...] no longer vulnerable to the depredations of social process or time but no longer redeemed by love" (38). Laura has looked over her glass collection only once at High School, where she platonically loved a boy called Jim, as she joyfully tells her mother when asked. Laura relies on her mother's sensitiveness but she is soon discouraged owing to her mother's self-absorbed behavior:

AMANDA: Haven't you ever liked some boy?

LAURA: Yes. I liked one once [*She rises.*] I came across his picture a while ago.

AMANDA [*with some interest*]: He gave you his picture?

LAURA: No, it's in the yearbook.

AMANDA [*disappointed*]: Oh-a high school boy.

[*Screen image: Jim as the high school hero bearing a silver cup*]

LAURA: Yes. His name was Jim. [*She lifts the heavy annual from the claw-foot table.*] Here he is in *The pirates of Penzance*.

AMANDA [*Absently*]: The what?

LAURA: The operetta the senior class put on. He had a wonderful voice and we sat across the aisle from each other Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in the aud. Here he is with the silver cup for debating! See his grin? (16-17)

Laura has never suffered for love in the way her mother did, she has just restricted herself to a role of viewer of Jim's life and adored him at a safe distance. The brace on her leg has spoiled her adolescence as she explains:

JIM: Now I remember—you always came in late.

LAURA: Yes, it was so hard for me, getting upstairs. I had that brace on my leg—it clumped so loud!

JIM: I never heard any clumping.

LAURA [*wincing at the recollection*]: To me it sounded like—thunder!

JIM: Well, well, well, I never even noticed.

LAURA: And everybody was seated before I came in. I had to walk in front of all those people. My seat was in the back row. I had to go clumping all the way up the aisle with everyone watching! (75)

Now Laura has to pay for her deception, she must accept what Amanda demands of her with no excuses. With a rewarding position in the business career set aside, she has to consider the idea of finding a suitable husband who takes care of her. She must satisfy Amanda's machinations in order to repay her for the failure at Business College, imitating her mother in her coquettish and manufactured style:

AMANDA [*Impatiently*]: Why are you trembling?

LAURA: Mother, you've made me so nervous!

AMANDA: How have I made you so nervous?

LAURA: By all this fuss! You make it seem so important!

AMANDA: I don't understand you, Laura. You couldn't be satisfied with just sitting home, and yet whenever I try to arrange something for you, you seem to resist it. [*She gets up*] Now take a look at yourself. No, wait! Wait just a moment—I have an idea!

LAURA: What is now?

[*Amanda produces two powder puffs which she wraps in handkerchief and stuffs in Laura's bosom*]

LAURA: Mother, what are you doing?

AMANDA: They call them "Gay Deceivers"!

LAURA: I won't wear them!

AMANDA: You will!

LAURA: Why should I?

AMANDA: Because, to be painfully honest, your chest is flat.

LAURA: You make it seem like we were setting a trap.

AMANDA: All pretty girls are a trap, a pretty trap, and men expect it to be. (52)

What happens if the man in question, the gentleman caller invited by Tom, might be her beloved Jim?

LAURA: There was a Jim O'Connor we both knew in high school— [*then, with effort*] If that is the one that Tom is bringing to dinner—you'll have to excuse me, I won't come to the table.

AMANDA: What sort of nonsense is this?

LAURA: You asked me once if I'd ever liked a boy. Don't you remember I showed you this boy's picture?

AMANDA: you mean the boy you showed me in the yearbook?

LAURA: Yes, that boy.

AMANDA: Laura, Laura, were you in love with that boy?

LAURA: I don't know, Mother. All I know is I couldn't sit at the table if it was him!

AMANDA: It won't be him! It isn't the least bit likely. But whether it is or not, you will come to the table. You will not be excused.

LAURA: I'll have to be, Mother. (55)

Tom brings home Jim who happens to be the boy she has secretly loved at High School and now is Tom's colleague at the warehouse. When Jim comes at the door, at first, she weakly welcomes him then she disappears behind the portieres:

LAURA [*retreating, stiff and trembling, from the door*]: How—how do you do?

JIM [*heartily, extending his hand*]: Okay!

[*Laura touches it hesitantly with hers.*]

JIM: Your hand's *cold*, Laura!

LAURA: Yes, well—I've been playing the Victrola...

JIM: Must have been playing classical music on it! You ought to play a little hot swing music to warm you up!

LAURA: Excuse me—I haven't finished playing the Victrola.... [*She turns awkwardly and hurries into the front room. She pauses a second by the Victrola. Then she catches her breath and darts through the portieres like a frightened deer.*] (58)

Laura catches up with Tom, Amanda and Jim who are waiting for her, but she faints, incapacitated by the unbearable situation. The tag explains what happens to her:

[*The kitchenette door is pushed weakly open and Laura comes in. She is obviously quite faint, her lips trembling, her eyes wide and staring. She moves unsteadily toward the table.*]... [*Laura suddenly stumbles; she catches at a chair with a faint moan*]... [*...In the living room Laura, stretched on the sofa, clenches her hand to her lips, to hold back a shuddering sob.*](65-66)

Laura spends all the suppertime lying alone on the sofa, certain of the failure of the date, but Jim, after Amanda's request to keep company with Laura, surprises her who can do nothing but speak to him in the most candid way:

LAURA [*hastily, out of embarrassment*]: I believe I *will* take a piece of gum, if you—don't mind. [*Clearing her throat*] Mr. O'Connor, have you—kept up with your singing?

JIM: Singing me?

LAURA: Yes. I remember what a beautiful voice you had.

JIM: When did you hear me sing?

.....

JIM: You say you've heard me sing?

LAURA: Oh, yes! Yes, very often....I suppose-you remember me—at all? (73)

Now she calls the shots of the conversation opening up, helped by Jim's curiosity, demonstrating the capability to entertain a man, not by exposing her mother's art of conversation, but having the courage to dig up again even embarrassing episodes:

JIM [*Smiling doubtfully*]: You know I have an idea I've seen you before. I had that idea as soon as you opened the door. It seemed almost like I was about to remember your name. But the name that I started to call you—wasn't a name! And so I stopped myself before I said it.

LAURA: Wasn't it—Blues Roses?

JIM [*springing up, grinning*]: Blue roses! My gosh, yes—Blues Rose! That's what I had on my tongue when you opened the door! ... (73)

...

JIM: Aw, yes, I've placed you now! I used to call you Blue Roses. How was it that I got started calling you that?

LAURA: I was out of school a little while with pleurosis. When I came back you asked me what was the matter. I said I had pleurosis—you thought I said *Blue Roses*. That's what you always called me after that! (75)

The nickname *Blue Roses* is at first a funny misunderstanding that becomes a metaphor of Laura's hidden beauty that even Jim seizes in his later speech as Bert Cardullo analyzes in his article: "Jim's nickname for Laura, "Blue Roses", signifies her affinity for the natural-flowers-together with the transcendent-blue flowers, which do not occur naturally and thus come to symbolize her yearning for both ideal or mystical beauty and spiritual and romantic love." (161) Laura has the strength to remind Jim about her unsaid love: "Everybody—liked you", "Jim: Including you?" Laura: "I—yes, I—did, too" (78) and Jim's sympathy moves her to let him in her secret garden that is her glass collection:

JIM: Now how about you? Isn't there something you take more interest in than anything else?

LAURA: Well, I do—as I said have my glass collection

[*A peal of girlish laughter rings from the kitchenette.*]

JIM: I'm not right sure I know what you're talking about. What kind of glass is it?

LAURA: Little articles of it, they're ornaments mostly! Most of them are little animals made out of glass, the tiniest little animals in the world. Mother calls them a glass menagerie! Here's an example of one, if you'd like to see it! This one is one of the oldest. It's nearly thirteen. (82)

[*Music: "The Glass Menagerie."*] ⁸

Laura then shows Jim her favorite piece of glass from the collection, the unicorn that symbolizes both her and its uniqueness as concern the loneliness of their condition:

LAURA: I shouldn't be partial, but he is my favorite one.

JIM: What kind of a thing is this one supposed to be?

LAURA: Haven't you noticed the single horn on his forehead?

JIM: A unicorn, huh?

LAURA: Mmmmm-hmmmm.

JIM: Unicorns—aren't they extinct in the modern world?

LAURA I know!

JIM: Poor little fellow, he must feel sort of lonesome.

LAURA [*Smiling*]: Well, if he does, he doesn't complain about it. He stays on a shelf with some horses that don't have horns and all of them seem to get along nicely together. (83)

Laura and the unicorn have a lot in common; she represents a type of girl, the so-called "home girl", which between the lines means virginity, as Judith Thompson writes: "accordingly, her favorite animal in the glass menagerie is the mythical unicorn, emblem of chastity and the lover of virgins."(19) As the unicorn shares the shelf with the horses, Laura manages to mingle with the other ordinary girls.

Jim invites Laura to dance and this new experience allows her to minimize the little accident that soon occurs to the glass unicorn of the collection, when it falls to the floor when they bump into the table:

LAURA: Now it is just like the other horses.

⁸ Judith J. Thompson writes: "The recurrent music of "The Glass Menagerie,"[...] serves to evoke all the other images and qualities that characterize Laura's inner world: the tiny stationary glass animals, her childlike nature, and her uniqueness, in circus terms called freakish" (19-20).

JIM: IT's lost its—

LAURA: Horn! I doesn't matter. Maybe it's a blessing in disguise.

JIM: You'll never forgive me. I bet that that was your favorite piece of glass.

LAURA: I don't have favorites much. It's no tragedy, Freckles. Glass breaks so easily. No matter how careful you are. The traffic jars the shelves and things fall off them.

JIM: Still I'm awfully sorry that I was the cause.

LAURA [*smiling*]: I'll just imagine he had an operation. The horn was removed to make him feel less-freakish! (86)

For a while, Laura believes that as the unicorn has lost its horn, she might have lost her freakish aureole, like a broken spell. Jim plays his role paying her compliments that mislead her about his real intentions:

LAURA: In what respect am I pretty?

JIM: In all respects—believe me! Your eyes—your hair are pretty! Your hands are pretty! [*He catches hold of her hand.*] You think I'm making this up because I'm invited to dinner and I have to be nice. Oh, I could do that! I could put on an act for you, Laura, and say a lot of things without being very sincere. But this time I am. I'm talking to you sincerely.... Somebody—ought to—*kiss* you, Laura! (88)

Jim, who has understood he has given Laura a false hope, takes a distance considering her just a putative sister: "I wish you were my sister. I'd teach you to have some confidence in yourself." (87) Then he cools her revealing he is going to marry a certain Betty very soon:

AMANDA [*Faintly*]: you—won't call again?

JIM: No, Laura, I can't. [*He rises from the sofa.*] As I was just explaining, I've—got strings on me. Laura, I've—been going steady! I go out all the time with a girl named Betty. She's a home girl like you, and Catholic, and Irish, and in a great many ways we—get along fine. I met her last summer on a moonlight boat trip up the river to Alton on the *Majestic*. Well—right away from the start it was—love! (89-90)

Laura's disappointment is tangible but she reacts in the only way she can do: she gives Jim the glass unicorn they previously broke dancing together so as to give him a keepsake to remind him of her existence:

[She bites her lip which was trembling and then bravely smiles. She opens her hand again on the broken glass figure. Then she gently takes his hand and raises it level with her own. She carefully places the unicorn in the palm of his hand, then pushes his fingers closed upon it.]

What are you-doing that for? You want me to have him? Laura?

[She nods.]

What for?

LAURA: A—souvenir... (90-91)

Now with the unicorn converted to horse, Laura has become a normal girl herself. She gives it to Jim so as to thank him for her metamorphosis. This is a meagre consolation and a disillusion. Laura's date has just been a game played to satisfy her mother's expectations, and "the failure of this performance, however, leaves Laura with only the theatre in which to live out her life, that of her glass menagerie" (Bigsby 40), the safest place in the world to live. One last quotation by Bart Cardullo explains the metaphorical meaning of the candles that Laura blows out at the end:

Indeed, at the end of the play Laura herself blows out the candles that Jim has brought to their encounter, and she does this in recognition not only of her brother Tom's departure from her life but also of the Gentleman Caller's. The implication is that no gentleman caller will ever enter her life again, will ever be gentle enough in a society so crassly materialistic to perceive her inner beauty, to appreciate her love for beauty, to understand her unnatural, if not supernatural, place in a world ruled by science and technology (163).

1.3 TOM WINGFIELD

Tom is the man of the house. He is the person who sustains the economy of the family. Every morning he wakes up after his mother's singsong "Rise and shine, rise and shine!", has his

breakfast and goes with reluctance to the warehouse where he gets sixty-five dollars a month. At the age of twenty-two, he is not living the life he had wanted to live as he remembers in a heart-breaking explanation during the umpteenth quarrel:

TOM: Listen! You think I'm crazy about the *warehouse*? [*He bends fiercely toward her slight figure.*] You think I'm in love with the Continental Shoemakers? You think I want to spend fifty-five *years* down there in that—*celotex interior!* with—*fluorescent—tubes!* Look! I'd rather somebody picked up a crowbar and battered out my brains—than go back mornings! I *go!* Every time you come in yelling that Goddamn "*Rise and Shine!*" "*Rise and Shine!*" I say to myself, "How *lucky dead* people are!" But I get up: I *go!* For sixty-five dollars a month I give up all that I dream of doing and being *ever!* And you say *self—self's* all I ever think of. Why, listen, if *self* is what I thought of, Mother, I'd be where he is—GONE! [*He points to his father's picture.*] As far as the system of transportation reaches! [*He starts past her. She grabs his arm.*] Don't grab at me, Mother! (23)

He has been in charge of a role left vacant by his father's absence for which he is compelled to sustain the family, as Bigsby remarks in his article: "He earns a wretched sixty-five dollars a month but in Depression America any job is valuable and, though Tom feels suffocated by work which leaves him little time or space for his poetic ambitions⁹, it has at least served to sustain the family." (34) His only way to forget about it is going every night to the movies, as he continually repeats throughout the play:

AMANDA: Where are you going?

TOM: I'm going to the movies. (24)

LAURA: Where have you been all this time?

TOM: I have been to the movies. (26)

AMANDA But, why—*why*, Tom—are you always so *restless*? Where do you *go* to, nights?

TOM: I-go to the movies. (33)

JIM: What are you gassing about?

TOM: I'm tired of the movies. (61)

AMANDA: Where are you going?

⁹ "A poet in an unpoetic world, he retreats into his writing because there he can abstract himself from the harsh truths of his existence in a down-at-heel St. Louis apartment." (Bigsby 38)

TOM: I'm going to the movies. (95)

He loses himself in the adventures lived by Hollywood stars and dreams something similar for himself, in fact he justifies his reason to an astonished Amanda:

AMANDA: Why do you go to the movie so much, Tom?

TOM: I go to the movies because—I like adventure. Adventure is something I don't have much of at work, so I go to the movies.

AMANDA: But, Tom, you go to the movies *entirely too much!*

TOM: I like a lot of adventure. (33)

He has the habit of smoking, maybe to emulate actors, or maybe to have the excuse to go out to the fire escape and isolate in his thoughts. He even helps himself to a drink and comes home late. “Images of existential man dominate Tom’s symbolic characterization: demonic images of fragmentation, suffocation and alienation.” (Thompson 20) The adventures he always craves do not lie in the warehouse but in his not concealed need to express his feelings even through in his poetry as he explains: “Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter, and none of those instincts are given much play at the warehouse!”(34)¹⁰ Amanda cannot comprehend his lifestyle and she tries to remove the traces of what might distract him from his duties:

AMANDA: What is the matter with you, you—big—big—IDIOT!

TOM: Look!—I've got *no thing*, no single thing—

AMANDA: Lower your voice!

TOM: —in my life here that I can call my OWN! Everything is—

AMANDA: Stop that shouting!

TOM: Yesterday you confiscated my books! You had the nerve to—

¹⁰ “In Tom’s struggle to integrate the primal instincts of a “lover, a hunter, a fighter” with the creative impulse of the poet may be recognized the attempt of modern man to heal that deep split between body and soul, flesh and spirit, which characterizes the modern malaise” (Judith J. Thompson 20)

AMANDA: I took that horrible novel back to the library—yes! That hideous book by that insane Mr. Lawrence.

[*Tom laughs wildly.*]

I cannot control the output of diseased minds or people who cater to them—

[*Tom laughs still more wildly.*]

BUT I WON'T ALLOW SUCH FILTH BROUGHT INTO MY HOUSE! No, no, no, no!

TOM: House, house! Who pays the rent on it, who makes a slave of himself to— (21)

Tom is a dreamer and poetry means to Tom the same the glass collection means to Laura; a secret garden impenetrable to the uninitiated. As Bigsby writes: “Tom, meanwhile, prefers the movies, or more importantly, his poetry. A poet in an unpoetic world, he retreats into his writing because there he can abstract himself from the harsh truths of his existence in a down-at-heel St. Louis apartment.” (38) He dreams of moving away, in fact he had voluntarily forgotten to pay the light bill to enroll in the Merchant Marine to follow the same path his father did, escaping from that house. He defines himself “The bastard son of a bastard” without any grudge, sympathizing for a man who deserted his family sixteen years earlier:

TOM: I'm starting to boil inside. I know I seem dreamy, but inside—well, I'm boiling! Whenever I pick up a shoe, I shudder a little thinking how short life is and what I am doing! Whatever that means, I know it doesn't mean shoes—except as something to wear on a traveler's feet! [*He finds what he has been searching for in his pockets and holds out a paper to Jim.*] Look!

JIM: What?

TOM: I'm a member.

JIM [*reading*]: The Union of Merchant Seamen.

TOM: I paid my dues this month, instead of the light bill.

JIM: You will regret it when they turn the lights off.

TOM: I won't be here.

JIM: How about your mother?

TOM: I'm like my father. The bastard son of a bastard! Did you notice how he's grinning in his picture in there? And he's been absent going on sixteen years!

JIM: You're just talking, you drip. How does your mother feel about it?

TOM: Shhhh! Here comes Mother! Mother is not acquainted with my plans! (62)

He does not stay at his mother side not recognizing the sacrifices made all alone to bring him up, he thinks of himself as a scapegoat in which Amanda lays her frustration. Tom is aware that Amanda relies so much on him economically and she addresses her anxiety only to him, also because he is more malleable than Laura is; he only verbally attacks Amanda when he can no longer bear her inquisitorial tone, impersonating in some way one of the heroes he sees on screen:

TOM: I'm going to opium dens! Yes, opium dens, dens of vice and criminals' hangouts, Mother. I've joined the Hogan Gang, I'm a hired assassin, I carry a tommy gun in a violin case! I run a string of cat houses in the Valley! They call me Killer, Killer Wingfield, I'm leading a double-life, a simple honest warehouse worker by day, by night a dynamic *czar* of the *underworld*, Mother. I go to gambling casinos, I spin away fortunes on the roulette table! I wear a patch over one eye and a false mustache, sometimes I put on green whiskers. On those occasions they call me—*El Diablo!* Oh, I could tell you many things to make you sleepless! My enemies plan to dynamite this place. They're going to blow us all sky-high some night! I'll be glad, very happy, and so will you! You'll go up, on a broomstick, over Blue Mountain with seventeen gentlemen callers! You ugly—babbling old—witch....(24)

According to Thomas L. King's article "Irony and Distance in *The Glass Menagerie*":

[Tom] protects himself from the savage in-fighting in the apartment by maintaining distance between himself and the pain of the situation throughout irony [...] how they call him "Killer, Killer Wingfield", how, on some occasions, he wears green whiskers—the irony is heavy and propels him out of the painful situation, out of the argument, and ultimately to the movies. Significantly, this scene begins with Tom writing, Tom the artist, and in it we see how the artistic sensibility turns a painful situation into "art" by using distance. (208)

He yields to his mother's pressure about finding a gentleman caller for Laura; satisfying his mother's expectations is hard work for one who likes to stay on his own writing poems, and with a mocking attitude he announces the good news:

TOM: I thought perhaps you wished for a gentleman caller.

AMANDA: Why do you say that?

TOM: Don't you remember asking me to fetch one?

AMANDA: I remember suggesting that it would be nice for your sister if you brought home some nice young man from the warehouse. I think that I've made that suggestion more than once.

TOM: Yes, you have made it repeatedly.

AMANDA: Well?

TOM: We are going to have one.

AMANDA: *What?*

TOM: A gentleman caller! (41)

Even though he recognizes the fact that Laura is crippled and a little bit weird, something that does not occur to the resolute Amanda, he agrees to bring home a boy for Laura just to subdue Amanda's accusation of selfishness:

TOM: Mother, you mustn't expect too much of Laura.

AMANDA: What do you mean?

TOM: Laura seems all those things to us and me because she's ours and we love her. We don't even notice she's crippled any more.

AMANDA: Don't say crippled! You know that I never allow that word to be used!

TOM: But face facts, Mother. She is and—that's nor all—

AMANDA: What do you mean "not all"?

TOM: Laura is very different from other girls.

AMANDA: I think the difference is all to her advantage.

TOM: Not quite all—in the eyes of others—strangers—she's terribly shy and lives in a world of her own and those things make her seem a little peculiar to people outside the house.

AMANDA: Don't say peculiar.

TOM: Face the facts. She is. (47-48)

Tom invites Jim home, the only friend he has at the warehouse, without mentioning Laura to him but just telling him to come for a dinner among friends, as he explains to Amanda: “He doesn’t know about Laura. I didn’t let on that we had dark ulterior motives. I just said, why don’t you come and have dinner with us? He said okay and that was the whole conversation.” (47) Tom belittles Amanda’s effort to transform the house: “You don’t have to make any fuss.”...”Mother, this boy is no one to make a fuss over!”(42) [...] If you’re going to make such a fuss, I’ll call it off, I’ll tell him not to come!”(43) Once he has brought Jim home he returns to his troubles; he lights up a cigarette and confesses to Jim his intolerance of rules at the warehouse, hoping for a future that does not include it:

TOM: Yes, movies! Look at them—[*a wave toward the marvels of grand Avenue*] All of those glamorous people—having adventures—hogging it all, gobbling the whole thing up! You know what happens? People go to the *movies* instead of *moving*! Hollywood characters are supposed to have all the adventures for everybody in America, while everybody in America sits in a dark room and watches them have them!...It’s your turn now, to go to the South Sea Island—to make a safari—to be exotic, far-off! But I’m not patient. I don’t want to wait till then. I’m tired of the *movies* and I am *about to move*! (61)

Where Tom and Laura represent the weakest link of the quartet, Amanda and Jim represent the sensible ones who cannot comprehend Tom’s behavior and even joke about his sensitivity. For instance, Jim jokes about the fact that Tom has forgotten to pay the light bill: “Shakespeare probably wrote a poem on that light bill, Mrs. Wingfield”(69); Tom is not so confident to answer back. Jim nicknames him “Shakespeare”, since he “knew of [Tom’s] secret practice of retiring to a cabinet of the washroom to work on poems when business was slack in the warehouse.” (50) Jim works hard to improve his skills whereas Tom risks the layoff, as he shows no signs of waking up to this fact:

JIM: Mr. Mendoza was speaking to me about you.

TOM: favorably?

JIM: What do you think?

TOM: Well—

JIM: You're going to be out of a job if you don't wake up.

TOM: I am waking up—

JIM: You show no signs.

TOM: The signs are interior. (60)

With the dinner ready on the table, Amanda warmly invites him to say grace, a habit re-introduced to show herself in a good light, and he accepts to back Amanda up saying the grace even though he is bewildered:

AMANDA: What *is* that? Rain? A nice cool rain has come up! [*She gives Jim a frightened look.*] I think we may—have grace—now...

[*Tom looks at her stupidly.*] Tom, honey—you say grace!

TOM: Oh... “For these and all thy mercies—“

[*They bow their heads, Amanda stealing a nervous glance at Jim. In the living room Laura, stretched on the sofa, clenches her hand to her lips, to hold back a shuddering sob.*]

TOM: God's Holy Name be praised—(66)

The epilogue of the night is not happy for Tom, who Amanda considers responsible for the early departure of the gentleman caller who confesses to have planned to marry a girl named Betty the following June. Amanda blames Tom for his superficiality on his campaign for the gentleman caller, something deliberately played against Amanda who does not want to accept the hopelessness of the plan:

AMANDA: It seems very extremely peculiar that you wouldn't know your best friend was going to be married!

TOM: The warehouse is where I work, not where I know things about people!

AMANDA: You don't know things anywhere! You live in a dream; you manufacture illusions!

[*He crosses to the door.*]

Where are you going?

TOM: I'm going to the movies. (95)

This is the last time Tom declares the sentence above; he gives up, accepting that his mother does not want to consider his feelings, and is just inclined to redeem herself by taking advantage of Tom and Laura's benevolence. Tom cannot stand this situation anymore and decides to move away: "All right, I will! The more you shout about my selfishness to me the quicker I'll go, and I won't go to the movies!" (96) Who cares about the income for the family and the gentlemen callers for Laura? Now he has to think for himself. As Bigsby asserts: "By leaving he condemns mother and sister to something more than a spiritual isolation." (35) Only running away might he have the possibility to realize what he needs, but miles away "Tom lacks even the consolation of success. Fired from his job in the shoe warehouse, he wanders from city to city, looking for the companionship he had failed to offer his sister." (Bigsby 38) Tom, alone in big cities wearing the Merchant Marine uniform, still thinks about home and his beloved sister Laura and "[l]ike the Ancient Mariner, he becomes the *poète maudit*, cursed with existential knowledge of the human condition and compelled to retell endlessly his story, herein a modern fable of the failure of love and of modern man's inability to transcend his essential solitude in a world devoid of transcendent goals." (Thompson 21)

1.4 JIM O'CONNOR

Jim works at the warehouse with Tom. They are peers and had previously known each other's at High School at Soldan and as Roger B. Stein suggests in "*The Glass Menagerie Revisited: Catastrophe without Violence*": "Jim's own dream of success seems to have reached its peak in high school. The trek upward through the depression years is disappointing, but the indomitable optimist is not discouraged" (148). As Tom remembers in his introduction: "I had known Jim slightly in high school. In high school Jim was a hero." (50) At present Jim earns twenty dollars more per month than Tom as his position as shipping clerk is more valuable than Tom's:

TOM [*submitting grimly to the brush and the interrogation*]: This young man's position is that of a shipping clerk, Mother.

AMANDA: Sounds to me like a fairly responsible job, the sort of a job *you* would be in if you had more *get-up*. What is his salary? Have you any idea?

TOM: I would judge it to be approximately eighty-five dollars a month.

AMANDA: Well—not princely, but—

TOM: Twenty more than I make. (44-45)

Jim is the only friend Tom has at the warehouse because he has taken him under his protective wing and sheltered from the derision of the other mates. He seems to understand Tom's attitude of retiring to a cabinet to write some poems, but "Jim realizes dimly that his friend is that strange creature the artist, set apart from his fellow men." (Stein 145) Tom gives all these pieces of information in his describing introduction of Jim's:

He was the only one at the warehouse with whom I was on friendly terms. I was valuable to him as someone who could remember his former glory, who had seen him win basketball games and the silver cup in debating. He knew of my secret practice of retiring to a cabinet of the washroom to work on poems when business was slack in the warehouse. He called me Shakespeare. And while the other boys in the warehouse regarded me with suspicious hostility, Jim took a humorous attitude toward me. (50)

Turning back time during the years at High School Jim was the School Hero who excelled in everything he was involved. He was a star in the baseball team, captain of the debating club, president of the senior class and the glee club and male lead actor in the annual light operas. He was also very popular among girls at school as Laura reminds him:

JIM [*with reflective relish*]: I was beleaguered by females in those days.

LAURA: You were terribly popular!

JIM: Yeah—

LAURA: You had such a—friendly way—

JIM: I was spoiled in high school.

LAURA: Everybody—liked you!

JIM: Including you?

LAURA: I—yes, I—did, too— [*She gently closes the book in her lap.*] (78)

The person designated to a career of success who six years later has just obtained the same job the introverted Tom has as Tom recalls in his speech: “But Jim apparently ran into more interference after his graduation from Soldan. His speed had definitely slowed. Six years after he left high school he was holding a job that wasn’t much better than mine” (50). Jim does not consider his former glory as the lost success of his life, indeed, he attends night classes of radio engineering and public speaking hoping for a more suitable job:

JIM [*going after him*]: You know Shakespeare—I’m going to sell you a bill of goods!

TOM: What goods?

JIM: A course I’m taking.

TOM: Huh?

JIM: In public speaking! You and me, we’re not the warehouse type.

TOM: Thanks—that’s good news. But what has public speaking got to do with it?

JIM: It fits you for—executive positions!

TOM: Awww.

JIM: I tell you it’s done a helluva lot for me.

TOM: In what respect?

JIM: In every! Ask yourself what is the difference between you an’ me and the men in the office down front? Brains?—No! Ability?—No! Then what? Just one little thing—

TOM: What is that one little thing?

JIM: Primarily it amounts to—social poise! Being able to square up to people and hold your own on any social level! (59)

Stein argues: “Jim, the emissary from reality [...] is the chief spokesman for the American dream. To Jim the warehouse is not a prison but a rung on the ladder toward success. He believes in self-improvement through education, [...] Jim is a booster in the American

tradition.”(148). Unlike Stein, Bigsby quotes: “Jim is a huckster for success, no longer confident of the substantiality or inevitability of his dream, an actor increasingly uncertain of his lines or his role.” (40) Jim represents the man every mother, especially Amanda, would like for her daughter, the right man to invite for dinner. When Tom announces the arrival of the so craved gentleman caller, Stein well explains the symbolism of his meaning in the Wingfield family:

In the “annunciation” scene, when Amanda learns that the Gentleman Caller’s name is O’Connor, she says “that of course, means fish-tomorrow is Friday!” The remark functions not only literally, since Jim is Irish Catholic, but also figuratively, for the fish is the traditional symbol of Christ. In a very real sense both Amanda and Laura are searching for a Savior who will come to help them, to save them, to give their drab lives meaning. (151)

When he crosses the apartment’s threshold the shy girl (Laura) who welcomes him does not catch his attention, he does not play the role of the prince charming mostly expected from Amanda: “[a]s a reincarnation of the gentleman caller, he evokes both the infinite possibilities suggested by all seventeen suitors and the limited reality defined by the last caller, the father who abandoned wife and family.” (Thompson 21) He restricts his comments on her clumsiness and outdated behavior, as he soon comments: “JIM: Shy, huh? It’s unusual to meet a shy girl nowadays. I don’t believe you ever mentioned you had a sister.” (58) Jim dissimulates his interest about this supper trying to let his hair down, reading the newspaper and indulging Amanda’s effort to have pride, given that the only one person honestly interested in him seems to be her. In fact, Laura spends all the suppertime laying on the sofa after a fainting spell, while Tom only says grace kindly requested by Amanda. His sense of embarrassment resists when he witnesses a little familiar drama when the light is cut off. He minimizes this embarrassing moment to save the situation and to keep Tom’s secret:

AMANDA: Tom!

TOM: Yes, Mother?

AMANDA: That light bill I gave you several days ago. The one I told you we got the notices about?

[*Legend on screen: "Ha!"*]

TOM: Oh—yeah.

AMANDA: You didn't neglect to pay it by any chance?

TOM: Why, I—

AMANDA: Didn't! I might have known it!

JIM: Shakespeare probably wrote a poem on that light bill, Mrs. Wingfield.

AMANDA: I might have known better than to trust him with it! There's such a high price for negligence in this world!

JIM: Maybe the poem will win a ten-dollar prize. (68-69)

The supper finished, Jim agrees to keep Laura company, the girl he had not even considered before, to return Amanda's kindness:

JIM: I ought to be good for something.

AMANDA: Good for something? [*Her tone is rhapsodic.*] *You?* Why Mr. O'Connor, nobody, *nobody's* given me this much entertainment in years—as you have!

JIM: Aw, now, Mrs. Wingfield!

AMANDA: I'm not exaggerating, not one bit! But sister is all by her lonesome. You go keep her company in the parlor! I'll give you this lovely old candelabrum that used to be on the altar at the Church of the Heavenly Rest. ... (69-70)

Thompson states:

Jim is invested with multiple heroic images. As the reborn gentleman caller, he is identified with a fertility god, the regenerative "planter"; his "annunciation" signals the rebirth or second coming of Christ as the savior; Amanda [...] casts Jim in the role of Prince Charming to Laura's Cinderella; and in scene VII, he plays the prince who awakens her Sleeping Beauty. He is the singing Pirate who will charm the Lady, and the Superman who never fails to rescue Lois Lane. All of these symbols of expectation are ironically invested in a character who is the apotheosis of all-American boy-extroverted,

dynamic, and optimistic-thoroughly acculturated to the popular equation of happiness with technological progress and material success. (21)

He enters the parlor carrying a candelabrum in one hand and a glass of wine in the other and, as an exam of his ability in public speaking; he addresses his attention to an astonished Laura who cannot believe she is alone with him, as the stage direction well summarizes:

Jim comes into the dining room, carrying the candelabrum, its candles lighted, in one hand and a glass of wine in the other. [...] Laura sits up nervously as Jim enters. She can hardly speak from the almost intolerable strain of being alone with a stranger. [...] At first, before Jim's warmth overcomes her paralyzing shyness, Laura's voice is thin and breathless, as though she had just run up a steep flight of stairs. Jim's attitude is gently humorous. While the incident is apparently unimportant, it is to Laura the climax of her secret life.] (70)

The situation depends on Jim's loquacity and capacity to encourage any kind of initiative, and he knows he should break the ice offering her the glass of wine that could relax her¹¹. Jim makes himself comfortable on the floor and invites Laura to join him; he is trying to find the easier way to have a conversation not requesting too much commitment. The chewing gum, The Wrigley Building, the Century of Progress and the Hall of science save him from exposing: "Think of the fortune made by the guy that invented the first piece of chewing gum. Amazing, huh? The Wrigley Building is one of the sights of Chicago— [...] What impressed me most was the Hall of Science. Gives you an idea of what the future will be in America, even more wonderful than present time is! (72) As Stein states: "He is awed by the fortune made in chewing gum and rhapsodizes on the theme of the future material progress of America: *All that remains is for the industry to get itself under way! Full steam—knowledge—Zzzzzp! Money—Zzzzzp! Power! That's the cycle democracy is built on!*" (148) Laura listens to him silently but

¹¹ According to Roger B. Stein: "Jim's attempt to play the modern savior is an abysmal failure. In the after-dinner scene, he offers Laura the sacrament-wine and "life-savers," [...] but to no avail. (152)

ready to turn the conversation into a most personal tone. Here Laura holds the reins, Jim's self-control vanishes, and for Jim it is a jump into a past that he might regret:

LAURA [*hastily, out of embarrassment*]: I believe I *will* take a piece of gum, if you—don't mind. [*clearing her throat*] Mr. O'Connor, have you—kept up with your singing?

JIM: Singing? Me?

LAURA: Yes. I remember what a beautiful voice you had.

JIM: When did you hear me sing? (73)

Laura reminds him of his beautiful voice of the chorus at High School and soon he recognizes Laura as his classmate who used to arrive in class late and her nickname *Blue Roses*. Jim, to recover, probably plays the absent-minded not to offend a girl he had scarcely noticed at high school:

JIM [*smiling doubtfully*]: You know I have an idea I've seen you before. I had that idea soon as you opened the door. It seemed almost like I was about to remember your name. But the same that I started to call you—wasn't a name! And so I stopped myself before I said it.

LAURA: Wasn't it—Blue Roses?

JIM [*springing up, grinning*]: Blue Roses! My gosh, yes—Blue Roses! That's what I had on my tongue when you opened the door! Isn't it funny what tricks your memory plays? I didn't connect you with high school somehow or other. But that's where it was; it was high school. I didn't even know you were Shakespeare's sister! Gosh, I'm sorry. (73)

Laura reminds him of every detail of their moments together at High School and her devotion, where Jim remembers her as the clumsy girl who he does not want to disappoint in her recalling his past. He notices that Laura has not the coquettish behavior her mother has and addresses to him candidly. Jim appreciates her enthusiasm that puts him again under a melancholic spotlight and he agrees to leaf through the yearbook where he was the school hero and as an experienced actor he signs her yearbook:

[*Laura returns with the high school yearbook*]

Holy Jeez! The Torch!

[He accepts it reverently. They smile across the book with mutual wonder. Laura crouches beside him and they begin to turn the pages. Laura's shyness is dissolving in his warmth.]

LAURA: Here you are in *The Pirates of Penzance*!

JIM *[wistfully]*: I sang the baritone lead in that operetta.

LAURA *[raptly]*: So—beautifully!

JIM *[protesting]*: Aw—

LAURA: Yes, yes—beautifully—beautifully! (77)

What interests Jim more is not recalling his glorious past, but rather devoting himself to his expectations for the future. Jim is not discouraged, whereas Tom on the contrary is: “Being disappointed is one thing and being discouraged is something else. I am disappointed but I am not discouraged. I’m twenty-three years old. How old are you?”(78). He does not lose the opportunity to show Laura the lesson he has learnt to improve his self-esteem, given that Laura deserves redemption. Jim’s art in the seduction of the masses brings Laura to believe she is crippled only in her mind, and then he picks the confidences of Laura’s life, in particular her devotion to her Glass Menagerie:

JIM: Now how about you? Isn’t there something you take more interest in than anything else?

LAURA: Well, I do—as I said—have my glass collection—

[A peal of girlish laughter rings from the Kitchenette.]

JIM: I’m not right sure I know what you’re talking about. What kind of glass is it?

LAURA: Little articles of it, they’re ornaments mostly! Most of them are little animals made out of glass, the tiniest little animals in the world. Mother calls them a glass menagerie! Here’s an example of one, if you’d like to see it! This one is one of the oldest. It’s nearly thirteen. (82)

Unfortunately he is more interested in showing off his skills, even as a dancer; indeed he proposes to dance on the notes of the Paradise Dance Hall that Laura, at first reluctantly, finally accepts:

Ahhh, a waltz! [*He excuses some sweeping turns by himself, then holds his arms toward Laura.*]

LAURA [*breathlessly*]: I can't dance!

JIM: There you go, that inferiority stuff!

LAURA: I've never danced in my life!

JIM: Come on, try!

LAURA: Oh, but I'd step on you!

JIM: I'm not made of glass. (84)

She lets herself go but they accidentally break the glass unicorn she had previously shown him. Jim kisses Laura after having paid her ulterior praises, maybe because he feels responsible for the event, or because he wants to have a satisfactory conclusion of the night, or as Stein quotes:

Jim destroys the illusion by knocking against the glass menagerie [...] when Jim kisses Laura, retreats, and then brands himself a "stumblejohn". The gesture of love [...] does not heal the crippled Laura [...] It shatters her. All the kiss seems to have done is to pass on to Jim, momentarily, Laura's crippled condition" (147).

He is so embarrassed that he soon manages to get out of it:

[His hand slips slowly up her arm to her shoulder as the music swells tumultuously. He suddenly turns her about and kisses her on the lips. When he releases her, Laura sinks on the sofa with a bright, dazed look. Jim backs away and fishes in his pocket for a cigarette.] ... [He lights the cigarette, avoiding her look. There is a peal of girlish laughter from Amanda in the kitchenette. Laura slowly raises and opens her hand. It still contains the little broken glass animal. She looks at it with a tender, bewildered expression.] (88)

He grasps that the supper has been organized to find a suitable gentleman caller for Laura, and neither Amanda's wheedling nor Tom's friendship is enough to tempt Jim to stay. Laura would be all right if were not for Betty the girl he wants to marry soon as he explains:

LAURA [*faintly*]: You-won't—call again?

JIM: No, Laura, I can't. [*He rises from the sofa.*] As I was just explaining, I've—got strings on me. Laura, I've been going steady! I go out all the time with a girl named Betty. She is a home-girl like you, and

Catholic, and Irish, and in a great many ways we—get along fine. I met her last summer on a moonlight boat trip up the river to Alton, on the *Majestic*. Well—right away from the start it was—love! (89-90)

Bigsby declares: “Recognizing the inadequacy of “get along fine” he moves quickly to a confession of love, born on a moonlit boat trip and leading to the construction of “a new man”. It carries no real conviction” (40) What a perfect moment to make the early departure! The gift Laura gives him, the broken unicorn, does not convince Jim to stay. He is probably conscious he has misled a poor girl who did not deserve to be involved in the Wingfield’s family carnage. He is guilty too but he has the means to escape from the embarrassment, facing a hard one like Amanda:

JIM: Oh, don’t go out Mrs. Wingfield. The fact of the matter is I’ve got to be going.

AMANDA: Going, now? You’re joking! Why, it’s only the shank of the evening, Mr. O’Connor!

JIM: Well, you know how it is.

AMANDA: You mean you’re a young workingman and have to keep workingmen’s hours. We’ll let you off early tonight. But only on the condition that next time you stay later. What’s the best night for you? Isn’t Saturday night the best night for you workingmen?

JIM: I have a couple of time-clocks to punch, Mrs. Wingfield. One at morning, another one at night!

AMANDA: My, but you *are* ambitious! You work at night, too?

JIM: No, Ma’am, not work but—Betty!

[He crosses deliberately to pick up his hat. The band at the Paradise Dance Hall goes into a tender waltz.]

AMANDA: Betty? Betty? Who’s Betty?

[There is an ominous cracking sound in the sky.]

JIM: Oh, just a girl. The girl I go steady with!

AMANDA *[a long-drawn exhalation]*: Ohhhh... Is it a serious romance, Mr. O’Connor?

JIM: We’re going to be married the second Sunday in June.

AMANDA: Ohhhh—how nice! Tom didn’t mention that you were engaged to be married. (92-93)

As he has finally understood the night has been arranged for the daughter to marry off, who knows if Jim has used the excuse of his phantom girlfriend to escape from a situation in which he has already seen himself entrapped. Stein ends his article pointing out that:

Despite Amanda's dress which is "historical almost", despite the attempt to live in the nineteenth century when the electric power goes off, Jim is not Rhett Butler but an "emissary from a world of reality," [...] an engaged twentieth-century man on vacation. (147)[...] Laura is *not* Cinderella: the silver slipper does not fit finally, and Jim is not Prince Charming but one of the innumerable Americans who would soon be moving overseas in troop ships. (149)[...] Jim's attempt to play the modern savior is an abysmal failure. (152)

1.5 THE NARRATOR

The narrator of the play coincides with Tom. Bigsby quotes: "the play does have a narrator and his values and perceptions shape the way we see the action, indeed determine what we see." (37) He is the first character who appears on scene and introduces himself as the spokesperson of the unchallengeable truth, as Thomas L. King remarks: "Tom opens the play and closes it; he also opens the second act and further scenes in the first act-his is the first word and the last. Indeed, Amanda, Laura, and the Gentleman Caller do not appear in the play at all as separate characters" (208). Among the components of the family, including the missing father, the narrator gives a special description of the most realistic character who he observes is Jim, the gentleman caller. Laura, Amanda and Tom live in a world on their own, outside the reality represented by Jim.

Tom enters, dressed as a merchant sailor, and strolls across to the fire escape. There he stops and lights a cigarette. He addressed the audience...

I am the narrator of the play, and also a character in it. The other characters are my mother, Amanda, my sister, Laura, and a gentleman caller who appears in the final scenes. He is the most realistic character in the play, being an emissary from a world of reality that we were somehow set apart from. But since I have a poet's weakness for symbols, I am using this character also as a symbol; he is the long-delayed but always expected something that we live for. (5)

He offers the reader and the spectator the social background in which the play is set, staging an allegorical vision of the decadence of the American society. Here America is as a blind man who does not even see the dissolution of the economy of the country and does not care about the revolutionary movements occurring in Europe. The trail left by the Great Depression is deafening, confusion, disturbances of labor, but also peaceful cities like Saint Louis, which “is not an objective one, but a solipsist’s created by Tom, the artist-magician and containing Amanda, Laura and the Gentleman Caller” (King 208) where the play takes place. Shouting and confusion find home in the Wingfield family that incorporates the defects of the American society of the time:

To begin with, I turn back time. I reverse it to that quaint period, the thirties, when the huge middle class of America was matriculating in a school of the blind. Their eyes had failed them, or they had failed their eyes, and so they were having their finger pressed forcibly down on the fiery Braille alphabet of a dissolving economy. In Spain there was revolution. Here there was only shouting and confusion. In Spain there was Guernica. Here there were disturbances of labor, sometimes pretty violent, in otherwise peaceful cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Saint Louis... this is the social background of the play. (5)

Tom also informs us what kind of performance the audience will be offered, for instance the devices, the shade, music and the spirit of the play: “The play is memory. Being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental, it is not realistic. In memory everything seems to happen to music. That explains the fiddle in the wings.” (5) The narrator of the play understands in advance all the things to come and, as an experienced stage manager, rises the curtains on the play: “Tom is the only character in the play, for we see not the characters but Tom’s memory of them—Amanda and the rest are merely aspects of Tom’s consciousness.”(208)

Introducing scene three Tom the narrator briefly summarizes the previous scene, Laura’s fiasco at school and the symptoms of Amanda’s search of a gentleman caller for Laura. He is

not a mere relator of the episodes that occur between the family, but rather one who ironizes¹² with sarcastic references to the haunting presence of the gentlemen caller: “After the fiasco at Rubicam’s Business College, the idea of getting a gentleman caller for Laura began to play a more and more important part in Mother’s calculations. It became an obsession. Like some archetype of the universal unconscious, the image of the gentleman caller haunted our small apartment”(19) As King writes: “The mocking humor in this is revealed by the derisive alliteration, the hyperbolic language, and the humorous, parodying evocation of all the clichés of these stories. The speech makes fun of the literary equivalents of Amanda’s memories of gentlemen callers in the mythical South.” (211-212) He scoffs Amanda’s commitment on working hard conducting a vigorous campaign on telephone to gain extra money to restore the house and marry off her daughter. Sarcasm is the tone he uses to joke on the matrons’ sublimations, even using archeological devices:

An evening at home rarely passed without some allusion to this image, this specter, this hope... Even when he wasn’t mentioned, his presence hung in Mother’s preoccupied look and in my sister’s frightened, apologetic manner-hung like a sentence passed upon the Wingfileds! [...] Late that winter and in the early spring-realizing that extra money would be needed to properly feather the nest and plume the bird-she conducted a vigorous campaign on the telephone, roping in subscribers to one of those magazines for matrons called *The Homemaker’s Companion*, the type of journal that features the serialized sublimations of ladies [...] bodies as powerful as Etruscan sculpture. (19)

Scene five is not introduced by the monologue of the narrator Tom, instead by a dialogue between Amanda and Tom who, with the excuse of getting a cigarette, goes to the fire escape and tell the audience about the surroundings:

Across the alley from us was the Paradise Dance Hall. On evenings in spring the windows and doors were open and the music came outdoors. Sometimes the lights were turned out except for a large glass sphere that hung from the ceiling. It would turn slowly about and filter the dusk with delicate rainbow colors. Then the orchestra played a waltz or a tango, something that had a slow and sensuous rhythm. (38)

¹² “For the artist, irony is a device that protects him from the pain of his experience so that he may use it objectively in his art.” (King 208)

He describes to the audience the kisses, the dance, the song played behind the curtains considering people there not privileged ones but human beings who, like Tom, try to do their best in life. Nobody cares about what is happening across Europe with the revolution in Spain at the eve of World War 2; now it is time to have fun and to forget the misery of everyday life:

Couples would come outside, to the relative privacy of the alley. You could see them kissing behind ash pits and telephone poles. This was the compensation for lives that passed like mine, without any change or adventure. [...] In Spain there was Guernica! But here there was only hot swing music and liquor, dance halls, bars, and movies, and sex that hung in the gloom like a chandelier and flooded the world with brief, deceptive rainbows...All the world was waiting for bombardments!"(39)

King analyses the soliloquy:

In the third soliloquy, the Paradise Dance Hall provides the rainbow colors that fill and transform the alley. The irony breaks through in only a few places: when Tom disrupts the mood of magic by pointing out that you could see the young couples "Kissing behind ash-pits and telephone poles", and, as usual, at the end when he says, "All the world was waiting for bombardments." (212)

Scene six opens with the detailed description of Jim, the mysterious gentleman caller Tom is bringing home for Laura. The first part offers a generous report of the period at High School, when Jim was the School Hero and everybody liked him: "I had known Jim slightly in high school" (50). King explains the introduction of the character of Jim in this way: "Tom begins with a description of Jim in language that indicates that he has a genuine kind of amazed liking for this Irish boy."(213). In addition, King considers the irony used to give extra hints about Jim: "In high school Jim was a hero[...]He seemed to move in a continual spotlight[...]He was always running or bounding, never just walking[...]He seemed always at the point of defeating the law of gravity." (50) Tom speaks about him favorably with a bit of aloofness, conscious of the fact that at least Jim has not obtained nothing much more than Tom during the years after graduation: "But Jim apparently ran into more interference after his graduation from Soldan. His speed had definitely slowed. Six years after he left school he was holding a job that wasn't much better than mine." (50) The second part of the narrator's introduction

clarifies the destiny to which Jim has put himself over the years: he works at the warehouse with Tom and, as a narrator, he does not spare Jim from a certain disenchantment about his actual attitude toward him. Tom is Jim's former schoolmate who can remind him his brilliant past: "He was the only one at the warehouse with whom I was on friendly terms. I was valuable to him as someone who could remember his former glory, who had seen him win basketball games and the silver cup in debating." (50)

The gentleman caller's affair leave Tom puzzled and he does not seem optimistic about the outcome of Laura's date, considering the fact that he knows both of them and their peculiarities. He addresses his perplexities to the audience, who will certainly keep his thoughts secret:

I knew that Jim and Laura had known each other at Soldan, and I had heard Laura speak admiringly of his voice. I didn't know if Jim remembered her or not. In high school Laura had been as unobtrusive as Jim had been astonishing. If he did remember Laura, it was not as my sister, for when I asked him to dinner, he grinned and said, "You know, Shakespeare, I never thought of you as having folks!" He was about to discover that I did..." (51)

The narrator's last intervention is the concluding speech of the play. The inevitable has occurred, and now Tom has definitively left Saint Louis and his family, like his father did some times before. He is updating the audience about what has happened after the last quarrel with Amanda; the firing at the warehouse: "I was fired for writing a poem on the lid of a shoe-box" (96); the desertion of his family: "I left Saint Louis" (96); the restless wandering city after city looking for something he is now sure he will never find even at the world's end: "I traveled around a great deal. The cities swept about me like dead leaves, leaves that were brightly colored but torn away from the branches. I would have stopped, but I was pursued by something." (97) The more he has travelled far from home, the more he has regretted that choice. Tom is not like his father; he cannot leave everything behind and enjoy a carefree life. Every item of glass reminds him of his sister:

I pass the lighted window of a shop where perfume is sold. The window is filled with pieces of colored glass, tiny transparent bottles in delicate colors, like bits of a shattered rainbow. Then all at once my sister touches my shoulder. I turn around and look into her eyes. Oh, Laura, Laura, I tried to leave you behind me, but I am more faithful than I intended to be!" (97)

But he is too ashamed to take the road home, and with no friend to give vent to, he confesses his feelings to a listening audience he chosen as his confessional.

CHAPTER II

THE GLASS MENAGERIE 1950

2.1 CAST AND NEW ENTRIES

The first cinematographic version filmed by director Irving Rapper in 1950 started Jane Wyman as Laura Wingfield: “although her attitude toward Amanda must necessarily be passive, she does attain vitality and motion as character because the life she lives away from the apartment is shown on screen”(MacMullan 29); Arthur Kennedy as Tom Wingfield: “vigorously masculine, so that his longing for the sea, his torment with daily living, becomes a profound threat to Amanda’s security. To achieve this characterization with an actor of Arthur Kennedy’s talents and personal quality was not hard”(MacMullan 29); Gertrude Lawrence in the role of Amanda Wingfield: “[she] has played Amanda with every intent to create a reality in which the brilliant writing could be accepted” (MacMullan 28), and the remarkable Kirk Douglas as Jim O’Connor. MacMullan, who had been the dialogue director of several Hollywood films, writes: “With Kirk Douglas, energy of acting can naturally never be in question. But it was necessary that that energy should be increased inwardly, subdued outwardly” (30).

This version is the first cinematic adaptation of William’s *The Glass Menagerie*, and also the least accurate in comparison with the other versions of 1974 and 1987, because discrepancies in several points with the original author’s script. The characters briefly mentioned in the play such as Amanda’s gentlemen callers at the ball in Blue Mountain, the typing instructor at Rubicam College and Mr. Mendoza, “the straw boss at the warehouse, [who] is crudely drawn, reminiscent of the «agit-prop» drama of the thirties” (MacMullan 26) in the 1950 version, are on-screen characters. They appear as representation of moments in Amanda’s, Laura’s and Tom’s episodes out of the house.

The seven original scenes of the play are shuffled in a continual reshaping of the story that becomes a brand new story. Hugh MacMullan clarifies the reasons for the re-organisation in his article “Translating the Glass Menagerie to film”:

Such a play [the Glass Menagerie] presented under the psychological conditions peculiar to the living stage can succeed admirably; as a film it would weary a contemporary audience and seem to have little meaning. The trend in film has always been toward a particular method of interpreting reality, a literal method so far as acting and scene are concerned, with emphases achieved through camera position and editing. Our work in the making of *The Glass Menagerie* followed this trend, seeking for a complete reality of performance and place, relying on the camera and editing to supplant and transmute the devices used by Williams on the stage. As a consequence, we also felt it advisable to abandon his symbols except as they might be indicated by indirection, or treated not as symbols but as real objects in a real world. (14-15)

2.2 TOM: NARRATOR AND SON

Tom/Arthur Kennedy, who is dressed in the Merchant Marine Uniform sailing across the seas of no man’s land, opens the film with a struggling soliloquy in which he recalls his past. Here he is playing the narrator who, as in the stage play, introduces the background of the story. Unlike in the text, Tom does not expose foreign political affairs such as the revolution in Spain or the cause of America’s middle class, he just offers a panoramic view of “the early morning sun, the alleys, the back of the buildings, the fire escape, the dusky brick walls, desperate livings and shabby rooms in which he had lived”.

Tom’s alter ego, the son, first appears sleeping in bed, awakened by the “morning view of Laura’s glass collection and the ever-present smile of his father”. The script uses only two sentences corresponding to the original text:

“He was a telephone man who fell in love with long distances; [...] The last we heard from him was a postcard containing two words: “Hello-Goodbye!” and no address.” (5)

2.3 SCENE IV: INTRODUCING TOM AND AMANDA

The movie extrapolates scene four of the original play where Amanda, having accepted Tom's excuses for the quarrel of the previous night, confides her worry about Laura: "a scene which serves primarily to introduce the characters and familiarize the audience with their peculiarities as individuals, only in the most indirect way suggesting the underlying problem of the play: What is to become of Laura?" (MacMullan 16). The scene corresponds with the third page of scene four:

[Immediately following, the church bell is heard striking six. At the sixth stroke the alarm clock goes off in Amanda's room, and after a few moments we hear her calling: "Rise and shine! Rise and shine! Laura, go tell your brother to rise and shine!"] (28)

The dialogue between Tom and Amanda follows the lines of the text:

TOM: No. You say there's so much in your heart that you can't describe to me. That's true of me, too. There's so much in my heart that I can't describe to *you!* So let's respect each other's— (33)

Here the movie skips the part concerning adventures in the movies, in careers and the psychological implication of man as a hunter, a lover and a fighter:

TOM: Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter, and none of those instincts are given much play at the warehouse!

AMANDA: Man is by instinct! Don't quote instinct to me! Instinct is something that people have got away from! It belong to animals! Christian adults don't want it! (34)

The dialogue above was probably cut for the restrictions of censorship and to discourage desire to emulate in young American men of the time. The movie and the play coincide again when Amanda begs Tom to sit down and talk about Laura:

AMANDA: *[Pushing his shoulders]* Sit down!

TOM: You want me to punch in red at the warehouse, Mother? (34)

Tom champs at the bit to escape from his mother's claws as soon as possible and he expresses an indelicate opinion about Laura's attitude on the Business Course she is attending thanks to his savings. He affirms she is *not cut out* for that type of school. MacMullan states: "In the second scene, [...] Now we discover that she has been going to business college, studying stenography" (16). The play does not contain Tom's lament and, in the movie, Tom is depicted dominated by the two women; a scene that is not present in Williams' play but is useful to introduce the failed typing exam. Amanda keeps begging Tom, who is looking for the book he cannot find in the drawer, to bring home a gentleman caller for Laura. The book in the movie plays only a marginal role, but in Williams' play is the cause of Amanda and Tom's violent quarrel the previous night. The book represents Tom's affection for poetry and Amanda's disgust for it. Scene three of the play describes the dialogue very well:

TOM: yesterday you confiscated my books! You had the nerve to—

AMANDA: I took that horrible novel back to the library—yes! That hideous book by that insane Mr. Lawrence.

[Tom laughs wildly]

I cannot control the output of diseased minds or people who cater to them—

[Tom laughs still more wildly]

BUT I WON'T ALLOW SUCH FILTH BROUGHT INTO MY HOUSE! No,no,no,no,no! (21)

Tom leaves his mother without a satisfactory answer to her question about Laura. He puts his hat on, shuts the door and descends the fire escape straight to the warehouse. In the play, Tom is not so cynical and rude, but here Amanda seems not care. The scene ends when Amanda rings up Ida Scott, who immediately accepts the subscription, which in the play is achieved by Amanda only the second time with a certain Ella Cartwright.

2.4 TOM AND LAURA OUTSIDE HOME

The movie has inserted visual moments of Tom and Laura outside home. The chronological sequence shows Laura who arrives at school late after having bought another glass animal at the local store, and then running away, having been intimidated by the speed test. At the same time, Tom is working at the warehouse dreaming about exotic places and worrying about losing his job. In both cases the scenes have been devised to emphasize Laura's and Tom's states of mind. Hugh MacMullan writes:

Once the premises are stated, the film can leave the apartment, examine the daily routine of the characters. It shows Tom's boredom in the warehouse; Amanda's energetic, almost frenetic endeavors to sell magazine subscriptions; and Laura's climatic failure to take an examination at the business college, and her subsequent flight. In so doing it is making a correct use of its opportunities; it has broadened the scene of action and has examined its characters in the wide world in which they move. True, all this material comes from the play, but by rearranging it, by underscoring it, by showing what is only spoken of in the play, something new has been created. (20-21)

2.5 BLUE MOUNTAIN ON SCREEN

About twenty minutes after the beginning of the film, the first supper corresponding to scene one of the play is offered to the audience without noticeable differences. The leading scene is Amanda's memory of the night at Blue Mountain; a pretty and young girl who received the proposal of twenty-three (not seventeen as in the play) gentlemen callers. The flashback is not only narrated but also played by the same actress who is evidently too old to play a twenty-year-old girl. The scene is a grotesque depiction of Amanda's old glorious days. MacMullan says of it:

In a sense, it is a retrospect within a retrospect—and yet not quite so; for a performed, it is clearly a product of Amanda's imagination, either an extension of what may have occurred, or a complete fabrication [...] And under Irving Rapper's direction it was excellently performed. But despite the performance, despite Mr. Rapper's staging, with its editorial emphasis and close-ups, its judicious use of the moving camera, its continuous, biting reference to the reactions of Tom and Laura, the scene did not play as film. It remained a *tour de force*, a baroque set piece. [...] It offers a startling contrast between

the faded woman coming from her dingy kitchen and the belle of the ball she remembers herself to have been, beautiful and loved, a flower of the Old South. (27)

The dream vanishes when she recalls having married no sons of planters but Tom and Laura's father who owned nothing at all.

2.6 SCENE III AND IV MIXED TOGETHER

The several quarrels between Tom and Amanda have been disassembled and reassembled repeatedly. One example shows him trying to write down a few lines of a poem and she confesses to him she has taken a book back to the library. The dialogue that follows is a collage of scenes three and four, starting from the beginning:

AMANDA: I took that horrible book (novel) back to the library—yes! That hideous book by that insane horrible writer. (Mr. Lawrence)

TOM: I have got no thing, no single thing in this house I can call my OWN.

AMANDA: Lower your voice! (21)

The omission of the writer Mr. Lawrence, probably to omit any unfitting reference, does not change the meaning of the dialogue. Tom goes directly to the door to escape from the umpteenth row, justifying his choice corresponding to the lines of scene four:

AMANDA: But, why— *why*, Tom—are you always so *restless*? Where do you go to, nights?

TOM: I—go to the movies.

AMANDA: Why do you go to the movies so much Tom?

TOM: I go to the movies because—I like adventure. Adventure is something I don't have much of at work, so I go to the movies.

.....

AMANDA: Most young men find adventure in their careers.

TOM: Then most young men are not employed in a warehouse. (33)

The inflexible Amanda forces Tom to come back, pressing him. The dialogue that follows corresponds to the final part of scene four when Tom, tired of Amanda's insistence, scares her with the fake story of the opium dens. The junction is when Amanda demands that Tom comes back:

AMANDA: Come back here, Tom Wingfield! I'm not through talking to you!

TOM: oh,go—

LAURA: [*desperately*]:—Tom!

AMANDA: You're going to listen, and no more insolence from you! I'm at the end of my patience!

TOM: What do you think I'm at? Arent't I supposed to have any patience to reach the end of, Mother? I know, I know. It seems unimportant to you, what I'm doing—what I want to do—having a little difference between them! You don't think that. (22-23)

The dialogue continues following the play: the warehouse, (where he earns one hundred and fifty dollars instead of the only sixty-five in the play) and the opium dens. There is only a little discrepancy over the number of gentlemen callers that from twenty-three have returned seventeen as in the play. At the conclusion of the scene, Tom unwillingly topples the glass animals causing Laura desperation. He then goes sorrowfully to the movies. As he returns home visibly drunk, Laura is waiting for him on the threshold. He tells her about the amazing night that has not healed his uneasiness, but all of a sudden, Laura tells him about the beauty of the world; the play does not mention the optimistic view that Laura has about life. This scene corresponds to the inception of scene four that comes soon after the quarrel between Tom and Amanda and his apology. The following day Tom apologizes for the second time, and for the second time she accepts his excuses. In the play, this event occurs only once, at the beginning of scene four, and the sentence:

AMANDA: My devotion has made me a witch and so I make myself hateful to my children! (30)

has been cut into two. This time she says “My devotion to my children has made me a witch”. This moment in the movie is Tom’s second apology.

Scene four has been cut into two parts too; at the beginning of the movie and where we can find some extracts of Amanda’s recommendation about breakfast, her pity about Tom’s job at the warehouse, and Tom who finally agrees to bring home a gentleman caller for Laura. The movie needs two scenes to emphasize Amanda’s quest for Laura’s happiness, even though she has not already found out about her leaving school.

Evocative scenes of Laura strolling throughout the city are the film’s version image of the narration made by Tom; in the play all this can only be imagined. MacMullan explains the device of the narrator:

A further problem in continuity and style which confronted us involved the function of Tom as narrator. On the stage, dimly lit, and unreal as it is, Tom can come to the footlights, stepping out of the scene, and comment on the characters and the situation, describe off-stage happenings, without doing violence to the overall effect. But in the film, where obviously Tom’s voice can be used, since the method of film generally precludes a visible narrator’s talking into the lens, an entirely different impression is created. In the first place, the device of the narrator, speaking from memory, has been so overused as to be currently ineffective; in the second, the style of the narration is somewhat too tense, certainly too “literary” to blend with real people existing in a real world. (26)

2.7 SCENE II OF THE PLAY: LAURA AND AMANDA CONFRONT EACH OTHER

Then, through several brief scenes and a montage, we return to our plot skeleton. [...] Now, halfway through the film, occurs the scene between the mother and daughter with which Williams begins his play, that tortured, tragic scene in which both women are brought up against the barren present, the even more barren future. As developed in the film, this scene concludes on a note of hysteria, with Amanda determined as never before that Laura shall marry, and with Laura frightened and weeping. The problems, stated at the beginning, are here brought to full realization, and must be resolved. (21-22)

There are several discrepancies between scene two of the play and the movie. Amanda does not refer to Laura about her meeting with the typing instructor, the moment has already been

visually explained before, and neither does she ask her about some boy she might have loved at school because actually Amanda has already decided to find one for Laura at the beginning of the movie. Amanda worries about having an unmarried daughter and denies the visible handicap in Laura's leg and forces her to walk. Laura's High School boy is of no interest to the story and MacMullan explains that the director has intentionally cut it:

As originally shot, the "deception" scene contained the material used in the play when Amanda, in the midst of her despair, asks Laura if she has never been interested in some boy, and Laura shows her Jim O'Connor's picture in the high school yearbook... why Laura has been in love with Jim, has not forgotten him, and this before the audience knows that Jim and the Gentleman Caller are one. The little interlude completely destroyed the dramatic line of the scene, a dramatic line made necessary by this reinterpretation of character in the light of a new plot structure. And upon examination we discovered that to disclose a prior relationship between Jim and Laura was not as pleasing (if it was not actually old-fashioned) as to let that information gradually appear out of the scenes between the two of them. So the interlude was removed, and by its removal Amanda and Laura were permitted to build directly and logically to their hysterical climax, something they had been unable to do convincingly in the first version. (30-31)

2.8 THE GENTLEMAN CALLER IN HIS ENVIRONMENT

The following scene introduces Jim, Tom's mate at the warehouse. The movie has included several scenes that do not belong to the original play, as MacMullan writes:

The introduction of the Gentleman Caller at the beginning eliminated most of the suspense, since it was continuously obvious that eventually someone was coming to dinner, and who that someone was. Furthermore, this introduction made necessary an additional scene with Jim before his actual appearance at the apartment, since it is clearly impossible to lose sight of a major character for more than half a film, once he has been established. Such a scene did exist, occupying the position now filled by Jim's first introduction. (23)

MacMullan, as dialogue director of this movie, explains how the adaptation process from stage to screen works, and laments the fact that following the line of the play would have been better for the achievement of a good film:

In trying to free the continuity from the restrictions in time and space imposed by the stage various other scenes were attempted, scenes which when cut into the film dissipated the effect—an error which can easily occur when one is adapting a play to film since one is always eager to take advantage of the new medium. [...] In the main this final continuity seems faithful to the intent of the play at the same time that it is proper for a film. Only in one place do I find myself in violent disagreement with it; that is in the much-debated introduction of the Gentleman Caller. The play achieved an enormous effect by holding off that introduction to the end, by allowing the suspense within the audience to build and build. Then, when that suspense had been satisfied by his arrival, his very presence as a new and exciting character immediately won the audience to him. All this the film willfully sacrifices. (24-25)

Jim/Kirk Douglas, for instance, makes his first appearance in the warehouse. He is the charismatic leader that the boss, Mr. Mendoza, appreciates. Conscious of this, Jim takes Tom, who is the black sheep of the warehouse, under his protective wing. The movie utilizes this scene to set in opposition Jim's optimism and Tom's discouragement, but MacMullan does not seem to be of the same opinion:

The character is so overwhelming when he does appear, his scene so full of meaning, so rich with humor and sympathy, that he completes the film, brings all its problems to their conclusion. It is unfortunate, I think, that his opinion, held by most of us who are creating the film, did not prevail. To make matter worse, the scene in the warehouse, which introduces Jim, is badly written and ill-considered. Jim is bumptious, know-it-all, unpleasant; in no way the same character who later, in his wonderful, blundering sincerity, frees Laura. (25-26)

The dialogue between the two about their future expectations has been located in the toilet at the warehouse during a cigarette break, instead of the fire escape at Tom's home. The dialogue goes back and forth across scene six of Williams's play, following this line:

TOM: [...] I'm right at the point of committing myself to a future that doesn't include the warehouse.
[...]

JIM: What are you gassing about? (61)

Tom shows him the letter from the Merchant Marine

JIM: [*reading*]: The Union of the Merchant Seamen.

TOM: [...] Whenever I pick up a shoe, I shudder a little thinking how short life is and what I am doing!
(62)

Then Jim reproaches Tom about his incapacity to face facts

JIM [*going after him*]: You know, Shakespeare—I'm going to sell you a bill of goods!

TOM: What goods?

JIM: In Public speaking. You and me, we're not the warehouse type.

TOM: Thanks—that's good news. But what has public speaking got to do with it?

JIM: It fits you for—executive positions!

TOM: Awwww.

JIM: Ask yourself what is the difference between you an' me and men in the office down front? Brains?—No!—Ability—No! Then what? Just one little thing—

TOM: What is that one little thing?

JIM: Primarily it amounts to—social poise! Being able to square up to people and hold your own on any social level! (59)

Mr. Mendoza breaks in the bathroom interrupting them and accusing only Tom of wasting time. Jim's diplomatic behavior saves him and Tom decides that he is the right one for Laura, and more especially for Amanda. Thomas L. Erskine and James M. Welsh write about Jim: "[T]he role of Jim O'Connor, the "gentleman caller", is altered: he is no longer a shallow young man who has failed to achieve his dreams but is instead an engaging hero who can manipulate his superiors" (130).

2.9 SCENE V: THE GENTLEMAN CALLER, FINALLY...

The scene of the movie where Tom and Amanda are arranging for the gentleman caller is quite similar to Williams' scene five, except for several irrelevant changes; for instance, Tom's narrative introduction that has been cut:

TOM: [to the audience]: Across the alley from us was the Paradise Dance Hall. [...]... All the world was waiting for bombardments! (39)

The lines that follow are the explanation of the policy development:

As shooting progressed, compromise became necessary between those who wanted a full narration and those who felt that the story, as it was unfolding, could be thoroughly understood with no narration except at the beginning and the end, where it would establish, among other things, that the story was being told in retrospect. The original shooting script favored the latter opinion. But as time went on, more and more narration was added until it overbalanced the picture. And as so frequently happens, much of it, taken directly from the play, could no longer serve its original purpose—to describe and comment on off-stage action—since the film, with its wider field, was playing that very action. (It is indeed more than a little irritating to have a voice telling you that you are seeing what you are seeing, when all you really want is to listen to the score as it reinforces or interprets the visual image.) As a result, even before the first preview, during the rough-cut stage, quite an amount of narration was eliminated, and more went after the previews, until a fairly satisfactory balance was reached. (26)

Tom and Amanda are quietly talking about Tom's bad habit of smoking, when a passerby distracts Amanda who cannot help flirting with him. She cannot wait for a gentleman caller anymore and manages to attract the poor boy who does not accept her invitation to enter. This brand new scene serves to describe Amanda's vain stubbornness regarding her goal. Some little sentences of the dialogues have been transferred from one character to another, for instance:

AMANDA: So it is! A little silver slipper of a moon. **Have you made a wish on it yet?** (40)

In the movie it is Tom who says the bold part, rendering Amanda less curious about her children's lives. Tom enjoys keeping Amanda on tenterhooks before telling her he is bringing home a gentleman caller soon, and the dialogue follows the play, except for a statement not present in the movie:

AMANDA: Do you realize he's the first young man we've introduced to your sister? It's terrible, dreadful, disgraceful that poor little sister has never received a single gentleman caller! [...]. (43)

The Amanda represented in the movie seems blind to her daughter's misfortunes. Her not telling the truth about Laura allows her to deny her worries as a mother in front of others. As

a consequence, another aspect, which might have been incoherent considering Amanda's resoluteness, is the risk of Laura becoming an old maid; impossible to think and to say:

AMANDA: But will tomorrow. To meet your sister, and what do I know about his character? Nothing! Old maids are better off than wives of drunkards!

TOM: Oh, my God!

AMANDA: Be still!

TOM: [*leaning forward to whisper*]: Lots of fellow meet girls whom they don't marry!

AMANDA: Oh, talk sensibly, Tom—and don't be sarcastic! [...] (44)

Tom's sarcasm is latent in the movie. There is a curious discrepancy between the amount of Tom's and Jim's salary in the play and in the movie. In the play, they respectably earn sixty-five and eighty-five dollars a month:

TOM: I would judge it to be approximately eighty-five dollars a month.

AMANDA: Well—not princely, but—

TOM: Twenty more than I make. (45)

The workers in the movie earn much more, Tom earns one hundred and fifty-five dollars a month whereas Jim gets fifteen dollars more. Maybe inflation might have increased the wages of workers during the six years between 1944 and 1950.

Tom and Amanda keep talking about the dinner and Laura's peculiarities and at last Tom, unlike in the play, decides to rest after dinner instead of going to the movies. During the first part of the film, Tom has already been to the movies many times, after several quarrels with his mother. Amanda cannot wait to inform Laura of the good news and welcomes her on the threshold telling her about the gentleman caller. The film has spoiled the surprise that the play has just alluded at the end of scene five:

AMANDA: laura! Laura!

LAURA: Yes, Mother.

AMANDA: Let those dishes go and come in front!

[Laura appears with a dish towel. Amanda speaks to her gaily]

Laura come her and make a wish on the moon!

LAURA: *[entering]*: Moon, moon?

AMANDA: A little silver slipper of a moon. Look over your left shoulder, Laura, and make a wish!

[Laura looks faintly puzzled as if called out of sleep. Amanda seizes her shoulders and turns her at the angle by the door.]

Now! Darling, wish!

LAURA: What shall I wish for, Mother?

AMANDA *[her voice trembling and her eyes suddenly filling with tears]*: Happiness! Good fortune! (48-49)

2.10 THE CREDIT DESK

Again, Amanda and Laura together trespass the limit of the apartment to visit the credit desk of a department store. Amanda, offended by the insolvency innuendo, offers Laura some pearls of wisdom about friendship, especially when talking about money. It may be noticed that when Amanda arrives at the desk, she immediately asks for the “Gentleman uncharged on the charge account”; after all Amanda might know how to soften a resolute employee. Unfortunately, she is soon chilled by the professionalism of the woman at the desk, and her lesson is soon spoiled by the bitter truth.

2.11 SCENE VI: LAURA’S FANCY DRESS

The gentleman caller’s day has come and finally Amanda is arranging the house and dressing up Laura for the gentleman caller. MacMullan recalls the shooting moments on set:

The “Gay Deceivers” scene—that pathetic moment, so moving and so funny, when Amanda pushes false bosoms formed from rolled stockings into Laura’s dress to make her just that much more attractive for

the Gentleman Caller—was scheduled within the first few weeks' work, though its place is quite far along in the film. Unfortunately it came at a time when there was uncertainty over the characterization of Amanda. Miss Lawrence, in particular, was feeling that she was being too strident, that she was never permitted to show tenderness toward her children, and that here she had a splendid chance to demonstrate her deep love for Laura. Though Mr. Rapper did not agree with her, believing that the whole motivation of the film proved this love, he did tone the scene down from his own interpretation...though not by any means to the degree which she felt desirable. The error that lay in this slight tenderness was not discovered until the rough cut. But with the performance as a whole before us, the scene was not tolerable. Amanda at the moment of the Gentleman Caller's arrival—a moment for which she had agonizingly struggled and slaved—could never have borne with Laura's nervousness, would never have truly noticed her, being as intent on the nearing victory as she was. And so it, too, was reshot. (31-32)

This scene corresponds to the beginning of scene six of the play, omitting the narrator's introduction; Jim has already been introduced in the previous scene at the warehouse. The dialogue between Laura and Amanda follows the play with a relevant modification in Amanda's monologue about the dress and the ballroom:

AMANDA: Possess your soul patience—you will see! [...] I gave your brother a little extra change so he and Mr. O'Connor could take the service car home. (53-54)

Every reference to Laura and Tom's father has been omitted. Furthermore, there is not any reference to the yearbook and Jim; they did not talk about it before, unlike the play:

LAURA: You asked me once if I'd ever liked a boy. Don't you remember I showed you this boy's picture?

AMANDA: You mean the boy you showed me in the yearbook?

LAURA: Yes, that boy. (55)

Amanda responds to Laura's resistance ironizing about her worrying for just one gentleman caller; nothing compared to Amanda's seventeen. Again Amanda shows off her qualities presumptuously.

2.12 THE BAR

In the meantime, Tom waits for Jim drinking his glass of beer alone in a smoky bar. He scares a tramp, pretending to be an experienced sailor. As Jim arrives they are ready to join Amanda and Laura, but not before making a toast to “the evening, Jim’s junior executive position, and Tom’s Merchant Marine”. The bar scene ends with the last sentence of the first lines of scene six with Jim’s statement:

“You know, Shakespeare, I never thought of you as having folks!” (51)

Tom presents his quarter, briefly his family epopee and the back entrance to an amused Jim.

MacMullan writes:

[The movie] leaves the apartment as occasion permits; once, for a meeting between Tom and Jim, the Gentleman Caller, before they come in for supper [...] These changes in scene give a visual flow to the third act material which keeps it from becoming static, and, though here the film remains essentially true to the play in detail, its total effect is changed, precisely because of the rearrangements and additions in the first half. (22)

2.13 LAURA MEETS JIM

Laura dreads the arrival of Tom and Jim, and when finally Laura opens the door, forced by Amanda, the inevitable occurs; her shyness paralyzes her moving her to seek refuge elsewhere. Jim seems not to care about this and quietly shares the newspaper with Tom before supper. The dialogue skips about Jim’s plans, which has already been mentioned, and the dialogue is a collage of several parts taken from scene six:

JIM [*grinning*]: What was the matter?

TOM: Oh—with Laura? Laura is—terribly shy.

JIM: Shy, huh? It’s unusual to meet a shy girl nowadays. I don’t believe you ever mentioned you had a sister.

TOM: Well, now you know. I have one. Here is the *Post Dispatch*. You want a piece of it?

JIM: Uh—huh.

TOM: What piece? The comics?

JIM: Sports! [...] (58-59)

Then Amanda “invades” from behind the curtains:

AMANDA: [*from the kitchenette*]: Tom?

TOM: Yes, Mother?

AMANDA: Is that you and Mr. O'Connor?

TOM: Yes, Mother.

AMANDA: Well, you just make yourselves comfortable in there.

TOM: Yes, Mother.

AMANDA: Ask Mr. O'Connor if he would like to wash his hands.

JIM: Aw, no—no—thank you—I took care of that at the warehouse [...]. (60)

Jim notices the picture of Tom's father smiling from the wall and asks about him. The dialogue is here restricted to just few sentences where the statement *Bastard son of a bastard* has been removed, maybe to follow the censorship restrictions of the time. The lines below represent the play plot:

TOM: I paid my dues this month, instead of the light bill.

JIM: You will regret it when they turn the lights off.

TOM: I won't be here.

JIM: How about your mother?

TOM: I'm like my father. **The bastard son of a bastard**. Did you notice how he's grinning in his picture in there? And he's been absent going on sixteen years!

JIM: You're just talking, you drip. How does your mother feel about it? (62)

Jim does not obtain a proper answer because Amanda makes her appearance, leaving both Jim and Tom speechless admiring her timeless beauty. Amanda makes her show in front of Jim; she displays her act of conversation without giving Jim the possibility to say a word, no one dares to interrupt her. The scene replicates the last part of scene six when Laura suffers a fainting spell and the dinner. The scene corresponding to scene seven of the play begins with the dinner spoiled by the electric service blackout that leave them in complete darkness. Amanda scolds Tom about the light bill, yet not worrying so much:

JIM: No, Ma'am. All fuses look okay to me.

AMANDA: Tom!

TOM: Yes, Mother?

AMANDA: That light bill I gave you several days ago. The one I told you we got the notices about?

TOM: Oh—yeah.

AMANDA: You didn't neglect to pay it by any chance?

TOM: Why, I—

AMANDA: Didn't! I might have known it!

JIM: Shakespeare probably wrote a poem on that light bill, Mrs. Wingfield.

Unlike the play, Jim is not with them but he is still trying to adjust the fuse-box. Amanda does not wash the dirty linen in public, especially in front of a gentleman caller for Laura.

2.14 THE CANDELABRUM SCENE

The inconvenience of the blackout has created the right atmosphere for Amanda to take advantage of the kindness of Jim and save the disaster date that Laura has helped to create. Amanda, as an experienced puppeteer, warmly invites Jim to join Laura: soft light and a glass of red wine is the ideal device to break through Laura's stubborn shyness. Jim, thanks to Kirk Douglas' expressive smile, accepts to volunteer to take part in her game. Jim Approaches

Laura speaking about the everything and anything. The movie follows the dialogues of the play faithfully, except for a few words that do not change the conversation. The dialogue corresponds to the lines between page 70 and the last dialogue corresponding to page 73 of the play:

JIM: Hello there, Laura.

LAURA [*faintly*]: Hello.

[*She clears her throat.*]

JIM: How are you feeling now? Better? (70)

JIM: I judge you to be an old-fashioned type of girl. Well, I think that's a pretty goof type to be. Hope you don't think I'm being too personal —do you?

LAURA [*hastily, out of embarrassment*]: I believe I *will* take a piece of gum, if you —don't mind. (72-73)

The premises of a good outcome have been settled. Laura accepts the chewing gum he offers her and, de facto, she accepts that she will listen to his words. The cinematic fluidity needs a break on the key scene the audience has waited for since the beginning of the movie. In order to create suspense, brand new scenes showing Amanda and Tom in the kitchen have been inserted.

2.15 AMANDA AND TOM INTRUDE

The story revolves around the moment that has been perceived to be Jim and Laura's one. Tom and Amanda are now supporting characters like members of the audience observing the outcome of the night. The first break comes when Jim has just approached Laura and Amanda is silently supervising the moment. Amanda's look explains more than a hundred words could what she is expecting. The audience will see then how Amanda's expectations will be shown in her behavior. There are several "incursions" in the kitchen, where Amanda and Tom are

supposed to be washing the dishes, whereas in fact they (Amanda actually) eavesdrop on Jim and Laura. This movie version has given voice to Tom and Amanda during the topical scene; here the audience sees how they are participating in the date they have contributed to create. The first incursion occurs soon after Laura has accepted the chewing gum Jim has offered her; Tom is minding his own business while washing the flatware when Amanda informs him soon after having checked the situation; her anxiety is tangible and Tom makes fun of her. She conceals her emotions in front of her son, scolding him about the housework, so as to re-assert her role in the house. Amanda's attitude is more and more passionate; still spying on them and praising Jim's qualities, she does not even notice that Tom scoffs her, inviting her to go into the living room and listen to them openly. Amanda is as gay as a child and it is Tom now who reprimands her demanding: "Calm yourself Mother, possess your soul impatience!" All she does in return is a maternal kiss that blocks out the advice he has given her. Another funny incursion that interrupts the climate established in the living room, shows Amanda becoming increasingly nervous; she knows more about the gentleman caller and she wants to comment on it with Tom who, dressed in his apron sweeping the floor, is not even allowed to smoke his cigarette, minding his own business. He helplessly observes his mother who is almost out of her mind. He can express his intolerance only by shaking the dustpan against the basket. As a man, Tom has here reached the lowest point in masculinity.

The last incursion by Amanda is in a scene that is itself an "incursion" in the movie. Jim has decided to take Laura to the Paradise Dancing and, after they have gone, Amanda, from the threshold, starts to dream of a rosy future for her unlucky daughter. At this moment Amanda feels she has won her personal war; she is already planning Laura's next steps to the so craved for marriage.

2.16 JIM AND *BLUE ROSES*

Jim and Laura have become closer, thanks to Jim’s resourcefulness, and the conversation touches their memories:

JIM [smiling doubtfully]: You know I have an idea I’ve seen you before. I had that idea as soon as you opened the door. It seemed almost like I was about to remember your name. But the name that I started to call you—wasn’t a name! And so I stopped myself before I said it.

LAURA: Wasn’t it—Blue Roses?

JIM [springing up, grinning]: Blue Roses! My Gosh, yes—Blue Roses! [...] I didn’t connect you with high school somehow or other. But that’s where it was; it was high school. I didn’t even know you were Shakespeare’s sister! [...] (73)

The dialogue focuses on the nickname “Blue Roses”, which he had given her. The dialogue with some textual changes corresponds to the second half of page 75 of the play:

JIM: [...] How was it that I got started calling you that?

LAURA: I was out of school a little while with pleurosis. When I came back you asked me what was the matter. I said I had pleurosis—you thought I said *Blue Roses*. That’s what you always called me after that! (75)

The reminiscence lasts just a few lines more; the scene ends referring back to the last lines of page 74 and the bottom of page 75:

JIM: Now I remember—you always came in late.

LAURA: Yes, it was so hard for me, getting upstairs. I had that brace on my leg—it clumped so loud!

JIM: I never heard any clumping.

LAURA [*wincing at the recollection*]: To me it sounded like—thunder!

JIM: Well, well, well, I never even noticed.

LAURA: [...] My seat was in the back row. I had to go clumping all the way up the aisle with everyone watching!

JIM: You shouldn’t have been self-conscious.

LAURA: I know, but I was [...]

JIM: As I remember you sort of stuck by yourself.

LAURA: I—I never have had much luck at—making friends. (75)

They commemorate the high school span when Jim sketches a song advancing: “I sang the baritone lead in that operetta.” (77) and admitting:

JIM: My signature isn't worth very much right now. But some day—maybe—it will increase in value! Being disappointed is one thing and being discouraged is something else. I am disappointed but I am not discouraged. **I'm twenty-three years old.** [...] (78)

The bold sentence referring to Jim's age has been omitted in the movie, probably due to Kirk Douglas' adult features (born 1916). He was not twenty-three years old at the time of the movie (1950).

Before “Amanda's intrusion” (see 2.15), Laura has taken him to the topic of “Emily Meisenbach”:

LAURA: [...] How is—Emily Meisenbach getting along?

JIM: Oh, that kraut-head!

LAURA: Why do you call her that?

JIM: That's what she was.

LAURA: You're not still—going with her?

JIM: I never see her.

LAURA: It said in the “Personal” section that you were—engaged!

JIM: I know, but I wasn't impressed by that—propaganda!

LAURA: It wasn't—the truth?

JIM: Only in Emily's optimistic opinion!

LAURA: Oh—(79)

Laura faces this argument turning away from Jim's gaze, almost pointing at her mother in the kitchen. Jim now asks about Laura's complications at school. The dialogue returns at the top of page 79 jumping at the end of page 80 with the "inferiority complex theme". The dialogue in the movie corresponds as follows:

JIM: You finished high school?

LAURA [with difficulty]: I didn't go back.

JIM: You mean you dropped out?

LAURA: I made bad grades in my final examinations. [...] (79)

JIM [abruptly]: You know what I judge to be the trouble with you? Inferiority complex! Know what that is? That's what they call it when someone low-rates himself! I understand it because I had it, too.[...] Think of yourself as *superior* in some way! (79-80)

Jim's monologue, when he explains his point of view about mankind ("Everybody excels in some one thing!" [80]), becomes a question that Laura poses to Jim as a device to maintain the give and take fluidity of the scene. The scene proceeds with Jim's motivational monologue, in which he tells of his experience at night school, to reach the incursion in the kitchen where Amanda is still eavesdropping.

2.17 JIM AND THE UNICORN

Laura is now relaxing and feeling more confident about Jim's sincere allure. She opens her heart up to Jim and, thanks to the atmosphere created by the candelabrum, (and helped by the black and white screen) she shows him her favorite piece of her glass collection: the unicorn that is an allegorical representation of herself. The scene is faithful to the original pages. The unicorn topic runs from pages 82 to 84:

JIM: Now how about you? Isn't there something you take more interest in than anything else?

LAURA: Well, I do—as I said—have my—glass collection—(82)

.....

LAURA: Put him on the table. They all like a change of scenery once in a while!

JIM: Well, well, well, well—*[He places the glass piece on the table, then raises his arms and stretches.]* Look how big my shadow is when I stretch! (84)

When Jim stands up to stretch and probably to divert the discussion, he himself opens the door to check the provenance of the music in the background. Kirk Douglass has given Jim a vigorous trait, as MacMullan writes: “since he [Jim] is an emissary from the outside world, he has a reality and a force in the play that need to be transferred to the screen” (28-29). He is the one who takes the initiative to notice the Paradise Dance Hall at the corner of the street, as a prelude for the following scene, created entirely for this movie, contrasting with the lines of the play:

JIM *[crossing to the door]*: I think it’s stopped raining. *[He opens the fire-escape door and the background music changes to a dance tune.]* Where does the music come from?

LAURA: From the Paradise Dance Hall across the alley. (84)

Jim invites a reluctant Laura to dance; she accepts the invitation until they bump into the table and the glass unicorn falls to the floor. The dialogue has been restricted and remixed avoiding words suited to the occasion; they go straight to the point of the broken unicorn:

JIM: Aw, aw,aw. It is broken?

LAURA: Now it is just like all the other horses.

JIM: [...] I bet that that was your favorite piece of glass.

LAURA: [...] It doesn’t matter. Maybe it’s a blessing in disguise.

JIM: Still I’m awfully sorry that I was the cause.

LAURA *[smiling]*: I’ll just imagine he had an operation. The horn was removed to make him feel less—freakish! (86)

2.18 THE PARADISE DANCE HALL

This scene exists only in this 1950 version. Hugh MacMullan has offered one interpretation of this insertion:

[W]hen Jim, to encourage Laura and persuade her that she is not different, takes her dancing at the Paradise, [...] this latter fact justifies the new ending, in which Laura, finding her emancipation through Jim, gladly releases her brother to his seafaring and is left awaiting the coming of a new gentleman caller, whom, the inference is, she has found for herself. (22)

The Paradise becomes the sociological environment in which Laura's makeover takes place. Jim wants Laura to leave her cocoon so as to feel free to act away from indiscreet eyes. As they arrive at the dance hall and start dancing, Laura discovers a new world where, even though she still feels clumsy, she is happy to be part of. The comparison with other couples who dance better, the other women and even the smoke in the eyes that disturbs her are welcomed in Laura's new experience. The unknown frightens but at the same time excites her. Up to this point, this might be only an excursion in out of her life; Laura deserves to feel like the other girls who have a romantic date. With the dance over, Jim now cannot help praising her like the majority of men would do. Jim has witnessed Laura's blossoming. He says: "You changed Laura, just since an hour ago! You stopped being bashful. [...] I was proud of the fact I was your partner"¹³. These lines of the movie give sense to Jim's effort to pass Laura's transmutation. The following dialogue has been adapted for the Paradise scene when Jim confesses his feelings to Laura:

JIM: Has anyone ever told you that you were pretty? [...] Well you are! In a very different way from anyone else. And all the nicer because of the difference, too. [...] I wish you were my sister. I'd teach you to have some more confidence in yourself. [...] They're common as—weeds, but—you—well, you're—*Blue Roses!* (88) Peppermint? Life Saver? My pocket's a regular drugstore. (89)

¹³ 1950 Director Irving Rapper Script extracted Scene 1:31:28 (s.d.)

The movie solves the disappointing moment for Laura in a neutral place that preserves her from the monitoring of her mother. Jim is conscious of having made a mistake in kissing her and suggests they return home. The way back home is the right moment for Jim to confess his impossibility to ask for a date. He stops before the ladder and says:

JIM: Laura, you know, if I had a sister like you, I'd do the same thing as Tom. I'd bring out fellows and—introduce her to them. The right type of boys—of a type to—appreciate her. Only—well—he made a mistake about me. Maybe I've got no call to be saying this. That may not have been the idea in having me over. But what if it was? There's nothing wrong about that. The only trouble is that in my case—I'm not in a situation to—do the right thing. I can't take down your number and say I'll phone. I can't call up next week and—ask for a date. I thought I had better explain the situation in case you—misunderstood it and—I hurt your feelings... (89)

Laura has not yet understood what Jim has meant up to that moment; in fact she stops before the threshold when he says: "I'm not in the position to do the right thing" and she paralyzes when she hears her mother's voice; she feels mortified for her. When Laura is again at home and asks Jim: "You—won't—call again?" (89), she does it with an expression of total awareness that the game is over. Jim has played his game, and now that he is trying to explain his position, she does not listen to him anymore. She wears a polite smile when Jim talks about Betty and his great love for her, but Laura clearly wants Jim to go away the sooner possible; she cannot bear this humiliation anymore. She sits down when suddenly again Amanda enters, happy for the outcome of the night:

AMANDA [...]: I've made you children a little liquid refreshment.

[She turns gaily to him] Jim, do you know that song about lemonade?

"Lemonade, lemonade. Made in the shade and stirred with a spade—Good enough for any old maid!"(91)

Laura has now a moment to meditate and leaves her mother finding out the mocking surprise about his engagement with Betty; the movie has faithfully reported Jim and Amanda's verbal crossfire, and the lines below are the upper and lower bounds:

JIM [*uneasily*]: Ha—ha! No—I never heard it.

AMANDA: Why, Laura! You look so serious!

JIM: We are having a serious conversation. (91)

.....

JIM: I hope it don't seem like I'm rushing off. But I promised Betty I'd pick her up at the Wabash depot, an' by the time I get my jalopy down there her train'll be in. Some women are pretty upset if you keep 'em waiting.

AMANDA: Yes, I know—the tyranny of women! [*She extends her hand.*] Goodbye, Mr. O'Connor. I wish you luck—and happiness—and success! All three of them, and so does Laura! Don't you, Laura? (94)

Amanda has definitively lost interest in Jim so she passes the baton to Laura to dismiss him. When Laura stands up she seems to have found a new self-awareness, she even smiles at him and, before he goes, she gives him the broken unicorn that in the play she has given him before Amanda's entrance. The dialogue of the movie is a collage of lines from different pages:

JIM: So long, Shakespeare! Goodbye Laura. And don't forget the good advice I gave you. (94)

What are you—doing that for?

LAURA: A—souvenir... (91)

JIM: I'm certainly going to treasure that souvenir. (94)

2.19 THE NEW FINAL

Here the movie takes a new trajectory that invalidates the plot of the original play. A galvanized Laura stops Jim on the threshold to ask him to visit her family again together with his girlfriend Betty. Amanda is understandably annoyed when she listens to her daughter's words: "I had a lovely evening because I danced tonight; I danced for the first time. I'm so glad I saw Jim."¹⁴ Laura's epiphany is clearly insufferable to Amanda, who can only see the joke that Jim and perhaps Tom have played on her. Amanda's words outline her total disinterest in Laura's new awareness and in fact she says: "Laura, this is not the time to be

¹⁴ 1950 Director Irving Rapper Script extracted Scene 1:41:37 (s.d.)

gracious about it! What do we care about Betty, what do we care about Jim!”¹⁵ Laura makes Amanda heartless in front of the audience. Thomas L. Erskine and James M. Welsh write:

The pessimistic ending became a happy one. Rather than being destroyed by the discovery that her “gentleman caller” is already engaged, Laura is portrayed as happily awaiting the “gentleman callers”. To make that ending convincing, Laura is normalized, and her physical defect, a pronounced limp, and timid nature are altered accordingly (130).

Amanda and Tom’s quarrel is faithful to the play in the first part, where Amanda berates him for the unsuitable gentleman caller he has procured. There is a little detail which can be of interest: here Amanda does not show the sarcastic attitude that is clear in the sentence of the play: “[Tom] come in here a minute. I want to tell you something awfully funny.” (94) The quarrel starts from the passage when Tom says: “Has the gentleman caller gotten away already?”(94) with Amanda replying: “You don’t know things anywhere! You live in a dream; you manufacture illusions!”(95). Laura, who is not a remissive victim anymore, takes Tom’s defense; after all, she has learnt so much that now she can speak up. This insertion in the movie is another obvious consequence of Laura’s awakening. When Laura candidly says: “Mother it isn’t Tom’s fault”¹⁶, Amanda has a tragic epiphany in front of both Tom and Laura. Amanda confesses: “Laura, I don’t understand you. I don’t understand you Tom. I’ve never understood my children.”¹⁷ These lines have been written to segment Tom and Amanda’s showdown:

AMANDA: Where are you going?

TOM:: I’m going to the movies.

AMANDA: Don’t let anything interfere with your selfish pleasure! Just go, go, go—to the movies!

TOM: All right, I will! The more you shout about my selfishness to me the quicker I’ll go, and I won’t go to the movies!

AMANDA: Go, then! Go to the moon—you selfish dreamer! (95-96)

¹⁵ 1950 Director Irving Rapper Script extracted Scene 1:42:06 (s.d.)

¹⁶ 1950 Director Irving Rapper Script extracted Scene 1:43:11 (s.d.)

¹⁷ 1950 Director Irving Rapper Script extracted Scene 1:43:13 (s.d.)

Amanda adds a reference to the father, noting her resentment: “Walk on just the way your father did. We’ll manage without you. I’m strong I can take care of Laura”¹⁸. Amanda is inadvertently wrong; Laura will be the one who will have to take care of her mother. Laura is now strong enough to support her brother who feels guilty in front of her, blessing him for the life he has decided to follow. Laura has now become the head of the family, the ideal parent who listens to her offspring.

The end is a juxtaposition of Laura’s and Tom’s lives. Tom wanders from one city to another, unable to leave his former life behind, as he says in his final monologue. On the contrary, Laura has not been left alone to “blow her candles out”; she is waiting for Richard, a new gentleman caller to come. Tom’s last thought is devoted to both Amanda and Laura, and he takes his leave from the audience relieved by the fact that at last everybody has achieved “the long delayed but always expected something that we live for!”¹⁹

Hugh MacMullan summarizes the choice of the happy conclusion:

There is no doubt that this ending was first devised by the producers in deference to the Hollywood tradition of the “Happy ending.” But once it was accepted, its influence spread through the entire continuity, forcing much of the structure here outlined, so that it could exist logically, as I feel it does. Certainly, viewed philosophically, the film is neither more nor less important as a comment on life than the original stage play, and it does bring to a suitable resolution all the problems raised by the plot’s premises and their development—if on a sentimental level. [...] This does not mean that the film is necessarily “better” than the play; only that it is different, substituting one value for another, a value in keeping with the taste of its audience.” (22-20)

One last quotation, which deserves mentioning, is Tennessee Williams’ point of view on the realization of the 1950 version and reported by Thomas L Erskine and James M, Welsh in “Video versions: Film Adaptations of Plays on Video”:

¹⁸ 1950 Director Irving Rapper Script extracted Scene 1:43:54 (s.d.)

¹⁹ 1950 Director Irving Rapper Script extracted Scene 1:46:37 (s.d.)

In fact, Williams' original message about the impossibility of achieving one's dreams or overcoming one's limitation is completely subverted by the film, which Williams described as the most "dishonest" adaptation of this work. (130)

CHAPTER III

THE GLASS MENAGERIE 1973

3.1 CAST AND CHARACTERS

The film released in 1973 by director Anthony Harvey is an adaptation for the television network. R. Barton Palmer and William Robert Bray in “Hollywood’s Tennessee: The Williams Films and Postwar America” write:

This teleplay had a lengthy period of incubation. In 1968, Hepburn and English director Anthony Harvey were working on *The Lion in Winter*. Harvey mentioned that *The Glass Menagerie* was the first American play he had ever seen, and liked it so well that he was thinking about turning it into a movie. Hepburn told Harvey she would play Amanda if he directed and David Susskind produced it in London. (289)

Katherine Hepburn plays Amanda Wingfield, Sam Waterston and Joanna Miles are respectively Tom and Laura Wingfield and Michael Moriarty is the gentleman caller Jim O’Connor. Andrew Scott Berg in his book “Kate Remembered: Katherine Hepburn, a personal Biography” writes:

The Glass Menagerie was Katherine Hepburn’s first appearance on television. She has initially been wary of the medium, but was convinced by the opportunity to work with friend Anthony Harvey, with whom she had made the successful film *The Lion in Winter*. Hepburn was also drawn to the project when she was told her niece Katharine Houghton could co-star as Laura, but Houghton eventually turned down the role. (257)

This version corresponds with Tennessee Williams’ play: the seven scenes have been shot in consequential order. My analysis, from scene one to scene seven, follows the subdivision of the play.

3.2 SCENE ONE

Katharine Hepburn's name is introduced as the leading character (of course she was the most famous among the four) immediately above the title of the movie, together with the author's name. The other three actors, Waterston, Moriarty and Miles appear all together to emphasize this is Katharine Hepburn's film. Tennessee Williams' name is restated as the writer of the play. The following names are simply the producer's name and director Anthony Harvey.

Tom is the first character to appear on screen. He walks towards the camera, coming from the dusky background that might be a commuter town. He stops struck by something he sees and probably knows. The audience finally sees what Tom has just seen: the slender figure of Laura crossing the street and disappearing behind the building. She is an evanescent figure who exists only in Tom's imagination. "In most films, the shot/reverse shot formation²⁰ functions to efface the presence of the camera by convincing viewers that what is visible on the screen is actually the point of view of a character within the cinematic narrative." (Crandell 5) Marina Pellanda writes:

Accade così che l'arte cinematografica viene a configurare in maniera inedita il modo di guardare: la macchina da presa [...] attraverso i modi e le angolazioni di ripresa, può isolare brevemente momenti particolari di uno stesso avvenimento attraverso i cosiddetti dettagli, ovvero l'inserito fulmineo nell'inquadratura di oggetti, personaggi o parti del corpo che appaiono e, se pur per un breve istante, occupano tutto lo schermo. (24-25)

As he understands this, he continues his stroll accompanied by a gloomy piano motif. Tom arrives at a dock to read his newspaper, but again, Laura's whisper twice invites him to follow his memory. Marina Pellanda continues:

²⁰ Kaja Silverman in "The Subject of Semiotics" writes: "The shot/reverse shot formation is a cinematic set in which the second shot shows the field from which the first shot is assumed to have been taken: Shot 1 shows a space which may or may not contain a human figure [...] shot 2 locates a spectator in the other 180° of the same circular field, thereby implying that the preceding shot was seen through the eyes of a figure in the cinematic narrative. (201-202)

Con il primo piano, dunque, non solo la fisionomia e la mimica divengono le forme più soggettive di cui l'attore disponga, ma accade anche che la mobilità della macchina da presa, sostituendo l'enfasi del gesto e dell'eloquio, vada a trasformare l'interprete da arbitro di se stesso, qual è sul palcoscenico, in una entità che viene costantemente diretta dai fili della regia. È proprio per questo che, secondo un altro punto di vista, potremmo anche dire che il cinema, rispetto al teatro, trasforma gli attori in automi. (56)

Amanda's rebuke substitutes Laura's whisper; the scene fades out with Amanda's: "Tom we can't start dinner without you!"²¹ corresponding to the play's: "We can't say grace until you come to the table!"(6) The picture of the missing father that dominated on the wall metaphorically introduces the apartment:

A blown-up photograph of the father²² hangs on the wall of the living room, to the left of the archway. It is the face of a very handsome young man in a doughboy's First World War cap. He is gallantly smiling, ineluctably smiling, as if to say "I will be smiling forever." (4)

The camera on Amanda's face replaces Tom's introductory monologue written below:

Tom: Yes, I have tricks in my pocket, I have things up my sleeve. But I am the opposite of a stage magician. He gives you illusion that has the appearance of truth. I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion. [...] The last we heard of him was a picture postcard from Mazatlán, on the Pacific coast of Mexico, containing a message of two words: "Hello—Goodbye!" and no address. (4-5)

Amanda is telling her offspring a curious story about "rented seats in the church during the Mass"²³. Both Tom and Laura do not seem interested in what she is telling them. Amanda reproaches both of them for not following some rules of etiquette. She says to Laura: "Honey, don't push with your fingers. If you have to push with something, the thing to push with is a crust of bread."(6) To Tom she says: "Chew—chew! Animals have secretions in their stomach

²¹ 1973 Director Anthony Harvey ABC Television production. Script extracted Scene 1:49 (s.d.)

²² It is curious that also in this movie the same actor plays both the father and Tom.

²³ Script extracted Scene 2:20 (s.d.)

which enable them to digest food without mastication, but human beings are supposed to chew their food before they swallow it down,”(6) In the play she oppresses only Tom:

AMANDA [*to her son*]: Honey, don't *push* with *fingers*. If you have to push with something, the thing to push with is a crust of bread. And chew—chew! Animals have secretions in their stomachs which enable them to digest food without mastication, but human beings are supposed to chew their food before they swallow it down. Eat food leisurely, son, and really enjoy it. A well-cooked meal has lots of delicate flavors that have to be held in the mouth for appreciation. So chew your food and give your salivary glands a chance to function! (6)

Amanda treats Tom and Laura in different ways and her persona has been well depicted by Shirley A. Huston Findley in “Subverting the dramatic text: folklore, feminism and the images of women in three canonical American plays”:

The widowed mother lives in the myth of the old South, and in her attempt to recapture the essence of the Southern Belle from her past, she creates an illusion bound up in the romantic myth. However, the reality of the present ensures the myth will fail. It is in this tension between the illusion of the past and the reality of the present that Amanda is forced to play dual roles: the wicked witch and the fairy godmother. (165)

In her *Seventeen Gentlemen Callers* story, the politically correct word “houseboy” substitutes the original terms “nigger” when she says:

AMANDA: One Sunday afternoon in Blue Mountain—your mother received—*seventeen!*—gentlemen callers! Why, sometimes there weren't chairs enough to accommodate them all. We had to send the **nigger** over to bring in folding chairs from the parish house. (8)

Amanda tells Tom and Laura about Blue Mountain with the scene ending with Laura's two statements: “It isn't a flood, it's not a tornado, Mother. I'm just not popular like you were in Blue Mountain” and “Mother's afraid I'm going to be an old maid” (10), separated by the same piano motif of the first scene:

[*The scene dims out with the “Glass Menagerie” music.*]

John Barry, the composer, has translated Williams' idea of music as he previously wrote in the production notes of William's "The Glass Menagerie":

A single recurring tune, "The Glass Menagerie," is used to give emotional emphasis to suitable passages. [...] It seems under those circumstances to continue almost interminably and it weaves in and out of your preoccupied consciousness; then it is the lightest, most delicate music in the world and perhaps the saddest. [...] When you look at a piece of delicate spun glass you think of two things: how beautiful it is and how easily it can be broken. Both of those ideas should be woven into the recurring tune, which dips in and out of the play as if it were carried on a wind that changes. [...] It is primarily Laura's music: it focuses upon her and the lovely fragility of glass which is her image. (xxi)

3.3 SCENE TWO

The piano links scene one with scene two producing some differences in the introduction. For instance, the tagline describes the scene: "*On the dark stage the screen is lighted with the image of blue roses.*" (11) What the audience sees is the glass animals' close-up; Laura appears but not "*seated in the delicate ivory chair at the small clawfoot table.*" (11), she is not even "*washing and polishing her collection of glass.*" The figure of Laura is sort of "heroine within a melodramatic silent film. For example, Laura may take on the role of the ideal woman by describing the effects the pressure to conform places on her. She may tell a story of her favorite fairy tale *Cinderella*, and explain why she is more ugly duckling than the beautiful princess." (Huston Findley 160)

Amanda enters opening the door, without any forewarning; she does not "*appear on the fire escape steps*" (11). Amanda does not fix herself up: "*She purses her lips, opens her eyes wide, rolls them upward and shakes her head. Then she slowly lets herself in the door.*" (11)

As Amanda enters, she soon removes her gloves and hat and goes straight to the Victrola to turn it off with a hot temperament, whereas the tagline gives another reaction: "*She slowly removes her hat and gloves, continuing the sweet suffering stare. She lets the hat and gloves fall on the floor—a bit of acting*" (11).

Laura and Amanda start arguing, and again, Amanda's gestures are different from the taglines of the play; she does not "*slowly open her purse and remove a dainty white handkerchief which she shakes out delicately and delicately touches to her lips and nostrils*" (12); here Amanda is more aggressive. When she tears the diagram in front of her daughter, she does not "*holds it in front of her for a second, staring at it sweetly and sorrowfully*" (12). The argument between Amanda and Laura proceeds in compliance with the play, omitting for instance: "*Amanda draws a long breath, takes out the handkerchief again, goes through the dabbing process*" (13).

The bold part below has been inserted in the movie to emphasize that even though they live on credit, money seems to be non-influential in their lives; when Amanda says: "Fifty dollars' tuition, **I don't care about the money so much!**²⁴ All of our plans—my hopes and ambitions for you—just gone up the spout, just gone out the spout like that." (14); the bold part has been inserted in the movie to empathize that even though they live on credit, money seems to be non-influential in their lives.

The sorrowful monologue that Amanda addresses to her daughter is not present in the movie.

What follows is the omitted part:

AMANDA: I know so well what becomes of unmarried women who aren't prepared to occupy a position. I've seen such pitiful cases in the South—barely tolerated spinsters living upon the grudging patronage of sister's husband or brother's wife!—stuck away in some little mousetrap of a room—encouraged by one in-law to visit another—little birdlike women without any nest—eating the crust of humility all their life! Is that the future that we've mapped out for ourselves? I swear it's the only alternative I can think of! [*She pauses.*] It isn't a very pleasant alternative, is it? [*She pauses again.*] (16)

At the end, she says: "Of course—some girls *do marry*." (16) Huston Findley writes:

Despite the fact that the prince whose "charm" swept this princess off of her feet was no Prince Charming, Amanda remains caught up in the illusion of the romantic myth, hoping for a fairy tale ending. Only this time the success will come to her daughter. In essence, Amanda tries to recreate the illusion through Laura with her motto "try and you will succeed," the traditional motto of the American

²⁴ Script extracted Scene 11:27 (s.d.)

dream of success. [...] But Laura is incapable of playing out the rags-to-riches story of the romantic myth. Yet this does not stop Amanda. In fact, it draws her even further into the myth. (166)

In the play Amanda says, as she stands up: “Girls that aren’t cut for business careers usually wind up married to some nice man. *“She gets up with a spark of revival.”* Sister, that’s what you’ll do!” (17). On the contrary, here she sits next to Laura without moving. Laura’s movements are also different; in the play, Laura “*utters a startled, doubtful laugh. She reaches quickly for a piece of glass*” (17), whereas in the movie she just moves away from her mother’s hug when she says: “[*in a tone of frightened apology*]: I’m—crippled!” (17), knowing that Amanda does not tolerate this definition.

The scene ends with the photograph image of the smiling father together with the piano motif, as in the play: “*The scene fades out with music*” (18).

3.4 SCENE THREE

Scene three begins with Tom recapitulating Laura’s fiasco at Rubicam’s Business College and Amanda’s vigorous campaign on the telephone; Tom confides to the audience sitting in the escape landing, “*Tom speaks from the fire escape landing*” (19). The movie instead returns to Tom sitting near the dock in the role of narrator, located outside his house and in another time space. He reproduces the monologue with several cuts:

TOM: After the fiasco at Rubicam’s Business College, the idea of getting a gentleman caller for Laura began to play a more and more important part in Mother’s calculations. It became an obsession. [...] Late that winter and in the early spring—realizing that extra money would be needed to properly feather the nest and plume the bird—she conducted a vigorous campaign on the telephone, roping in subscribers to one of those magazines for matrons called *The Homemaker’s Companion*. (19)

After Tom's introduction, Amanda's telephone call restores the story; Amanda's half face fills up the screen, with the camera shooting her expression of enthusiasm transforming into disappointment when Ida Scott hangs up.

Before Amanda and Tom quarrel, there are several new passages: at first, Amanda laments with Laura upon Ida Scott but Laura invites her mother to lower her voice because Tom is writing. The intrusive Amanda bothers Tom with the excuse of the desk lamp: "I'm trying to save your eyesight!"²⁵ Even though Tom kindly sends her away: "Mother, please go away, I'm finishing writing"²⁶, she keeps bothering him teaching how to get a proper posture. Tom's explosion corresponds with the lines of the play:

TOM: What in Christ's name am I—

AMANDA [*shrilly*]: Don't you use that—expression! Not in my—presence! Have you gone out of your senses?

TOM: I have, That's true, *driven* out!

AMANDA: What is the matter with you, you—big—big—IDIOT! (20-21)

The movie has depicted the causes of the quarrel, where the play suggest them in the tagline: "*The quarrel was probably precipitated by Amanda's interruption of Tom's creative labor*" (22).

Houston Findley writes:

While Amanda plays the role of fairy godmother for Laura, to Tom, she is the terrible Mother, the womb of the earth become the devouring maw of the underworld. Tom outburst toward Amanda, which leads to characterizing his mother as a witch, is the result of her desire to make him comfort to the role of father. [...] Assaulted by Tom's reference to an ugly witch, Williams allows Amanda to retreat, while awaiting an apology from her son. (168)

²⁵ Script extracted Scene 19:44 (s.d.)

²⁶ Script extracted Scene 19:53 (s.d.)

In the movie Tom is able to take off his nightgown, change his pants, put on his sweater and his shoes while venting his monologue to Amanda; he then accidentally strikes against the shelf of Laura's glass collection:

He goes through a series of violent, clumsy movements, seizing his overcoat, lunging to the door, pulling it fiercely open. The women watch him, aghast. His arm catches in the sleeve of the coat as he struggles to pull it on. For a moment he is pinioned by the bulky garment. With an outraged groan he tears the coat off again, splitting the shoulder of it, and hurls it across the room. It strikes against the shelf of Laura's glass collection, and there is a tinkle of shattering glass. Laura cries out as if wounded (24).

Laura does not say a word; she just jounces looking at her broken glass animal; Amanda gets scared too but soon recovers: "*Amanda is still stunned and stupefied by the «ugly witch»²⁷ so that she barely notices this occurrence*" (25)

Amanda leaves them, and they remain both speechless and immobilized, differently from the play, where "*Laura clings weakly to the mantel with her face averted. Tom stares at her stupidly for a moment. Then he crosses to the shelf.*" (25) Tom is already on his knees "*to collect the fallen glass, glancing at Laura as if he would speak but couldn't*" (25).

Here again the scene fades out with the piano motif *The Glass Menagerie*.

3.5 SCENE FOUR

Tom's movements (returning home after a night out, followed by his apology to Amanda the following day) correspond to scene four of the play. The actors have literally performed words and movements of the play:

²⁷ Houston Findley points out: "If one were to capitalize on the Amanda-as-witch image, one might find [...] an interesting moment in which Amanda, with broomstick or magic wand in hand, could "cast a spell" on Tom, causing his clumsy incident to happen. The spell would not only remind Tom of who is in control, forcing him to play out his role as father, but it would also heighten the audience's awareness of the part Amanda must play in order to fulfil her goal in living out the illusion of the romantic myth. (169)

Tom appears at the top of the alley. [...] he has been drinking. As he climbs the few steps to the fire escape landing light steals up inside.[...] Tom fishes in his pocket for his door key,[...]At last he finds the key, but just as he is about to insert it, it slips from his fingers. He [...] crouches below the door. Laura appears [...] in a nightdress. (26)

The tagline above is the order of appearance of the actors on scene. Tom recapitulates his odd experiences at the movies: “Of course! And, oh, I forgot! There was a big stage show!” (27). Tom, standing up and taking off his coat, says: “The headliner on this stage show was Malvolio the Magician” (27) Houston Findley writes:

Tom’s entrapment is dramatized most clearly in scene four. Having just returned from a night of movies and drinking, he shares the story of Malvolio the Magician with his sister.[...] [T]he stage directions suggest the answer to Tom’s question of escape: the Father can, and in fact did, leave for more adventure; as we see in the play’s conclusion, so does the surrogate father, Tom. Important here is that the women, unlike the men, do not experience an opportunity for adventure, and therefore escape, except in the hopes of a prince to rescue them. (164)

Laura helps him removing his shoes while he is still at the beginning of his tale. By the time he “*pulls from his back pocket a shimmering rainbow-colored scarf*”. (27) he is already in his bed. In the play, he stays out until the very end of the monologue and “*flops onto the bed and starts removing his shoes*” (27). The scene ends when Tom falls asleep with Laura stroking his hair gently. “Unlike Tom and her father, Laura cannot escape the confines of the role prescribed for her simply by leaving. Instead she is forced, by her fairy godmother, to believe in herself as a princess and attend the ball.” (Houston Findley 171) The play offers a different end: “*As if in answer, the father’s grinning photograph lights up. The scene dims out*”(28).

The following morning the scene starts when Laura, before going to the grocery, asks Tom: “Do what I asked you, will you, will you, Tom?” (29) Tom looks at her without the expression used in the play: “*He looks sullenly away.*” (29) He just stares at her blankly.

Tom and Amanda are now alone at home having their silent breakfast:

As Tom comes listlessly for his coffee, she turns her back to him and stands rigidly facing the window on the gloomy gray vault of her rearway. [...] Tom glances sheepishly but sullenly at her averted figure and slumps at the table. [...] Tom blows on his coffee, glancing sidewise at his mother. She clears her throat. Tom clears his. He starts to rise [...] Then he slowly sets the cup down and awkwardly and hesitantly rises from the chair. (30)

As Tom apologizes, peace is back at home and Amanda can talk about Laura. When she says: “[...] If you hadn’t spoken I would have spoken to you. *“She sits down”*(31) in the movie Amanda stays standing as if to reaffirm her strength; following Houston Findley’s suggestion:

After forgiving him for his attack, Amanda quickly reverts back to the role of fairy godmother, moving toward her ultimate goal: securing a husband for her daughter. And yet, a moment following Tom’s eruption occurs in which subversion might further enhance our awareness of the role Amanda has been forced to play in order to succeed in her goal. (168)

Tom does not *“put his cup down slowly”*(32); he puts it down when Amanda kneels in front of him when she says: “What gives her any idea? However, you do act strangely [...] I’ve never told you but I—*loved* your father.”(32) Tom tries to stop her Mother’s lamentation telling her: “No. You say there’s so much in your heart that you can’t describe to me. That’s true of me, too. There’s so much in my heart that I can’t describe to *you!* So let’s respect each other’s— ” (33) standing up to move out, and the atmosphere overheats again, *“Amanda looks baffled, then hurt. As the familiar inquisition resumes, Tom becomes hard and impatient again. Amanda slips back into her querulous attitude toward him”* (33).

Tom is already at the door ready to leave, unlike in the play where he rises at this moment:

TOM: I reckon they’re not.

AMANDA: You’re joking. However, That isn’t what I wanted to discuss.

TOM [*rising*]: I haven’t much time.

AMANDA [*pushing his shoulders*]: Sit down. (33)

They both sit down and start discussing Laura. As the conversation deteriorates, “*Tom springs up and crosses to get his coat. It is ugly and bulky. He pulls on a cap with earmuffs. He snatches it angrily from the closet, tosses it around his neck and pulls both ends tight*” (35).

When Amanda obtains Tom’s promise to get a gentleman caller, she can devote herself to the subscriptions on telephone:

AMANDA: Ella Cartwright? This is Amanda Wingfield! How is your kidney condition? You’re a Christian martyr, yes, honey, that’s what you are, a Christian martyr! Well, I just happened to notice in my little red book that your subscription to the *Companion* has just run out! I knew that you wouldn’t want to miss out on the wonderful serial starting in this new issue. It’s Bessie Mae Hopper [...] It’s all about the horsey set on Long Island! (37)

The movie has provided a successful epilogue for the call. Amanda, after having found out she has probably woken up Ella, feels terribly sorry for the annoyance she has created, but fortunately she accepts the subscription. Amanda’s happy expression for both the good news, Tom’s promise and Ella’s subscription, ends the scene.

3.6 SCENE FIVE

The scene starts with the image of the play’s first tagline: “*Music is heard as the light slowly comes on*” (38), with Tom’s voice describing the social, historical events that seem out of the Wingfields interests. The camera moves slowly from left to right, framing the alley while Tom tells the audience:

TOM [to the audience]: Across the alley from us was the Paradise Dance Hall. On evenings in spring the windows and doors were open and the music came outdoors. Sometimes the lights were turned out except for a large glass sphere that hung from the ceiling. It would turn slowly about and filter the dusk with delicate rainbow colors. [...] They were waiting around the corner for all these kids. [...] All the world was waiting for bombardments! (39)

Amanda's voice from the inside interrupts the meditative moment. She cries out: "Tom where are you?"²⁸:

TOM: I'm [...] out to smoke.

AMANDA: You smoke too much. A pack a day at fifteen cents a pack. How much would that amount to in a month? [...]

TOM: I'd rather smoke. [*He steps out on the landing, letting the screen door slam.*]

AMANDA [*sharply*]: I know! That's the tragedy of it... [*Alone, she turns to look at her husband's picture.*]
(38-39)

AMANDA [*sighing*]: A fire escape landing's poor excuse for a porch. [*She spreads a newspaper on a step and sits down, gracefully and demurely as if she were settling into a swing on a Mississippi veranda.*] What are you looking at? (40)

Amanda joins Tom outside and he soon reveals *The Gentleman Caller* topic. Amanda's impatience is translated on screen when she repeatedly asks "How soon?" with Tom replying "Quite soon. Pretty soon. Very soon"²⁹ Unlike in the play, where Amanda asks a direct question to Tom: "*Naturally* I would like to know when he's *coming!*" (42), here it is Tom who reveals in advance what Amanda does not dare to ask.

Amanda is determined to get things working and grabs Tom to push him inside. In the play, he "*follows her inside, groaning*" (43). When they are inside, Amanda stops in front of the sofa looking at its crumbling aspect, demonstrating her intention to re-arrange all the furniture as soon as possible. In the play, she has already dealt with the sofa, as she says: "Thank heavens I've got that new sofa!"(43); this is to reaffirm that Amanda on screen needs more strength to battle against all the annoyances that happen to her. This Amanda is very resilient. At the same time, she does not want to seem too intrusive and leaves Tom to give her the information she needs. For instance, in the play she asks directly: "What does he do. He works at the

²⁸ Script extracted Scene 41:24 (s.d.)

²⁹ Script extracted Scene 43:37 (s.d.)

warehouse?”(43) whereas in the movie she just asks: “Where did you meet him?”³⁰, pretending to expect more creativity by her son who says: “At the warehouse. Where else would I meet him?!”³¹ The play does not write about Jim’s Irish background, but it is quite understandable from his surname, O’Connor.

The dialogue proceeds with a curious omission in Amanda’s statement:

TOM: Aren’t you being a little bit premature? Mr. O’Connor has not yet appeared on the scene!

AMANDA: But will tomorrow. To meet your sister, and what do I know about his character? **Nothing! Old maids are better off than wives of drunkards!**

TOM: What are you doing?

AMANDA: I’m brushing that cowlick down!

TOM [*leaning forward to whisper*]: Lots of fellow meet girls whom they don’t marry!

AMANDA: What is this young man’s position at the warehouse? (44)

Here again the bold clause is missing in the movie. Tom and Amanda continue on their discussion until Amanda’s reference to her husband in the play: “[...] He *smiled*—the world was *enchanted!*”(46), in the movie is more resentful: “All he had to do was grin, and the all world was bewitched!”³²

Tom and Amanda maintain a cheerful tone, curious and ironical. Here Amanda tells Tom not to say the word *crippled*, admonishing him: “Don’t use that word!”³³ not accepting the inconvertible truth.

The piano motif starts when Tom rises to say: “She lives in a world of her own—a world of little glass ornaments, Mother. She plays old phonograph records and—that’s about all—”

³⁰ Script extracted Scene 45:52 (s.d.)

³¹ Script extracted Scene 45:53 (s.d.)

³² Script extracted Scene 48:27 (s.d.)

³³ Script extracted Scene 50:32 (s.d.)

(48). After this last statement, he picks up his coat, this time gently, and goes to the movies without Amanda's innuendos.

The film reproduces Amanda's gesture, her emotional makeover: "*He is gone. Amanda looks worriedly after him for a moment. Then vitality and optimism return and she turns from the door, crossing to the portieres.... Laura appears with a dish towel. Amanda speaks to her gaily*" (48-49).

Amanda does not spoil the surprise and, like the play, the scene ends with the touching words: "Happiness! Good fortune!" (49)

3.7 SCENE SIX

In the play Tom's narration gives several details about Jim O'Connor being a former school hero and a successful worker at the warehouse, where no reference is given in the movie. The tagline reference below, not totally corresponding to the play, introduces scene six:

Laura stands in the middle of the room with lifted arms while Amanda crouches before her, adjusting the hem of a new dress, devout and ritualistic. The dress is colored and designed by memory. The arrangement of Laura's hair is changed; it is softer and more becoming. A fragile, unearthly prettiness has come out in Laura: she is like a piece of translucent glass touched by light, given a momentary radiance, not actual, not lasting (51).

The camera zooms out from an ornamental flower and in on Laura's head as Laura slowly turns to the front, like a model on a trestle. As the camera stops, Amanda is discovered kneeling in front of her mending her white plain color dress. The music in the background is dance music. The first one to talk is Amanda who teases Laura:

AMANDA [impatiently]: Why are you trembling?

LAURA: Mother, you've made me so nervous!

AMANDA: How have I made you nervous?

LAURA: By all this fuss! You make it seem so important! (51-52)

Here Amanda praises Laura telling her: “Look at yourself in the glass. See? You look just like an angel on a postcard. Isn’t that lovely?”³⁴ in fact substituting the words of the play “Now look at yourself, young lady. This is the prettiest you will ever be!” (52). Houston Findley quotes:

As Laura’s fairy godmother, Amanda, sans magic wand, alters both their home and her daughter into acceptable appearances, including Laura’s “Gay Deceivers.” [...] Having ritualistically transformed Laura’s outward appearance into a look appropriate for a “princess”, [...] Amanda, having fulfilled her role as fairy godmother, can only send her daughter off to “the ball” as is required. (167)

Amanda goes out leaving Laura alone: “*Amanda crosses through the portieres, humming gaily. Laura moves slowly to the long mirror and stares solemnly at herself.*” (53) “And yet, [Amanda’s] future actions suggest that the desire to play the princess once again remains intact, including her change [...] which she puts in preparation for the gentleman caller.”(Houston Findley 166) Laura removes the powder puffs from her bosom after she has turned “*slowly before the mirror with a troubled look*” (53) and hides them under one pillow.

Amanda appears in front of Laura transformed to a *Belle* of the ball but without wearing “*a girlish frock of yellowed voile with a blue silk sash*” and she does not “*carr[y] a bunch of jonquils*”(53); just an ornamental flower around her neck. She is so excited that she even sketches a clumsy Ring Around the Rosie with Laura acting her monologue that finishes when she recalls “this—boy”, of course Laura and Tom’s father but she does not “*stop in front of the picture*”(54) instead she heaves a sigh looking up to the sky. The thunder breaks the atmosphere and Amanda does not “*cross the room and place the jonquils in a bowl on the table*” (54); instead she crosses the room to close the front door.

Laura and Amanda talk about Jim O’Connor and at the end, Laura must wait for the boys to arrive. She awaits frightened and paralyzed, the camera zooming in on her, but she does not

³⁴ Script extracted Scene 53:47 (s.d.)

“turn off the lamp, . . . knotting her fingers together”(56) nor does she rise until Amanda orders her: “Laura Wingfield, you march right to that door!”(57). Here Tom and Jim have not appeared on scene yet. In the play, they await on the fire escape for Laura to open the door:

[Tom and Jim appear on the fire escape steps and climb to the landing]

JIM: I think we just beat the rain.

TOM: Uh-uhh. [He rings again, nervously. Jim whistles and fishes for a cigarette.] (56)

Laura’s opening the door is paradoxical. At first she turns away from the boys’ sight, facing the wall and hiding behind the door, then she stays with her arm suspended in the air, and at last she takes an awkward bow in front of Jim, disappearing behind the portieres. Houston Findley analyzes this moment:

[Laura] actually longs to play the role prescribed by society as the ideal woman married to the prince because she has been convinced that this is indeed her role to play. Having fought against the illusion, Laura now dismisses reality in what Williams calls the “climax of her secret life”. And yet, as mentioned, Williams subverts Laura’s climax, which I suggest, might be further enhanced by including images of the *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty* fairy tales acting as subtext throughout Laura and Jim’s encounter. (172)

Tom and Jim are left alone in the living room; a little difference is that Tom lights his cigarette when he is already outside, whereas in the play “he lights a cigarette and goes over to the fire-escape door” (59) returning inside saying: “I’m tired of the movies.”(61) running-up for the heat of his statement offering Jim, who in the meanwhile has got comfortable on the sofa, his reactionary monologue about his state of mind:

Tom: Yes, movies! Look at them—[a wave toward the marvels of Grand Avenue] All those glamorous people—having adventures—hogging it all, gobbling the whole thing up! You know what happens? People go to the *movies* instead of *moving*! [. . .] It’s our turn now, to go to the South Sea Island—to make a safari—to be exotic, far-off! But I’m not patient. I don’t want to wait till then. I’m tired of the *movies* and I am *about to move!* (61)

There is a quick verbal crossfire between Tom and Jim in a music free atmosphere. The play, instead, accentuates the role of music, as the tagline explains: *“The music seems to answer the question, while Tom thinks it over. He reaches in his pocket”* (61). The dialogue proceeds like the play, and it is interesting to notice that here Tom flanks his father’s photograph, so as to identify himself with his father³⁵, depicting himself: “I’m like my father. The bastard son of a bastard! Did you notice how he’s grinning in his picture in there? And he’s been absent going on sixteen years!”(62); “Tom’s desire to shed the role of father so that he may take on the role of hero in his life”(Houston Findley 164)

The time for supper has come and, as they are already inside, Tom is “in front” of Amanda when she appears from the portieres. As Amanda enters, both Tom and Jim react in reference to the play: *“She advances to them. Tom is distinctly shocked at her appearance. Even Jim blinks a little. [...] Tom is embarrassed but after the first shock Jim reacts very warmly.”* (63) Amanda warmly welcomes Jim who can just listen to her silently, not even allowed to reply to her set phrases.

Tom, like a *deus ex machina*, raises the curtain on the supper on the table saying: “It looks to me like supper is on the table.” (64) As Laura enters, and after she says: “I’m so sorry”³⁶ she has a fainting spell. Both Tom and Jim sustain her, but only Tom takes her to the sofa. He checks Laura for a few seconds, and when Amanda asks: “Is Laura all right now?”(66) he answers: “She is better, Mother.”³⁷

The scene ends when Tom is forced by his Mother to say grace; in the movie Tom pronounces the liturgy “For these and all thy mercies—God’s Holy Name be praised—”(66) staring back at Amanda, covering her back, whereas the play ends when *“[t]hey bow their heads, Amanda*

³⁵ The man in the picture is the same actor Sam Waterston. Tom represents the metaphorical figure of the father also visually

³⁶ Script extracted Scene 01:08:37 (s.d.)

³⁷ Script extracted Scene 01:08:58 (s.d.)

stealing a nervous glance at Jim. In the living room Laura, stretched on the sofa, clenches her hand to her lips, to hold back a shuddering sob”(66).

3.8 SCENE SEVEN

The camera slowly focuses on a Chinese Lamp, (bought for the occasion) above their heads. As it zooms out, Amanda, Tom and Jim are sitting around the table chatting after the supper. Jim feels at ease, especially with Amanda, and they seem not to notice Laura’s absence. Suddenly, the lights go out, leaving the three in complete darkness. Here Amanda, pretending a coquettish ignorance, does not know how to answer the riddle she has posed him: “Where was Moses when the lights went out?”(67) I had an answer but it was not very nice. I thought you might know the what!”³⁸. In the play, Amanda just says “In the dark!” (67) Amanda here seems hesitant to pose direct questions to Jim; she waits for Jim to light the candles, unlike the play, where she says: “Where’s a match? Which of you gentlemen can provide a match?”(67)

Amanda keeps flirting with Jim, ignoring Tom who silently observes them, but when Jim is in the kitchenette, she chills him: “Would it be awful if we lost him!”³⁹ Both Amanda and Jim scoff Tom when he is exposed about the light bill; at last, he leaves the table when Amanda irritates him: “Tom, as a penalty for your carelessness you can help me with the dishes.”(69)

Jim proposes: “I ought to be good for something.”(69) and Amanda slyly asks rhetorically: “What did I hear?”⁴⁰. Houston Findley writes: “As the fairy godmother, Amanda becomes Williams’ primary device for incorporating character imagery related to the fairy tale roles in order to heighten the climax of Laura and Jim’s meeting” (169). Jim, intimidated by Amanda’s

³⁸ Script extracted scene 01:10:12 (s.d.)

³⁹ Script extracted scene 01:10:57 (s.d.)

⁴⁰ Script extracted scene 01:12:31 (s.d.)

initiative, takes the candelabrum admitting “I’ll try”⁴¹ instead of: “Sure. I’m superman!”(70), revealing his perplexity.

Jim approaches Laura following the stage direction on page 70:

Jim comes into the dining room, carrying the candelabrum, its candles lighted, in one hand and a glass of wine in the other. Laura[...] can hardly speak from the almost intolerable strain of being alone with a stranger. [...] At first, before Jim’s warmth overcomes her paralyzing shyness, Laura’s voice is thin and breathless, [...] Jim’s attitude is gently humorous. (70)

He approaches Laura who is lying on the sofa, crouching in front of her, putting the candelabrum on the floor, then “*she sits on the floor on the other side of the candelabrum. Jim crosses his legs and smiles engagingly at her*” (72). Jim is a little too breezy; he chews the gum with his mouth wide opened.

Laura boldly, but still formally (she says Mr. O’Connor twice), accepts to share a piece of gum. Finally, they break the ice, reproducing the dialogue from the play, except for these lines that have been omitted:

JIM: When did you recognize me?

LAURA: Oh, right away!

JIM:: Soon as I came in the door?

LAURA: When I heard your name I thought it was probably you. I knew that Tom used to know you a little in high School. So when you came in the door—well, then I was sure.

JIM:: Why didn’t you *say* something, then?

LAURA [*breathlessly*]: I didn’t know what to say, I was—too surprised!

JIM: For goodness’ sakes! You know, this sure is funny!

LAURA: Yes! Yes, isn’t it, though... (74)

⁴¹ Script extracted scene 01:13:15 (s.d.)

Some references to Laura's clumsiness have been omitted to simplify the dialogue, for instance, Jim's "I never heard any clumping." and Laura's "To me it sounded like—thunder!"(75). It is important to notice that also the reference to *Blue Roses* is absent:

JIM: Aw, yes, I've placed you now! I used to call you Blue Roses. How was it that I got started calling you that?

LAURA: I was out of school a little while with pleurosis. When I came back you asked me what was the matter. I said I had pleurosis—you thought I said *Blue Roses*. That's what you always called me after that!

JIM: I hope you didn't mind.

LAURA: Oh, no—I liked it. You see, I wasn't acquainted with many—people... (75)

The several hesitations between Jim and Laura in the play have been cut in order to convey more fluidity. Here Jim jumps soon to the conclusion:

JIM: You were shy with people!

LAURA: I tried not to be but never could—

JIM: Overcome it?

LAURA: No, I—I never could! (76)

Laura then stands up to recover the yearbook: *The Torch* in the play, which becomes *The Cadescos* in the movie. Again Houston Findley writes:

Consequently, from the moment we are introduced to Jim, we are expecting the Prince Charming who will arrive to save Laura and provide us with our happy ending. And throughout the play our expectations are reinforced on several occasions: Jim is remembered by Laura as the leading man in *Pirates of Penzance*.[...] Amanda casts Jim in the role of Prince Charming to Laura's Cinderella.(170)

Here Laura is more courageous; she stares at him, never looking away, unlike the play where:

LAURA [*looking down*]:Yes.

JIM: Why?

LAURA: I—wanted to ask you to—autograph my program.

[She takes the program from the back of the yearbook and shows it to him.] (77)

Laura never looks downward, even when she confesses she has “loved” him, and she does not “*gently close the book in her lap*” (78). Laura moves slowly where Jim moves up and down to conceal an effective embarrassment. For instance, when he says: “My signature isn’t worth very much now. But some day—maybe—it will increase in value!”(78) he sits down asking Laura: “You finished high school?”(79) Jim continually presses Laura to avoid moments of embarrassing silence.

Laura holds her yearbook for a long time unlike in the play; she does not “*rise and replace the book and the program on the table, nor pick up a piece from the glass collection, and turn it in her hands to cover her tumult*” (79), the yearbook shelters her. She hesitates when Jim wants to know about the years after school, and here the movie omits discouraging details about her:

JIM: I said what have you done since high school, Laura?

LAURA: Noting much.

JIM: You must have been doing something there six long years.

LAURA: Yes. (80)

....

JIM: What are you doing now?

LAURA: I don’t do anything—much. Oh, please don’t think I sit around doing nothing! My glass collection takes up a good deal of time. Glass is something you have to take good care of. (80)

Laura is visibly embarrassed and Jim does not give her time to continue, because he soon begins with his “inferiority complex” monologue. Jim’s monologue corresponds to the play; he always addresses Laura and never “*unconsciously glances at himself in the mirror nor adjusts his*

tie at the mirror" (81). His fervor increases together with Laura's admiration: only Amanda's laughter in the kitchen reveals Jim's fanatical behavior.

A galvanized Laura shows Jim her glass menagerie, and now the piano again starts its refrain. The music is obviously evocative, it belongs only to the *Glass Menagerie* dimension: it fades out whenever the scene changes when Jim "*places the glass piece on the table, then raises his arms and stretches.*" (84)

Jim takes advantage of the dance tune coming from the Paradise Dance Hall across the alley to get close to Laura; he asks for a dance. They dance a *clumsy* waltz for a while, bumping into the table when Jim romantically wheels around Laura; "the dance leads to the horn being broken off of the unicorn rendering it no longer unique, creating a metaphor for our heroine's equally relevant transformation." (172)

Laura does not worry about the broken unicorn, whereas Jim seems sorry. Houston Findley writes:

[W]hen the horn is broken off of the unicorn during the dance with Jim, Laura's calm reaction represents her desire to become a normal person and no longer remain a unique individual apart from the others. She actually longs to play the role prescribed by society as the ideal woman married to the prince because she has been convinced that this is indeed her role to play. (171-172)

The waltz in the background keeps the atmosphere romantic. Jim praises Laura telling her: "I'm glad to see that you have a sense of humor. You know—you're—well—very different! Surprisingly different from anyone else I know!" (87). Unlike the play, where she "*is abashed beyond speech [...] nods shyly, looking away [...] touches her throat and clears it—turns the broken unicorn in her hands [...] looks up slowly, with wonder, and shakes her head [...] turns away, nearly faint with the novelty of her emotions.*" (87), she does not fear Jim's gaze, in fact she never lowers her eyes.

Jim kisses Laura after having lifted her up, then releases her. Laura is evidently dreamy, static in an unnatural position, her arms bend ahead and she does not “*slowly raises and opens her hand. It still contains the little broken glass animal*”(88). Houston Findley writes:

Symbolically supported by breaking the horn of the unicorn, Laura’s most prized glass animal, Prince Charming’s attempt at transforming his Cinderella through a magical kiss cannot work. Thus, as the hero, Jim fails. However, like the other characters in the play, Jim has experienced the effects of having a role imposed upon him, rather than playing a role he accepts. [...] [A] projection of the prince waking Sleeping Beauty from her hundred years-sleep might compliment Laura’s moment of disenchantment. However, unlike the fairy tale heroine, who wakes to join her prince in marriage, Laura’s romance ends with the mention of Jim’s girl, Betty. (170-172)

Jim moves to the threshold, ready to go after having mentioned his girlfriend named Betty, leaving Laura completely puzzled, “[i]n fact Jim’s engagement to «a girl named Betty» interrupts the illusion, breaking the magical spell of the romantic myth.”(Houston Findley 156) Laura can only pick the glass animal and give it to Jim. The references in the taglines give an idea of the film scene:

There is a look of almost infinite desolation. Jim glances at her uneasily]... [She opens her hand again on the broken glass figure. Then she gently takes his hand and raises it level with her own. She carefully places the unicorn in the palm of his hand, then pushes his fingers closed upon it (90).

Laura whispers: “A—souvenir...”(91) before Amanda bursts into the living room with the fresh lemonade. Amanda wrongly understands she should go away, she exclaims: “Ohhh, I think I go back in the kitchen.”⁴² Jim takes advantage to explain his position to Amanda who does not accept as “nice”⁴³ the fact that Jim is engaged to be married.

Jim has gone; “Jim, as we discover, is a clerk, incapable of playing the role of the hero who saves the maiden in distress. Again the tension exists between the romanticized past, most obviously mythicized by Amanda, and the reality of the present.”(Houston Findley 170)

⁴² Script extracted Scene 01:36:30 (s.d.)

⁴³ Amanda: Ohhh—how nice! Tom didn’t mention that you were engaged to be married. (93)

“Amanda closes the door on the gentleman caller. Then she turns back to the room with a puzzled expression. She and Laura don’t dare to face each other. Laura crouches beside the Victrola to wind it” (94). Tom enters the living room, unaware of Amanda’s anger and apologizes to Laura: “I didn’t know about that.”(95) The dialogue deteriorates until Tom escapes followed by Amanda’s: “Go, then! Go to the moon—you selfish dreamer!”(96)

The last scene is about Tom sitting on the shore, where he had started to narrate his past to the audience at the beginning of the film. He talks to the camera first, and then Tom’s amplified voice replaces him. He goes up the steps, walks alone across the street and turns to the camera before the voice pronounces his sister’s name and the piano outlines a few notes. He visualizes the table of the living room and both Amanda and Laura:

Amanda appears to be making a comforting speech to Laura, who is huddled upon the sofa. Now that we cannot hear the mother’s speech, her silliness is gone and she has dignity and tragic beauty.[...] Amanda’s gestures are slow and graceful, almost dancelike, as she comforts her daughter. [...] At the end of Tom’s speech, Laura blows out the candles, ending the play (96).

At the end of his monologue, Laura blows out the candles darkening the scene. The camera returns to Tom’s face and the voice saying: “Blow out your candles, Laura—and so goodbye...”(97). The piano refrain accompanies Tom walking off scene accompanied by the credits.

Houston Findley’s conclusion:

While each of Williams’ characters is being forced to conform to the roles of father (Tom), princess (Laura), Prince Charming (Jim), and wicked witch/fairy godmother (Amanda), their inability to play these roles makes them anti-heroic characters. Thus the playwright subverts out romantic dreams, replacing the illusion with unmistakable reality. (173)

Susan Claire Warshauer writes:

Critics of the 1973 television version of *Menagerie*, directed by Anthony Harvey and produced on ABC, state that the two hour special’s most moving moments occur in the climatic gentleman caller scene in

which Joanna Miles as Laura moves from “dreamy mope into a blossoming radiance” that is short-lived. [...] The scene takes on a heightened importance in reviews, as though it provides the only opportunity for movement in a relatively static plot, the rare chance to build expectation only to have it let down in the realistic action. (173-174)

CHAPTER IV

THE GLASS MENAGERIE 1987

4.1 CAST AND CHARACTERS

The last *Glass Menagerie* adaptation that I will analyze is Paul Newman's film of 1987. Joanne Woodward (Newman's wife) plays Amanda Wingfield, sharing the scene with John Malkovich as Tom Wingfield, Karen Allen as Laura Wingfield and James Naughton as Jim O'Connor. The film competed in the fortieth Cannes Film Festival in 1987 but did not win any award. This version is longer than the other two: almost two hours and ten minutes. The plot respects the play, both in the order of the scenes and in the unhappy epilogue of the story. Here are some production notes taken from "Hollywood's Tennessee: The Williams Films and Postwar America":

The movie version *The Glass Menagerie* released in 1987 is something of an anomaly in the canon of Williams adaptations. It was not filmed for television; nor was it a Hollywood production. The film enjoyed only a limited release (by Cineplex Odeon Films, which financed and distributed the film in its theatres), but was directed by one of Hollywood's major stars of the century (Paul Newman) and starred well-known, established actors Joanne Woodward as Amanda and John Malkovich as Tom. James Naughton (Jim) and Karen Allen (Laura) completed the cast. The stage production originated in Williamstown (with the same cast except for Malkovich), then moved to New Haven before Newman signed on to direct the picture. According to Newman, one of his most compelling reasons for filming the picture was to record the stage performances, especially his wife's extraordinary interpretation of Amanda. [...] The exterior shots were filmed in a New Jersey tenement, and Tony Walton fashioned the set to accentuate the play's sense of confinement. Newman shot the film in sepia tones, cinematically complementing the structure of the memory play, but the director's attempt to adapt a production that had worked so well in Williamstown earned mixed reviews. Most notices focused on Newman's faithfulness to the spirit of the play script, but faulted his "plodding" direction. According to most records, the film grossed less than a million dollars. (290-291)

This chapter will analyze the role of Tom as narrator and the camera shots, in particular fragments of the narration which define the director's intervention in the story.

4.2 THE ROLE OF THE NARRATOR

The camera is fixed in front of some abandoned buildings when a clarinet motif starts, and some confused steps are heard. Tom/John Malkovich appears on scene arriving from behind the camera. He does not seem bothered by the camera, rather he lets it follow him when he tries unsuccessfully to enter a building. Tom continues walking calling the shots; the camera stops as he stops to look directly into camera. Dave Kehr writes: "In the film, Newman 'opens-up' the play only to offer some exterior views of the dank St. Louis apartment in which the action takes place and to give Tom a room of his own". Finally, he climbs a fire escape ladder to reach an uninhabited apartment, where the camera has anticipated him. Here the camera focuses from behind Tom's puzzled expression to pan over the flat; the clarinet motif brings the camera to Tom, who is striking a match to smoke a cigarette. He then addresses the camera to deliver the introductory monologue fully:

TOM: Yes, I have tricks in my pocket, I have things up my sleeve. But I am the opposite of a stage magician. He gives you illusion that has the appearance of truth. I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion. [...] The last we heard of him was a picture postcard from Mazatlan, on the Pacific coast of Mexico, containing a message of two words: "Hello—Goodbye!" and no address...(4-5)

Janet Maslin writes:

Tom, John Malkovich (sic) has the awkward task of switching from the pained, poetic style of the opening narration to a more lightly conversational tone, but he manages this gently and well. Though Tom can be seen as the play's most cryptic character, having been drawn by Williams in such intentionally incomplete terms, Mr. Malkovich brings him fully to life.

Tom introduces himself as the narrator/stage manager of the play who describes the historical background of the story, " [a]nd Tom, who functions as a narrator as well as a character within the play, draws us into the action by, as he says, turning back time" (Hinson). He moves to the window trying to escape the camera sightlines and, to conceal his embarrassment, he hints a sardonic smile when he says: "This is the social background of the play"(5).

He introduces the play and characters mournfully; the camera provides a flashback where Laura and Amanda are represented inside their apartment; Jim is only described and the picture of Tom and Laura's grinning father dominates the wall. The scene returns to Tom sitting on the dusty floor talking about him; he looks downwards or towards the window avoiding the camera. He even helps himself to a liquor flask to face this sad truth when the music slowly fades out.

4.2.1 SECOND MONOLOGUE

Tom's second monologue opens the corresponding scene three of the play; he is still in the abandoned flat, this time leaning against the wall, smoking a cigarette and talking to the audience looking out of the window. He repeats the words of the monologue that this time has been noticeably reduced:

TOM: After the fiasco at Rubicam's Business College, the idea of getting a gentleman caller for Laura began to play a more and more important part in Mother's calculations. It became an obsession. [...] Late that winter and in the early spring—realizing that extra money would be needed to properly feather the nest and plume the bird—she conducted a vigorous campaign on the telephone, roping in subscribers to one of those magazines for matrons called *The Homemaker's Companion*, the type of journal that features the serialized sublimations of ladies of letters who think in terms of delicate cuplike breasts, slim, tapering waists, rich, creamy thighs, eyes like wood smoke in autumn, fingers that soothe and caress like strains of music, bodies as powerful as Etruscan sculpture. (19)

When he says: "It became an obsession", Amanda is seen at her desk "conducting the vigorous campaign on the telephone", with the camera moving from Amanda to Laura, who is sitting on the sofa. When the camera returns to Tom, he is in the bathroom (looks like an outhouse) barely addressing the camera that seems to be chasing him. Despite this, Tom does not lose his sarcasm when describing his mother's prototype buyers; he faces the camera which captures his conclusive sneer.

4.2.2 THIRD MONOLOGUE

This monologue introduces scene five of the play; the cinematic editing has permitted the insertion of Tom's monologue before the dialogue between Amanda and him about the gentleman caller. The scene begins with Tom's reflected image on the window panes that are reflecting the *Paradise Dance Hall* lights. The soft music works as a climax for his speech:

TOM [*to the audience*]: Across the alley from us was the Paradise Dance Hall. On evenings in spring the windows and doors were open and the music came outdoors. Sometimes the lights were turned out except for a large glass sphere that hung from the ceiling. It would turn slowly about and filter the dusk with delicate rainbow colors. [...] All the world was waiting for bombardments! (39)

Tom gives the entire monologue with the camera zooming away from his reflected image, revealing he is on the fire escape landing; the camera tries to catch his glance but he escapes it. He is summing up the events in the Paradise; he ironizes about having witnessed the "couples kissing behind ash pits and telephone poles" (39); Tom feigns an ironical indifference to the world outside. Even though the camera slowly focuses on him, he never looks into the camera. The monologue ends with Tom looking downwards and Amanda calling him twice.

4.2.3 FOURTH MONOLOGUE

Tom is again on the fire escape landing, half hidden by the ladder, holding his flask of whisky, melancholically looking nowhere in particular; this expression disappears as he starts his monologue about Jim, the gentleman caller. The monologue has been cut, in particular the part concerning the years at school. What follows is what remains of the first part: "And so the following evening I brought Jim home to dinner. I have known Jim slightly in high school"(50). Tom walks slowly along the terrace talking about Jim as warehouse worker and his attitude toward Tom:

TOM: He was the only one at the warehouse with whom I was on friendly terms. I was valuable to him as someone who could remember his former glory, who has seen him win basketball games and the silver cup in debating. [...] If he did remember Laura, it was not as my sister, for when I asked him to dinner, he grinned and said: "You know, Shakespeare, I never thought of you as having folks!" (51)

Tom delivers it as a litany in order to be faithful to the words he is pronouncing; Tom depicts himself as the black sheep in front of the audience but, at the same time, Tom's insolence conceals his intolerance of Jim's attitude toward him. He treats Jim as a Good Samaritan who shelters him from the others, but Tom does not care about it. Hal Hinson does not play great compliments to Malkovich's interpretation, when he says:

Malkovich's work is understated, reined-in and just as unconvincing. As Tom, he is a mass of tics and affectations: Even the simplest gesture or line reading becomes an opportunity for him to flaunt his eccentricities.

Tom gets serious again when he talks about Laura. He knows about her interest in Jim and their incompatibility. Tom fools Jim mimicking his tone: "You know, Shakespeare, I never thought of you as having folks!" ending the monologue ironizing about the improbable date.

Dave Kehr writes:

Newman's knowledge of the camera's eye helps Malkovich, too—his Tom represents his best film work, stripped of the mannerisms and straining for effect that have marked his past appearances. Newman has taught Malkovich how to relax on screen: He works casually, gracefully, introducing a hint of his character's homosexuality, and placing dark gravity in the words of his narration that suggests, just enough, that his understanding of the action on the stage goes deeper than he is willing to say.

4.2.4 FIFTH MONOLOGUE

The last monologue starts with Amanda standing at the end of the hallway, upset by the umpteenth quarrel with Tom. She slowly turns away from the camera to join Laura in another room. With the silent image of the two women embracing, Tom starts the farewell

monologue, supported by a moving clarinet theme: “I didn’t go to the moon, I went much further—for time is the longest distance between two places. Not long after that I was fired for writing a poem on the lid of a shoe-box. I left Saint Louis.” (96)

The camera moves to Tom in the deserted apartment; it moves backwards as Tom moves onwards, but he always looks down, as if fearing the camera. He is holding his coat, ready to leave the apartment and his past. He does not seem to notice anything, acting as if to conceal his actual embarrassment when he says: “Perhaps it was a familiar bit of music. Perhaps it was only a piece of transparent glass. Perhaps I am walking along a street at night, in some strange city, before I have found companions.” (97) He looks into camera for a moment before portraying the episode about Laura’s glass animals:

I pass the lighted windows of a shop where perfume is sold. The window is filled with pieces of colored glass, tiny transparent bottles in delicate colors, like bits of a shattered rainbow. Then all at once my sister touches my shoulder. I turn around and look into her eyes.” (97)

He slackens his narration, until he stops talking and moves to the camera. The piano refrain gives the scene more power of suggestion. Tom has lost his aloofness, and is now sweeter; he begs for Laura’s consideration as if to apologize for having abandoned her. He looks away to an indefinite horizon as if to pretend she might be there listening to his words:

TOM: Oh, Laura, Laura, I tried to leave you behind me, but I am more faithful than I intended to be! I reach for a cigarette, I cross the street, I run into the movies or a bar, I buy a drink, I speak to the nearest stranger—anything that can blow your candles out! [...] For nowadays the world is lit by lightning! Blow out your candles, Laura—and so goodbye... (97)

Tom tries to justify himself, closing his eyes when he remembers what he has done to forget Laura. Finally, he invites her to “blow out the candles” begging her to remain in her world of glass animals that shelters her. A solitary teardrop cuts through his face before he catches a deep breath, gives a last glance to his apartment and says goodbye to Laura and to the audience

looking directly into camera, before leaving the apartment. Manavendra K. Thakur writes about Malkovich's performance:

He [Malkovich] virtually reads out loud the famous opening monologue, rendering it a dull and listless speech without much conviction.[...] After lagging for most of the film, his best moment undoubtedly comes as he pours forth his anguish in the closing monologue at leaving his sister, where he improves dramatically (no pun intended) to meet Williams' powerful poetic demands. (8)

4.3 THE APARTMENT

Unlike the other versions of 1950 and 1973, this movie shows the apartment in two different conditions: when it is inhabited by the Wingfields and when it is abandoned, visited by Tom after a long time. Desmond Ryan writes about it: "The camera here is the province of Michael Ballhaus [director of photography], who brings a wonderful contrast to the gaunt light of Tom's narrative scenes and the soft-edged glow in the apartment."

4.3.1 THE ABANDONED FLAT

The apartment is part of what remains of a built up area inhabited by the working class. The window's broken panes and the tattered curtains evoke the desolation of the place; the camera shoots the visual desolation making a panning shot of the flat which only the rays of light illuminate. No piece of furniture has remained. Hal Hinson writes:

Climbing up the fire escape, he finds the apartment abandoned, the windows broken out and the floors cluttered with debris. "The scene is memory and is therefore nonrealistic," Williams wrote in his stage directions at the beginning of the play, and it is from this description that Newman has taken his cue.

In Tom's second monologue, the camera shoots a narrow corner where the sun illuminates the darkened room. The shelves and the coat stand are empty; dust and spider webs are everywhere, and Tom with his dissolute attitude, smoking his cigarette, is perfectly inserted

in this decadent picture. The camera in the bathroom shows spider webs where the washbasin is encrusted with limestone.

When Tom pronounces his monologue on the terrace, the reflected lights of the Paradise Dance Hall make room for the desolate background; indeed, on his left the window's broken panes catch the spectator's eyes as symbolizing the decay of the place.

Tom leans behind the rusted ladder at the beginning of the fourth monologue. As he moves away from it, he walks very close to the exterior wall: it is whitened by the neglect of time. Thereafter, Tom stops in front of the broken window where the panes have become opaque, so as to conceal the house inside.

The last incursion to the "enchanted" flat occurs during Tom's last monologue inside the house; this tracking shot does not spare the inexorable decline of the flat. The decomposition of the house reveals more and more details: the unglued wallpaper, the missing light bulbs of the chandeliers, pieces of plaster scattered on the floor; not even the flower decoration on the wall has been spared by the passage of time. Desmond Ryan writes:

The camera here is the province of Michael Ballhaus, who brings a wonderful contrast to the gaunt light of Tom's narrative scenes and the soft-edged glow in the apartment. In the prologue, Malkovich warns, "I am the opposite of the stage magician." But the truth is that the magic of Williams' play lives on through him.

4.3.2 THE FURNISHED FLAT

It is quite difficult to accept that the "two locations" belong to the same place. Manavendra K. Thakur writes:

The mood of the film established by its set design and lighting is properly somber, with embellishments like fancy costumes and occasional lively music by Henry Mancini creating the aura of contrived yet entirely appropriate elegance. Each wall has been designed separately, and much thought has obviously gone into the decorations and furnishings. (11)

The opening scene shows the small glass table that hosts the Glass Menagerie, the tropical-like plants, the nineteenth-century bedside-lamp and even the father's photograph frame that seem to belong to a middle-class endurance. The dining room displays one big central chandelier and two smaller side lamps. Janet Maslin writes:

[I]n Tony Walton's design, especially cluttered and dim, the lamps themselves are obstacles, frequently coming between the actors and the camera.[...] The feeling of claustrophobia is indeed effective, but it's also unrelieved, which makes the production feel longer than it should.

The living room presents, in addition to the sofa, a little table, a rocking chair and a fireplace (although not a working one), three or four chairs are arranged here and there. The big panoramic window seems to belong to a colonial mansion, but the white curtains hide the distressing view of the buildings in front. The light inside is soft, in a perfect romantic style.

In the daylight, the apartment reveals itself to be shabbier; the sunlight discloses the modesty of the elements that by night light revive the house. The ochre color of the walls metaphorically describes the bleaching of their lives. The ornaments, the white curtains, the flowers in the vases bear witness to the desire to give the flat dignity despite the modest circumstances; minimalism does not reside here. One corner looks like a tropical garden: plants with big leaves and ivy endow the apartment with an exotic atmosphere.

Tom's room looks like a rented room. Wood cladding covers the walls; the bookcase is full of books, reflecting his passion for literature. His clothes are hanging tidily on a coat rack. This room may depict Tom's need of order, minimalism and of course culture. Manavendra K. Thakur writes: "Tom is given his own bedroom for what seems no other reason than to give Newman another room to shoot in." (11) Amanda's bedroom is supplied with a dressing table, inevitable for a vain woman like Amanda. Her "working desk" is piled with bits and pieces demonstrating her absolute confusion.

The bathroom is in wood chalet style; two yellow curtains solve the problem of distinguishing it from the other rooms. Wall lamps alternate with paintings and mirrors adorn the hallway. The flight of stairs with the decorations of the wall banister allude to a possible past elegance, despite the encrusted wall. The terrace outside is supported by iron beams that make it seem precarious; the parapet is rusted and it seems suspended in the air.

The redecoration for the gentleman caller has not changed the furniture so much: two or three vases of jonquils, the silverware and a new tapestry have been enough to refresh the location. As the light goes out, the illumination from the Paradise Dance Hall and the candlelight give a shade of red to the dining room. The last wide shot of the house is the darkened corridor that ends with the big white curtains that illuminate the “white Amanda” who slowly goes through them to disappear.

4.4 THE CAMERA’S POINT OF VIEW

The camera plays an important role in the film; it can be defined the fifth character on scene. It is not just a device; it is a curious and even voyeuristic observer that works in order to surprise the audience. Desmond Ryan writes:

Newman capitalizes on the intense claustrophobia in the rundown St. Louis apartment where Amanda, Tom and Laura eke out a precarious existence. He favors close-ups and camera moves that make the atmosphere positively stultifying.

4.4.1 THE CAMERA CHASES TOM

In the first scene, before Tom enters the abandoned flat furtively, there is a sort of “catch me if you can” game between Tom and the camera. The camera shyly follows Tom, and, finally, he directs a long gaze of approval: the camera is now allowed to keep him company throughout his confession.

The camera anticipates Tom inside the flat; it has the burden of shooting the deserted place and soon it zooms in on Tom's bewildered expression. During the tracking shot, the camera substitutes Tom's eyes in order to enter into the merits of the story. When he starts to speak, the camera simply works at his service.

4.4.2 CAMERA'S PRESENCE ON SCENE

The camera, now materialized in the past, covers the hallway until the living room where Amanda, Laura and Tom are sitting together and having dinner. The camera seems to invade everyone's spaces⁴⁴, trying to catch the odd expression. At the same time, it enhances Amanda when recalling her glorious past at Blue Mountain. This time, the zoom on her face moves the audience to empathize with her memory. It is to be noted that the close-ups on Amanda are innumerable, reminding us that Amanda/Joanne Woodward is the director's wife:

Newman excessively moves his camera around characters and even behind irrelevant objects such as a lamp. [...] In one sequence, the camera voyeuristically peers into the living room through the crack between two partially closed curtains -- but then moves "through" the crack, pans around some characters and objects, and then shows the crack again from inside the living room. It's almost as if the camera were congratulating itself for having flawlessly executed such difficult movement in one continuous take. And on at least one occasion, the camera suddenly lurches forward for a split second before resuming a smoother and even pan. (Manavendra K. Thakur 11)

When Amanda returns home and quarrels with Laura about the Business College, the camera foresees Amanda's intention to tear the paper from the typewriter moving to the typewriter before Amanda in a frantic transition, revealing its omniscience. Manavendra K. Thakur writes: "And on at least one occasion, the camera suddenly lurches forward for a split second before resuming a smoother and even pan." (11)

⁴⁴ It is a morbid filming method utilized in the Italian reality shows; the camera gets closer to the people to listen to what they have to say.

In the same scene, when Laura and Amanda are sitting on the sofa with Laura showing Jim's picture in the yearbook, the camera glides from the back to the front interfering with the intimacy between mother and daughter. As the camera stops in front of them, it slowly closes in on them to capture their expressions.

The camera presence is recognizable by quick movements that seems unimportant for the scene: for instance, the camera follows Amanda picking up a nightshirt when talking to Tom; it also waits for Tom's passage in the hallway when he moves out, stepping aside to make room, and following them to the threshold.

When Tom gives Amanda the good news about the gentleman caller, the camera is filming from a lower perspective in the street and slowly reaches the terrace at the exact moment to record the dialogue about the gentleman caller. When they are inside and Tom talks about Laura's peculiarities, the camera shoots from behind the curtains; it shoots as if it were spying from another room, an uninvited guest.

In Amanda's struggling monologue about the jonquils' episode, the camera concentrates on her face; she is at the center of the scene and, even though Laura is with her, the close-up lets it seem that she is alone talking to herself. The framing moves from Laura's back to her front to catch her reaction as she hears the name "O'Connor"; the camera whirls round and round Laura contributing to accentuate her discomfort. Ben Yagoda writes:

Newman [...] keeps the action in the apartment and hasn't indulged in any fanciful or dubious interpretations. Technically, his camera is straightforward but never uncinematic or dull. The only fancy shot in the film comes when Laura realizes that the gentleman to call that evening is in fact the one boy she ever liked in high school; the camera does a 360 around her face - a nice touch.

When Amanda is entertaining Jim before the supper, the camera shoots the scene from behind the white curtains; it is not Tom's point of view (he has the camera's same perspective), it is the camera's that seems to be overhearing them.

The camera does not hesitate to track from Laura lying on the sofa motionless to the other three characters in the dining room, in particular Amanda, who is gaily chatting. While Amanda is arranging to send Jim to Laura, Laura stands up, observed by the camera from behind the curtains; it forewarns Laura's preoccupation.

Jim joins Laura followed by the camera acting like a third wheel; imperceptibly, it approaches the two who are progressively breaking the ice. When Jim stands up to encourage Laura, the camera shoots from behind the curtains of the living room; Jim is perfectly visible whereas the curtains mask Laura. The camera moves progressively towards the curtains, observing the two now sitting on the sofa talking about High School and then moves forward. Manavendra K. Thakur writes:

[I]t is unfortunate that Newman's camerawork calls too much attention to itself. For example, he badly misuses close-ups by rapidly cutting from Karen to Jim when they first are left alone after dinner. This kinetic editing was probably introduced to spice up the somewhat slow dialogue, but it actually results in unnecessary and disorienting complications that detract from the content being conveyed. Newman partially redeems this scene by emphasizing psychological distance by placing his individual characters on the extreme edges of the 1.85 frame, but using the wider shape of the 2.35 (Cinemascope) frame would have been one possible way to accomplish the same result without resorting to choppy editing between facial close-ups. (11)

When Jim and Laura begin to dance, the camera does not simply shoot them, instead it wobbles with them. Jim's excuses are emphasized by the tracking shot. Laura seems to be placed in the stocks, and her close-up reveals her pain.

CHAPTER V

MY IDEAL *GLASS MENAGERIE*

5.1 ONE DEFINITION FOR EACH CHARACTER

The analysis of the three versions of Tennessee Williams' play has brought me to consider that both directors and actors have made a good job in rendering on screen the disillusioned and resigned atmosphere of the play. Before commenting on the interpretations of the actors, it is important to recap in a few words the traits of each character of the play who has been examined in all of the movies analyzed here.

Regarding Amanda, what emerges from the *pièce* is her continuing coquettish attitude: the word "coquette" describes her very well. She never stops flirting with whomsoever she finds in front of her. Laura, Tom and Jim are objects of her seduction, obviously in different contexts and on different occasions. The keyword for Laura is "shy"; this adjective describes this girl, incapable of living and managing social occasions; it is not a matter of disinterest, rather of resignation; she has given up any attempt to react to her handicap. Indeed, her only "friends" are the inanimate glass animals. Her brother Tom is revealed to be a restless being; Amanda herself defines him with this word: "Why, Tom—are you always so restless?"(33). He always seems to cause all the other characters to blame him for his behavior. Nobody seems to understand him, and he keeps people at a safe distance; movies and books represents for him what the Glass Menagerie is for Laura. He moves as a "splinter group" with no destination: his representative word is "restless". The proper definition for Jim is "resilient". Although he has lost his way along his life after High School, he has found the way to adapt himself to the new tasks of life. He is the only one who has left his past behind in order to invest in his future. He is not the High School boy anymore; unlike Tom, Laura and probably Amanda, he has grown up.

5.2 THE THREE AMANDAS

In the first version of 1950, Gertrude Lawrence portrays her Amanda as a woman full of contradictions: she alternates her resolute stubbornness and pride in the matters of self-satisfaction to naive reactions to Tom's provocations. Mrs. Lawrence's appearance is to be considered the shabbiest of the three, and even the least attractive, but in her favor, she gives her Amanda a fair amount of dignity; it made me sympathize with her, in particular in the scene at the warehouse where she assumes a bourgeois attitude, and in another moment when, understandably, she does not comprehend Laura's satisfaction with the outcome of the date with Jim.

Katherine Hepburn puts herself in the spotlight thanks to her regal appearance and her radiant smile; thanks to this, she is the perfect personification of Amanda Wingfield, the Southern Belle. Unfortunately, in this movie, Laura's and Tom's interpretations have been sacrificed; they seem scared by her proximity. Hepburn seems aware of her charisma as an actress, and she dominates the scene unconcerned for the others in the scene. Hers is an egocentric interpretation in a movie devoted to her.

Joanne Woodward offers the most nagging interpretation of Amanda. Even though she can be considered nicer than Mrs. Lawrence, she does not reach Hepburn's class. On the contrary, her bizarre haircut, her ungraceful walk and her strident voice, contribute to underline the patheticity of Amanda's characterization. In addition, Tom does not suffer her presence passively; rather, he fools her openly, where she does not even notice the joke. Despite being annoying, she is completely harmless.

In conclusion, I consider Joanne Woodward the best personification of Amanda Wingfield. Katherine Hepburn gives her Amanda too much severity, regality and strength, which suffocates the other actors, and Gertrude Lawrence plays the role of the simple person compared to the wise Laura. Joanne Woodward gives her Amanda a personal characterization:

the annoying tone of voice and the incessant complaining and demanding. Her ridiculous haircut contributes to make her a little insane, together with her clumsy walk. She is not naïve; rather she pretends that her coquettish behavior, once strategic, might still be efficient in the present. She still plays the same traps that have entrapped her (and other women) into unhappy marriages. She is ridiculous, as her attempt to turn back time, and even Tom mocks her. To sum up, the audience can only commiserate with her without judging because reality has already judged her.

5.3 THE THREE TOMS

Arthur Kennedy, the “first” Tom is definitely the most handsome of the three; it should be said that his appearance does not fit with the role of a “pushover”; he is too sophisticated to perform a “nerd”. He is not plausible in the role of a man who is not aware of his attractiveness, whose only interest concerns literature, the movies and the Merchant Marine Union. Not even the woman in the bar, who clearly tries to approach him, can soften his intolerance of humanity. Despite these little incoherencies between the character and the actor, Kennedy gives his Tom the right amount of common sense, in particular when confronting his mother’s innuendos; his understandable impatience is balanced with a sarcastic idleness when he is forced to sustain Amanda in her arranging a date for Laura. He even relaxes, playing the unusual role of “househusband”, rendering his Tom less strict and distant.

Sam Waterston, in the version of 1973, represents a Tom closer to reality. Maybe due to the fact that in those years a new generation of actors was emerging; Hoffman, De Niro, Pacino etc. were not beautiful and unattainable Hollywood stars, but common people representing ordinary lives on screen. Waterston, belonging to this category, gives his Tom an appearance easy to identify oneself with; his slender figure together with his melancholic glance helps him to portray the uneasiness of the character. Katherine Hepburn’s suffocating presence helps

Waterston not to give Tom any allusion of serenity. The few smiles are implied by the circumstances such as Jim's presence in the house. However, this Tom is also very attentive and sweet, in particular with Laura and he seems often reluctant to squabble with his mother. He seems to feel sorry for the way he is.

John Malkovich resembles Waterston in terms of physical appearance; they represent both ordinary people and, like Arthur Kennedy, he has a humorous attitude. Malkovich moves away from the other characterizations of Tom because he plays in the monotonous spirit of mockery. Starting from the monologues, he intellectually separates himself from the other characters in order to despise them, in particular Amanda and Jim. He is sardonic, ironic and insolent toward his mother; his cynicism does not leave room for any form of sufferance, or perhaps he pours it into his aloofness. Only with Laura, does he seem to feel a real connection; he protects her and stands by her in a theoretical game of roles against Amanda and Jim, who seem to be the rulers of their lives. Indeed, his only touching moment happens when, in his last monologue, he cries thinking about the sister he had deserted.

Arthur Kennedy offers a convincing interpretation despite his scarce plausibility for the role and John Malkovich personalizes the character too much: I do not see Tom; instead, I see Malkovich playing his Tom with his unmistakable sneer. My ideal Tom has to be Sam Waterston. He does not only play the melancholic attitude to life that a submissive like Tom in his twenties should not feel, but he is able with his nervous gestures and his being round-shouldered to increase Tom's peculiarities; a man who, unlike his father, is not able to find peace, either at home or around the world.

5.4 THE THREE LAURAS

Jane Wyman is the first actress who performs Laura Wingfield on screen in the movie of 1950. Her long-blond hairpiece and the choice of the long gown have give her the features of Walt

Disney's *Sleeping Beauty*. In addition to this, for the date with Jim, she is rouged with a doll-like ribbon on her head. Despite this fairy tale appearance, Wyman performs a sage Laura who is even able to comfort both Amanda and Tom for their misfortunes. The story works for her as a coming-of age story: her reluctance to leave her world of glass animals, visible by her expression of discomfort of listening to her mother's conjectures, leaves room for a new awareness of her as an attractive woman. Wyman offers a measured interpretation, never verging on caricature except for the accentuated lameness.

Joanna Miles, Laura in the version of 1973, is the most ethereal among the three. Physically, she is pale and lean; like Sam Waterston, she is round-shouldered, but what interests us most in her character is her evanescence. Miles gives Laura not only the common characteristics belonging to Laura, such as shyness and introspection, but also she depicts her as living in a rarefied atmosphere invalidating her movements. She seems retarded as if she were not able to comprehend the others. Her face is mono-expressive and she always whispers. When she meets Jim, she remains stiff as if frozen by the emotion and when she is with him after supper she often bends her arms onwards, assuming an unnatural position. She is depicted unfairly, not for Joanna Miles incapacity, but because of the imbalance of roles between her and Katherine Hepburn's majesty.

The movie of 1987 is balanced between Malkovich's mannerism and Woodward's oddity. In all this, Karen Allen plays her role trying to extricate herself from between them. Certainly, Allen maintains the leading features belonging to Laura, such as shyness and detachment, but she crosses the whole movie maintaining herself at the limits of the scene. Her Laura is more recognizable in terms of normality; she dares to disagree with her mother in certain moments, she expresses her reluctance to talk to Jim and faces the date with him with dignity; she does not create her role over-dramatically but through subtraction and simple gestures, she expresses all her discomfort.

Jane Wyman offers a convincing interpretation of Laura, but the happy epilogue of the story invalidates the total meaning of Williams' play; in other words the movie becomes a brand new story and this Laura cannot be considered as a Williams' prototype of woman. Joanna Miles portrays a sort of enchanted Cinderella who, translated into real life, renders her Laura disjointed from reality: it is one thing to depict a clumsy and shy young woman, it is another thing to characterize her like a victim of witchcraft. I think that Karen Allen is nearest to the person of Laura. Even though her acting is a little understated, this behavior helps her to capture Laura's introspection and indifference towards the world beyond her glass animals.

5.5 THE THREE JIMS

Kirk Douglass is the first Jim of the *Menagerie* epic. From his very first scene at the warehouse, his charismatic smile together with his overwhelming optimism let him impose on the other actors around him. Thanks to his strong and masculine appearance, he embodies the ideal gentleman caller every mother would like for her daughter. The genuine determination Douglass translates on screen renders him the ideal spokesperson for the realization of the American dream. There is no trace of bitterness and resentment about his glorious past, rather the will to involve both Tom and Laura in his positivity, indeed his affability can be seen in relation to all the characters, and to Tom he is a really good friend.

In my opinion, Michael Moriarty offers not only the worst interpretation of Jim O'Connor, but also the worst interpretation of all. His character is lacking personality and totally inexpressive, penalized also by his nasal and monochord voice. His chewing gum with his mouth open renders him boorish in front of the poor Laura, and he is not able to create any sort of empathy with Amanda. From the very beginning, the sensation provided is his need to leave the sooner the better. He never relaxes, he moves with rigid movements, most noticeably when he stands up to stretch and see his shadow on the wall. He does not even make the effort

to dissimulate any interest in Tom's problems and Laura's confessions. Only at the end, before leaving the house, does he convey an unconvincing displeasure in informing Laura about his girlfriend Betty, to become then clumsy again like a schoolchild after getting up to some mischief.

James Naughton is the last Jim to be analyzed. Together with Karen Allen he suffers under the lumbering presences of both John Malkovich and Joanne Woodward. Despite this, he offers a portrayal of a mature Jim, both physically and morally. He demonstrates a pragmatism, especially towards Tom, that renders him a sort of older brother who tries to warn him. He patiently complies with Amanda's enthusiasm and he can be considered a *gentleman* for the way he manages his date with Laura. He gives the sensation of an honest interest in the conversation with Laura, never betraying moments of impatience. He seems sorry for the sad outcome of the date. Naughton enters the Wingfields' house as a curious but never judgmental observer of the drama of this family that he is not able to adjust.

It is quite difficult to choose my ideal Jim; it is a tie between Kirk Douglass and James Naughton. Kirk Douglass offers a generous performance, where he incarnates the archetype of the ideal American Boy who resurfaces confident of the future. Although he is unable to save Laura, Douglass' contagious smile and genuine optimism rouses her. From his entrance, Douglass enlightens an atmosphere that was darkened by the other characters' negativity, acting as the torchbearer of the American Dream (the film was made in 1950, five years after the end of the Second World War; there was the need to trust in the future). Naughton plays his Jim in a less enthusiastic tone, he is just the boy Laura had loved once, and he is now Tom's colleague at the warehouse. He represents only a man who finds his own way to get by and tries to believe in it. Naughton enters the scene discretely, willing to encourage both Tom and Laura on their decisions, but ready to take a step backwards as he understands that this family is condemned to self-destruction. I think Naughton is closer to Tennessee Williams' idea of the *Menagerie* characters. Considering the fact that Williams did not approve of the happy

ending of the version of 1950, it is quite reasonable not to consider the Jim played by Kirk Douglass the best one.

In one way or in another, all the characters of *The Glass Menagerie* are miserable beings who try to live their lives in spite of those lives themselves, like Tennessee Williams did throughout his own life.

5.6 LOCATION AND SOUNDTRACK

In addition to the analysis of my ideal actors for the roles, I would like to write a few lines about the setting of the story and the music utilized in the different films.

Of course, the three locations well depict the conditions of tinyness of the Wingfields' dwelling. In particular, in 1950 and 1973 versions, the actors must move in restricted spaces, where for instance, Tom's bed has the double purpose of sofa in the living room. In all three versions, Laura does not have a room of her own to practice her typing, and the only exterior of the house is represented by the fare escape where Tom goes to smoke. Another thing all three movies have in common is the ever-present photo of the father represented by the actor who plays Tom. Although the version of 1987 is richer in terms of home furnishing and decoration, I affirm that the version of 1973 does metaphorically express the claustrophobic sense of suffocation experienced by all the actors, in particular Tom's lack of privacy. He does not have a place of his own to sleep and to write. Plants or laces do not embellish the apartment; instead, the grey-molded walls testify the desolation of the condition of their lives.

Music in the movie plays an important role. In Rapper's version, orchestral music in the background is almost omnipresent, and the *Glass Menagerie* theme (or the so-called) is a merry-go-round refrain more suitable for children's movies or cartoons. The versions of 1973 and 1987 utilizes an unique original theme in the crucial moments, as for instance in Tom's

monologues or for Laura's glass animals. John Barry and Henry Mancini translate into music their personal *Glass Menagerie*, and where Henry Mancini (1987) prefers the utilization of the clarinet spitefully accompanying Tom's monologue, the struggling piano motif offered by John Barry (1973) is the cherry on the cake for the most heartrending depiction of the little glass animals of Williams' play.

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Screen Adaptations

The Glass Menagerie. Dir. Irving Rapper. Perf. Jane Wyman, Gertrude Lawrence, Arthur Kennedy and Kirk Douglass. Twentieth Century Fox, 1950. Film.

The Glass Menagerie. Dir. Anthony Harvey. Perf. Katherine Hepburn, Sam Waterston, Joanna Miles and Michael Moriarty. David Susskind Production, 1973. Film

The Glass Menagerie. Dir. Paul Newman. Perf. Joanne Woodward, John Malkovich, Karen Allen and James Naughton. Cineplex Odeon Films, 1987. Film