

C H A P T E R - I I I

THE CONTEXT OF OTHER HUMAN RELATIONS

As we have already seen the tragic vision of Tennessee Williams covers a wide spectrum of human relationships. If the plays considered earlier deal with the collapse of marital relationship, the plays to be considered in this chapter address themselves to premarital love, lesbian relations, and mother and son relationship. In all these plays there are, of course, other relationships but the tragic vision in each play seems to centre round a dominant relationship which is singled out for critical analysis here.

II

Summer and Smoke, The Eccentricities of Nightingale, The Camino Real, Sweet Bird of Youth, The Milk Train Does Not Stop Here Anymore, and The Night of Iguana deal with man-woman relationship in the context of love. Thus Summer and Smoke explores the relationship of love between Alma and John. The Eccentricities of Nightingale, which is but a revision of Summer and Smoke also explores the same theme. In both the plays Tennessee Williams emphasises the tragedy of idealist passionate love pitted against pragmatic, down to earth kind of intelligence.

Summer and Smoke (1948) is a tragedy of Alma, the singer. The play opens with the innocent feelings of the two children, Alma and John. We see Alma's love for John. John asks her about 'eternity' and she answers,

It's something that goes on and on when life and death and time and everything else is all through with.¹

Alma's parents are worried about John's relationship with Alma as they discover it be a gossip topic. Alma's parents try to warn her. This family of the Winemillers is a Minister's family. The Reverend tries to consol and set her on the right path. This daughter -father relationship is an ideal one till the end of the play.

The major relationship in Summer and Smoke is the pre-marital relationship of love. John- Alma, John- Nellie, John- Rosa; these three exemplify this relationship. Since their childhood; John and Alma have been together but Alma's nature is different and she herself is conscious of these differences :

I'm afraid that you and I move in different circles.²

John hurts her feelings but he really likes her. He always calls her 'Doppelganger'. John is a young doctor and is not on good terms with his patients. Alma's mother rebukes Alma about John's character. Mrs.Winemiller calls John, 'not fit to be a doctor'. Alma is informed in the literary club by Mrs.Basset, "Have you fallen for him Alma? They tell me he has lots of new lady patients".³

Alma is nervous and decides to visit John for a check up. John repeatedly tells Alma to forget that she is a daughter of minister and tries to make her forget, tells her,

There are other things between man and a woman besides respect there's such a thing as intimate relations.⁴

But Alma's ideas about love are different. According to her, man-woman relationship is more than physical union.

Some people bring just their bodies. But there are some people, who can bring their hearts to it, also - who can bring their souls to it.⁵

Alma is not ready to believe him as 'gentleman'.

In the smoke part of the play we see Rosa Gonzales and John getting married. In the party Dr. Buchanan, John's father insults Rosa and her father. At this juncture Mr. Gonzales shots him dead. And in this way, Rosa's affair comes to an end.

Alma is the only consoler to John at his father's death. She is disappointed to see Nellie and John together. John gives Nellie a description of Alma in the following terms.

She came in the house that night like an angel of mercy.⁶

John accepts Alma as a high, noble lady but not as his wife. This is a blow to Alma. She asks John:

Why did I fail? Why did you almost come close enough - no closer? 7

Nellie and John have come closer. The situation reaches its climax when Nellie requests Alma to sing at their wedding.

In this play, Williams has shown three kinds of man-woman relationships. John-Rosa relationship ends in the death of John's father, Nellie wins John, and the relationship between Alma and John is destroyed.

Alma is lonely. She describes her situation as 'darkness'. Williams' portrayal of Alma is supreme. High noble qualities in Alma never reach the practical attitude of either Rosa or Nellie. John loves Rosa for her money, he loves Nellie for her beauty, and his love for Alma is for her soul, heart. Though John prefers Nellie, Alma still loves John. She is a woman whose love is of 'platonic kind'. Williams has shown that John has perfect American practicality. But Alma stands supreme throughout the play.

Summer and Smoke is often called tragedy for Alma's noble qualities are lost at the hands of John, a practical young doctor.

In The Eccentricities of Nightingale (1965) again the same theme is handled by Williams as in his previous play Summer and Smoks. He has modified it by making a few minor changes. But the characters, plot and the familial relationship do not change at all. The whole action revolves round Alma Winemiller, the singer, artist.

Alma loves John Buchanan, a doctor whose mother does not like her son's lingering for Alma. Her feelings for John are often interrupted by his mother. But John teases her snowy and dreamy look, he says :

The snow reminds me of an old proverb. Before you love, you must learn how to walk over snow, and leave no foot prints.⁸

John- Alma relations are not on equal basis. Alma's intense feelings remain the same and John does not understand her ideal love. Alma is eccentric, as people call her. Her father frequently warns about her eccentricities. Her going to the square with breadcrumbs, which she offers for the starving birds is an example of this. Her old father is worried about her behaviour and scolds her:

Little things like that an accumulation of them, Alma little habits, little mannerisms, little - peculiarities of behaviour- they are what get people known, eventually as eccentricities ! And eccentric people are not happy, they are not happy people.⁹

She often faints, gets hysteric attacks and is distressed by the comments of people.

Alma is 'nightingale of the delta' and she herself says that she is 'divinely appointed' to sing. The whole play describes her feelings for John, her love for singing, her faith in God and above all her eccentricities.

Man- Woman relationship is the central theme of this play. Alma's adolescent love, her excessive passion and wish for John and to be like her aunt, who died for her lover, emphasize her ideal character.

Alma knows Mrs. Buchanan's expectations for her daughter-in-law. She comes to the club meeting in a rectory and takes back John. This incident hurts Alma all the more. She directly tells John that he would marry a Northern girl, rich and beautiful. John admires her daring and says :

Few people there are that dare in this world to say what is in their hearts.¹⁰

Throughout the play this relationship stands at the apex. Alma's ideal love for John and her need to express it, gradually develop in the play. She tells John about her love:

It had begun that early, this affliction of love, and it is never let go of me since, but keep on growing and growing.¹¹

At last she realises that John is not going to marry her, so hopes for at least one day's or even one hours living with John- Alma's wish is intense, on the contrary John is nervous. Alma is honest, she asks John -

Alma : Where did the fire come from?

John : No one has ever been able to answer that question.¹²

As Alma is a Spanish word for soul, Alma's Platonic love remains without understanding from John and his mother. John is a doctor and the bed room seems to him like a room in hospital. John and his mother are practical, pragmatic. The play is thus about pragmatic John and idealist Alma.

Tennessee Williams reworked the short play, Ten Blocks on the camino Real and the longer version Camino Real came on the stage in 1953. It is his attempt to give to the audiences, his own sense of something wild and unrestricted, the transforming images of a dream.

Camino Real is a kind of dead end street, a grand avenue that has deteriorated, where the inhabitants are desperate transients. All that is decent is gradually destroyed. It is also a world where the power of money makes sincerity, love or kindness impractical. The rich suffer from fatigue and boredom and they furtively ask questions as if they were fingering pornographic postcards. Death symbolized by busy and giggling street cleaners, is treated

with indifference or cynicism. There is no compassion on Camino Real, for there word 'brother' is forbidden and even the wild birds have been tamed and put in cages. It is a world viewed by a man sick of everything and of himself as well.

Gutman manipulates the sixteen short scenes in a way imitative of the stage manager in Thornton Wilder's Our Town. Casanova's love for Margurite Gautier which is not returned, one of the few heartening relationships in the play. Lord Byron sings of human heart and the role of the poet.

Most of the women seem to be aging prostitutes. Margurite is old prostitute. Rosita continually pulls down her blouse to expose her sagging breasts. These are Williams' sex peddlers. Margurite is a fine character among them. In her loneliness she turns to the mortally ill Casanova, and offering herself to another man shows her moral downfall.

The main character Kilory, becomes an easy mark for the roughnecks on Camino Real. Kilory's escape from Camino Real is a scene, obviously written for the box office. This scene is comic and sensuous.

The relationship between Esmeralda and Kilory is the only one to mention in. Kilory is successful in the virginity proving scene. Esmeralda is also happy in choosing Kilory. This play has short blacks, no regular plot or characters.

But Williams' surrealistic handling in the play is the main feature of it. Camino Real portrays a decadent world of man-woman relationship in which genuine love is impossible.

Williams' Sweet Bird of Youth (1959) is more mature than The Glass Menagerie. The characters herein are psychologically conscious of their motifs. As the play opens, Chance Wayne, and The Princess Kosmonopolis are seen together. The princess is older than Chance but still hopes for youth and youngman's company. She is a rich and sophisticated actress and a business partner of some studios. Chance the young man of late twenties works for her, only for her money. It is a mutual contract. The princess' real name was Miss Del Lago and she has adopted this name as she wants to be away from society. She is hungry for sexual affairs, in fact, Chance hates her but she threatens him to remove from her services. Once Chance records her real business and tries to get money by black mailing and makes her listen to the tape he has recorded. He wants money and there is a vital reason for it.

The play opens in a hotel at St.Cloud, which is a native place of Chance. But for certain reasons he had left St.Cloud before ten years. George Scudder, a doctor and Chance's friend informs about the danger of his presence there and tells him about Heavenly, the girl with whom he has slept when she was fifteen and he was seventeen.

Heavenly, the loving daughter of Boss Finley loves Chance still. She has suffered a lot and has undergone an operation by Dr.Scudder. Boss Finley, therefore, wants to take revenge with the help of his son, Tom Junior. They try to kill Chance but without any success. The play ends with the departure of princess giving Chance his original girl Heavenly.

The inter-personal relationships among the characters of this play should be keenly observed. Both brother and sister know that their father is a notorious imposter but as he wields political influence they obey him. Heavenly hates her father for not allowing her to marry Chance as he is poor. This has made her a hysteric patient. She exposes her father in the following words :

You married for love, but you wouldn't let me do it, and even though you'd done it you broke Mama's heart. Miss Lucy had been your mistress.¹³

She thus reproches her father since he does not allow her to choose her lifemate. She further explains: '

You tried to force me to marry a fifty year old money bag that you wanted something out of.¹⁴

Heavenly is emotional and abnormal because of her frustration and laments for her love, 'Chance tried to compete, make himself big as these big shorts; you wanted to use me for a bond with. He went. He tried. The right doors

wouldn't open, and so he went in the wrong ones. This clarification of Heavenly clears her deep love for Chance still. For Chance, she accepts even the operation but as he is away kicked away by her father, there is no other way. She thinks him false, a liar. The play thus shows the authoritative role of the father in a love relationship. Boss Finley values to money and not love. Heavenly hates her father and Finley, for his own prestige, tries to kill Chance.

Like Heavenly, Tom also reproches his father. But he wants his money, his valuable influence and political weight. Tom knows more than his sister. He plainly says, 'Papa you are UNJUST'.¹⁵

Both, Finley and Tom expose each other, Tom has indulged in illegal activities but Finley's influence saves him. On the other hand Boss Finley is a sophisticated imposter. He has a 'voice of God' but Tom exposes his illicit relationship with Lucy and he quotes for him a remark made by Lucy, 'Boss Finley is too old to cut the mustard' Both, Tom and Finley are same in nature. Finley wants to make use of his son and Tom for the sake of money obeys his father. Their attitude is practical. Morally both of them are corrupt.

Tom- Heavenly relationship is also a vitiated one. Tom wants to kill his sister's love for the sake of money,

though both are united in exposing their father. In the general context of these relationships the relationship between Heavenly and Chance stands prominently.

Chance is alone and away from home for the last ten years. He could not be present at the time of his mother's death. The church took up a collection for hospital and funeral expenses. Chance hates his mother, "She's gone, why talk about her?"¹⁶

The difference is that Chance hates his mother and Heavenly is proud of her mama. Like Alma in Summer and Smoke her love for Chance never abates. She is also an ideal lover who gives values Chance more than her father. She tries to save Chance and suggests him to leave St. Cloud immediately. Thus, Heavenly sacrifices her life for her lover- Chance.

Chance- princess come closer for certain reasons. Both love youth and want to live together. The Princess is rich and with her monetary power she does anything. Chance hates this old lady but pretends for the sake of money.

In Tennessee Williams there are two major types of frustration, the sexual and the economic, and often these two are interrelated. The princess is frustrated in her life and wants to be a young bird forever. She is sexually frustrated.

Chance is frustrated because of her economic position and works for money. This has brought them together. Sexual and financial relationships are interrelated in this play.

The whole action in the play moves round these two points. The Princess, Lucy and Finley are sexually affected and they are of loose morals. Heavenly, Chance and Dr.Scudder are the victims of economic power, though they have high morals. Chance is haunted by the idea of to be rich as Finley has kicked him out of town.

The tragic vision in this play thus deals with the impossibility of the realization of love between Heavenly and Chance. In the general collapse of values characterised by money and power, Heavenly provides a positive point of reference. In this, she is very much like Alma in Summer and Smoke.

The Milk Train Does Not Stop Here Anymore is a major play by Williams in the later phase. In the prologue of this play, we are informed that Mrs.Goforth is 'mythological monster'. Mrs.Goforth is a rich and vehement lady, who is proud enough of having had three husbands. But she still has the name of the first husband- Goforth- All these men were rich. Now she is old and about to die. Her life is run only on medicines, which every now and then she takes.

Miss Blackie is her secretary who has to live these day and night as Mrs.Goforth dectates her memoirs: which are 'first hand' and 'frank'. She dictates her life experiences in original form. Blackie is not happy with this job but for the sake of a good salary she manages it. Moreover, she hates Mrs.Goforth.

The action of the play starts as soon as Chris arrives. The watchdogs on the mountain top scratch him and tore his clothes. He receives a cold welcome. After detaintion Mrs.Goforth meets Chris, the poet - a philosophical poet, who is a devotee of a Hindu Swami. She does not respond to Chris.

Mrs.Goforth often observes witches and there is a semblance between them. She says :

A witch and a bitch always dress up for each other, because, otherwise the witch would upstage the bitch, or the bitch would upstage the witch and the result would be havoc.¹⁷

She is proud of her beauty, which tempted as many men as possible. The 'natural oriental' breast is her major asset. But now being old, everything is fading up and she is not ready to accept the truth. Practically, everything is memory to her. She speaks to the witch about her inner conflict. Chris tells her the gospel of his coming and informs that for that Hindu Swami he killed- a man. He has come to help Mrs.Goforth, to make her death easy. But she fears death, evil. She says :

Devil can be driven out of the heart, because evil is not a person; evil is a thing that comes sneaky - Sneaking into the heart of a person, and takes it over : a mean intruder, a squatter.¹⁸

Chris prepares her mind to die as everything is over for her in this world and in the last scene she dies.

There are three major characters, Chris, Mrs.Goforth and Blackie. Mrs.Goforth refers her husbands whom she used as an instrument for her position. The man- woman relationship get clearer after Chris' arrival. Chris- Goforth relationship has no selfishness. Chris leads her to easy death. Chris is in need of money and Mrs.Goforth is in need of such a consolence. And Chris is successful to complete his mission.

Mrs. Goforth lives alone. Money cannot bring her solace. She says to Blackie :

Wind, cold wind clean, Release ! Escape from -
I'm lost, blind, dying. Blackie don't leave me
alone.¹⁹

She tries to forget her past, her husbands, her affairs. She has named her cottage at the beach as 'The oubliette' - a place where people are put to be forgotten. This loneliness has made her neurotic, more introvert and panic stricken. Chris has understood the 'meaning of silence'. He continues and not stop anymore. He has come with an idea, "The earth is a wheel in a great big gambling casino' . This Chris- Goforth relationship is successful in

the end. The theme of loneliness in Mrs. Goforth and the experiences of Chris about dying are the two major features of this play.

The Night of Iguana represents man- woman relationship outside the familial context. The play takes place in the summer of 40s; in a hotel - Costa Verde, in a tropical area. A group of ladies from a baptist college comes there and the action starts. Rev. Shannon, the manager of the tour is sexually, morally insane. He has illicit relations with Charlotte, one of the girls on the tour but he refuses her. Maxine, the manager of the hotel knows Rev. Shannon well. She is also trying to catch hold of Shannon.

Two major incidents take place after this. A group of German travellers enters the hotel for enjoyment. The other is that Nonno and Miss Hannah arrive there. Nonno is an old poet and his granddaughter Hannah is a painter. Nonno cannot complete a single poem till the play ends. It is symbolic. Hannah is middle aged and the only supporter of Nonno. He explains about her :

I am a selfish old man, so I've kept her all to myself. She isn't a modern flapper. She isn't modern and she was brought up to be a wonderful wife and mother.²⁰

Both Nonno and Hannah are artists. She draws men, observes them and moves from place to place. There is a

certain reason for her behaviour. She describes her personal happening in her life to Shannon. At the same point Nonno's poem is completed. Thus Shannon and Hannah come closer. But Hannah is different from other women in the play.

Feminine Jealousy is also found in this play. Maxine tries to get Shannon but when she knows that Hannah too is interested in Shannon, she warns her to leave the hotel. Besides this, Shannon has affairs with Charlotte, a teen aged girl who wants that Shannon should marry her. The same happens with Latta. Therefore, Maxine tries to remove everybody from Shannon. Like Valentine Xaviers in Orpheus Descending, Shannon has also a special masculine ego. But in the end, Shannon is warranted for the seduction of young girls.

The powerful relationship between Shannon and Hannah ends with Shannon's confession. Hannah does not allow him to run away. She however, tells him about her love experiences and makes him aware of her holy position. Shannon, is tied up, as his mental condition is weak. Both Shannon and Hannah are abnormal. Shannon's relations with other women are not powerful.

The other important incident in the play is that of Iguana. The German group brings Iguana and ropes under the Verandah. It is symbolic. Maxine, with the help of others, ropes Shannon as he is not in a proper condition. Shannon points out that like the Iguana he too is 'Scuffling under

the Verandah'. Iguana is trying to get free and Shannon is also requesting Hannah to release him. He is philosophic now, and says,

See, the iguana, at the end of its rope, trying to go on past the end of its goddam rope ! Like you ! Like me !²¹

The Night of Iguana thus deals with man- woman relationship, outside the marriage.

III

The four plays, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Something Unspoken, The Mutilated and Small Craft Warning provide in contrasting terms a tragic focus on two kinds of human relations, homosexual and ^{those between women .} ~~heterosexual~~. In these plays, Tennessee Williams shows how the characters remain basically mutilated because of their homosexual or ^{extreme} ~~heterosexual~~ desires. The main focus is thus on the tragic loneliness of such people, and their desperate but unsuccessful attempt to find a meaningful relationship.

Cat on a hot tin roof shows the collapse of a young man, Brick. The collapse is caused by the breaking of his homosexual worlds. Beneath a hot tin roof^f, on an oppressive summer's day, in a roasting room, Brick and Margaret Politt face each other. These characters have usual familial relations - that is husband and wife. Brick is addicted to

liquor as his friend with whom he had had homosexual relations is dead. Margaret wants a child by her husband and tense because of enforced continence, turns her thoughts toward bed. The play begins with a young lady getting undressed, the major action concerns that lady attempting to persuade a young man to put an end to her celibacy, and the play ends with the prospect of immediate success.

The whole action revolves round this husband and wife relationship. Williams has shown the interpersonal relations between them so as the tension- the tragic tension is stretched. Brick is afraid that he is homosexual, and this fear explains a great deal of the past and present action. He remembers his friend who is no more and is disgusted with even the mention of sex. " that kind of talk is disgusting" he says when Maggie describes Bid Daddy admiring her body when his father talks of having pleasures with women, "Brick's smile fades a little but lingers". Even Brick advises Maggie, the cat, to take a lover and this is a justification for his homosexual fears. Since his friend Skipper was homo, Brick doubts this. In fact, Maggie realises that Brick is not homosexual. But his internal fear makes him aware of that.

The real conflict is between Big Daddy and Brick. This relationship is a loaded one. These relations are based upon certain self images. Big Daddy is authoritative and

really big in the family in every respect. He knows his son better. On the contrary Brick's internal struggle, because of his lack of masculine power gives him a certain inferiority complex. Big Daddy is authoritative, superior as everybody respects him. At the centre of the play, however, is the homosexual relationship between Brick and his friend Skipper, who is no more. Skipper's death has left Brick totally isolated and made him incapable of facing life. Williams' tragic vision in this play thus deals with loneliness which is the product of a homosexual relationship terminated by death.

Something unspoken consists of only two characters, Cornelia Scott and Grace Lancaster tells much of 'unspoken'. Cornelia is a rich southern Spinster and Grace- her secretary. Cornelia is haunted by the idea of her image in the society. She wants always to be at the top of the social institution. She warns Esmeralda on telephone that she will accept only Highest Post; and not Vice- Regency.

They are celebrating Fifteenth anniversary of Grace's coming to Cornelia. She exposes Cornelia but in all these years " some things are better left unspoken" Grace says, " Also I know that when a silence between two people has gone on for a long time it's like a wall that's impenetrable between them ! May be between us such wall ! "²²

Cornelia is proud of her estates and wants people should bow in front of her, but people 'feel her force' and they admire her. Grace is different from Cornelia. Grace's estimation of Cornelia makes her introvert; and we see, something change at the end of the play. Cornelia is defeated in the election^{and} resigns her post.

This lesbian relationship in the play is striking. Grace is 'outspoken' and Cornelia wants it to be 'unspoken'. The unspoken is that which ranges from repressed desire for a lesbian relationship to seething hatred between the two ladies. The ambiguities of a love-hate relationship between them are explored in this way. This short play brings out the peculiar mind of a southern lady, who is spinster and lonely. The play ends with status-quo, that is their relationship continues, unaltered.

The Mutilated (1966) is one more play that Williams revised. It was previously titled as Slapstic Tragedy, but after its initial failure Williams presented it with some changes.

It is a story of the mutilated people. Celeste-Trinket, both are mutilated but everyone tries to show that they are not so. ~~The play does begin with a lesbian relationship~~ Celeste and her brother Henry are outside the hotel and he warns her not to come home as she has spoilt the name of their family. She comes in the Silver hotel, which is a

place for illegal activities. Celeste threatens to expose everybody, it is a sort of black mailing. Trinket shows her purse and tells that she helps loyal friends. But Celeste knows Trinket well and does not believe in her.

We know, from Trinket's Soliloquy, that she is going to forget the name Agnes Jones, by which name. She is publicly disgraced. But now she is repentant and hopes for a lover, an established marital relationship. She says :

I'll find him tonight he'll be beautiful ! Perfect ! perhaps he will be kind, evenso kind I can tell him about my mutilation.²³

She is in a mood of confession. As she is disturbed, wants to walk upon fresh snow. Trinket does not want Celeste as her friend and avoids. But Celeste snatches her purse when Trinket calls her, "That woman is criminal, shoplifter, a convicted Klepto" ²⁴

Trinket wants to start a new life. She tries to catch Slim as her lover by showing him photographs with high personalities. She says to Slim :

Now I am no longer in public relations at all, it seems like another life in another world to me.²⁵

But Trinket's original nature does not change, she takes Slim's purse. Both Slim and Celeste call her 'mutilated'.

There is a sort of competition among them to prove their being not 'mutilated'. Both are mentally abnormal. Once again Celeste refuses Trinket's friendship.

The only difference in these two women is that Trinket is a sophisticated 'mutilated' woman and Celeste is a natural whore. The relation does not stop a here. They go to church at the time of X-mas Carols. Celeste, who is in trance, shows Trinket 'Mother's Robe' and tells her that Mother has opened door for them. She tells the audience :

We all have our mutilations, some from birth, some from long before before birth, and some from later in life, and some stay with us forever.

The play ends with the theme that the world of the mutilated does not change at all, even though they want to change, they have no other alternative except to be in it. The play, therefore, describes a ~~lesbian~~ relationship which has^a severe mutilating effects on both the women.

Small Craft Warning (1972) is Williams' artistic presentation dealing with the lesbian relationship between Leona and Violet.

The play opens in a bar of Monk, when DoC practices without any license. Violet is waiting there, she sings:

The wheel of fortune²⁶
Keeps turning around.

And these lines expose her character. She is a fragile, pale creature who looks as if she is made of 'the bones are dissolving her'. She weeps easily. Leona sees her as a kind of water plant because Violet seems to float, mentally and physically, from one temporary protector to another. Her frequent companion is Steve, who cannot afford to marry her but buys her junk- food meals, in exchange for her favours. Her fingernails are dirty but 'she's got some form of religion in her hands'.

In contrast to Violet, Leona remains the central character. She is a beautician, sensitive to beauty. Leona is compassionate but her own values are absolute. She tries to prevent the drunken 'doc' from delivering a baby illegally but offers to help the young baby. She chases Violet twice into the ladies room where she protects herself. She makes Violet aware of her position and asks.

" Are you thrown out, evicted? A lady of the street?"²⁷
 Leona tells her not to be depressed and conscious. She attacks and says about her:

The bitch dying of malnutrition, but is she human?
 She's just a parasite creature, not even made out
 of flesh. She always looks like the bones are
 dissolving in her.²⁸

It was the death day of Leona's brother who was a Violin player. Weakness, anemic condition made him to good bye this world. Leona is more emotional on this point. Her

love for brother is striking one in her rash personality.

Violet's tear stained and tranced face in the dark Consoles Leona. This shows that, a relationship between them has a common ground of affection. Leona is 'self supporting', decent and clean, on the contrary Violet is dirty and parasite.

Leona comes along with police to stop Doc from illegal operation but he runs away before their arrival. Once again Leona Chases Violet, who is in a pitiable condition and has lost everything. Consumption of liquor has made her a whore.

Violet asks for Shelter to Monk, the barowner. He is the 'monk' who listens to their confessions and he himself "confesses" that they "take place of a family in my life". He tells Violet to take bath and be clean 'in and out'.

Like Kingdom of Earth, this play also deals with a woman's struggle for survival at any cost. Williams' portrays Violet struggling for existence. All these characters are funny and lovable of course, "We are all like these characters, small craft on the sea of life".²⁹

IV

The Glass Menagerie (1944) is a memory play~~s~~ having with autobiographical account. Amanda, Laura and Tom are the members of Wingfield family. Jim O'connor, the gentleman caller is a nice ordinary young man.

The family pattern in this play has the usual base of primary relationship. Amanda, the mother of the Wingfields,

Tom and Laura, is a little woman of great but confused vitality clinging frantically to another time and place. She represents the southern woman. She is a tender mother and her love for betterment of both her children is genuine. There is much to admire in Amanda and as much to pity. Certainly, she has endurance and a kind of heroism. Sometimes her foolishness makes her unwittingly cruel at times. She has an art of conversation which she showed in her 'seventeen'. In this age also she has the same dreamy ideas and expects the same from Laura.

Laura is not at all different from Amanda, her mother. Both fail to establish contact with reality, continue to live vitally in their illusions. The situation of the daughter is graver than that of the mother. A childhood illness has left her crippled, one leg slightly shorter than the other, and held in a brace. Physically Laura is more submissive than her mother. Stemming from this, Laura's separation increases till she is like a piece of her own glass collection, too exquisitely fragile to move from the shelf.

Both, Amanda and Laura are lost in their own world of dreams. Amanda always remembers her youth and memories of young days. She has forgotten that it was past and in reality she should forget it and accept the present, the real one. But Williams presents Amanda in her glorious memories of the past though she lives in the world of reality.

Laura is no less tragic than her mother. At least her mother is physically fit but Laura is deformed. The chain which joins both mother and the daughter is their imaginative mind, the dreamy world and glorious past. Laura lives in a world of illusions which are shown broken in the end. She fails to win Jim O'connor, the gentleman caller. Laura knows this and frankly tells her mother :

It isn't a flood, it is not a tarando. Mother, I'm just not popular like you were in Blue Mountains...^{3e}

The narrator of the play and Amanda's son, Tom has a different place in this play. He is a poet with a job in a warehouse. He is not remorseless but to escape from the trap, he has to act without pity. He realises and recognises reality. He never forgets that he lives in the present. Neither like his mother in the past nor as his sister who hopes for better future, Tom accepts reality. Amanda is not ready to discharge the past. In fact, Tom tries repeatedly to bring his mother in the world of reality. But Amanda fails to face the reality. Tom is a brave young man of New America having a look of foresight on future. He tries to maintain the balance between past and present. He is realistic. Tom brings gentleman Caller for his meak and crippled sister, as he is practical man. His expectations are not high.

Amanda warns Tom to rise and shine and succeed, which is a common American dream. But she fails to stand Laura in the harsh realities of the world. Life is a 'spartan endurance'

for Amanda but she herself is away from it. Her expectations are cleared in the gentleman Caller scene, which ends nervously as Laura faints and Tom prays to God :

For these and all thy mercies
God's holy name be praised.³¹

Tom's relationship as a son and as a brother is perfectly balanced. His mother represents the dead past Laura stands for an impossible future while only Tom faces the present.

Williams' Suddenly Last Summer (1958) is a curious modern fable, which is set in a wealthy old woman's living room which looks out upon an exotic jungle garden in New Orleans. It gives a surrealist impression of another kind of hell- another appalling glimpse into Williams' own southern Gothic.

It is the story of a southern aristocrat and her forty year - old son as it is reported by Catharine Holly, a girl who never resisted telling the truth. Mrs.Venables-Sebastian's mother, tells the memories to the doctor. His garden is planned and designed as his own life. She further tells :

My son was looking for God and I stopped myself because I thought you'd think, on a prententious young crackpot - which Sebastian was not.³²

Sebastian used to say that he has seen God and after that he had a fever, he was delirious with. He meant that God shows a savage face to people and shouts some fierce things at them. Mrs. Venable offers her funds to a charitable trust and not to her relatives.

Catharine, the eye witness to the death of Sebastian is unconscious and shocked after his death. A letter written to Catharine tells more of Sebastian's mind.

We're all of us children in a vast kindergarten trying to spell God's name with the wrong alphabet blocks.³³

Catharine's relatives tell her not to reveal how Sebastian died. But the doctor, who is called for this special purpose, wants Catharine alone to ask questions. Instead of his mother Sebastian takes Catharine in the last summer on tour, where he died.

Sebastian liked her so Catharine loved him and in a motherly way tried to save him, from completing a sort of 'image', a sort of 'sacrifice' a cruel. The relationship between Catharine and Sebastian is at the centre of the play. Besides her relations with another man Sebastian made her aware of her loneliness. He was, as Cathy says :

Affectionate with me, so sweet and attentive to me, that some people took us for a honeymoon couple until they noticed that we had separate rooms.³⁴

Sebastian had a feeling for Catharine and he purchased many things for her, as she felt that she turned into a 'peacock'. But the very season he was restless as Catharine responded him. She says :

I made the mistake of responding too much to his kindness of appreciating. It was more than he wanted me to and Suddenly Last Summer he began to be restless. I was not able to keep the web from breaking..... I saw it breaking but couldnot save or repair it.³⁵

He is 'fastidious' . He purchases a transparent bathing suit and forces her to wear on the beach. The truth of his death is like a fable- a surrealistic one . That day, the crowd annoys them and he gets irritated. The music "'Oompa ! Oompa ! Ooompa ! ' a sound like 'tuba' made him restless. The sound came nearer and nearer. It made him sick. He felt it 'as if a huge white bone had caught on fire in the sky and blazed so bright and turned the sky and under white with it."³⁶

Both Sebastian and Catharine started running down the hill. She asked him to go back but he refused to return to that filthy place. While crossing the steep rock he got palpitation, panic. But the music was louder. The band followed them. He screamed and ran half way up the white hill. Catharine ran down the hill to call people but when returned she found Sebastian disappeared. He was lying naked against the white wall and nobody could believe it, they devoured parts of him. What was left of him that looked like a big

white paper wrapped bunch of red roses had been torn, thrown, crushed ! Thus the fatal blow ended Sebastian's life.

The fable expresses curious love ending in death. This is a drama of changing puritanism. The charming, gay Sebastian changed suddenly, last summer- deserted the smart fashionable places and began to frequent Shabby little restaurants and crowded beaches. Violently " last summer " it happened. Sebastian's pleasure seeking came to an inexorable conclusion a horrouing end which forced his beautiful young cousin to the brink of madness and drove his doting mother to seek a swift and terrible vengeance. The play thus describes Sebastian's tragedy, the context of two relationships; his love relationship with Catharine and his relationship with his mother.