Chapter-II

BROKEN PIECES AND RESURGENCE TO LIFE:
The Glass Menagerie and The Rose Tattoo

Williams is the most prolific writer of 1940' and 1950. The Glass Menagerie was successfully staged in Chicago on 26th December, 1944 and in New York on 31st March, 1945 and ran more than a year. Williams won New York Drama Critics circle Award in 1945 for his play 'The Glass Menagerie' and Tony Award for 'The Rose Tattoo' in 1952. The Glass Menagerie is a memory play, a sub due nostalgic family portrait as Elia Kazan aptly said:

Everything in his life is in his plays and everything in his plays is in his life”.

The play emphasizes that most of the characters are not ready to accept their responsibilities and the reality of the world. Mr. Wingfield deserts his family and Mrs. Wingfield takes all the responsibilities of the family but she is more into her beautiful past. She is very much engrossed into the world of dream and stands unaware of the future of her children's and their troublesome lives. To sketch such kind of characters, the author expresses his view as such:
"I have always been interested in creating a character that contains something crippled ...... who were frightened of life, who were desperate to reach out another person."\textsuperscript{1}

Williams is very much influenced by the contemporary concern with psychological problems. In his early phase we find that virtues are awarded and guilty people are condemned and punished for their deeds. He is less a psychologist rather than a moralist.

Arthur ganz feels:

“he is a moralist, a special kind of sexual moralist, whose creation are judged virtuous only if they owe their allegiance to sexual impulse.”

In \textit{The Glass Menagerie}, both the female characters refuse to confront the reality of the world. Amanda roams in her past and Laura in her own image of present. Laura withdraws herself from the world of reality and makes her confined in her own world of collecting the glass articles. Critics find that Laura's withdrawal is "more deadening than Amanda's, however, she is completely self-centered, Amanda is at least trying to hold the family together, economically and spiritually."\textsuperscript{3}

Laura's wilful withdrawal from grown-up world to childlike world of her glass menagerie is her denial of maturity. Collection of glasses is a symbol of her childlike nature. Bigsby writes, "Laura's wilful withdrawal into child-like world of her menagerie derives its sad irony precisely from the fact that is a denial of her own maturity, of time."\textsuperscript{4} Her wilful withdrawal from
her own maturity is a irresponsible behaviour and she escapes from the real world and to the playwright, it is a great crime of Laura as character. She becomes fragile and ultimately loses her taste of life. She is awakened by Jim towards life but she cannot confront the world and she becomes "the sensitive, misunderstood exile, a recurrent character in Williams' work, one of the fugitive kinds, who are too fragile to live in malignant world."\(^5\)

Laura withdraws herself from the world because she is frightened by her unattractive figure. She fails to attract a single gentleman caller while her mother attracted the seventeen gentlemen callers. It is noteworthy to record that feeling unattractive, "Laura is frightened by a situation in which this attractiveness is directly tested, entertaining a man."\(^6\)

In The Rose Tattoo, Serafina idealizes the sweet experiences of her marriage with Rosario. After his death, she continues to exalt his memory by keeping his ashes in a marble urn and loves to disconnect herself from the real world. Alvaro, a truck driver who has a rose tattoo like her husband on his chest is her new lover and she is saved from despair by Alvaro to whom she turns in a relationship."\(^7\)

Here, Serafina's wilful withdrawal of her own maturity and the real world is one of the major themes of the play. In this play, Serafina's denial of her own maturity is her collection of ashes of her dead husband. Truck-driver Alvaro instills life into her and she disclaims her rejection and returns to "the world of life and sexuality."\(^8\) She throws the urn and cleans the ashes. She not only comes to confront the reality of the world but also allows her daughter
Rosa to see her lover, Jack. In the play, "Serafina comes through her crisis to realize, like Alma, that life is too important to reject for a memory."  

*The Glass Menagerie* (1945), one of the most autobiographical play is Williams's first success. Tom is the major character of the play and it is presented in a series of episodes through his recollections. He is the single son of the family. He is a poet-dreamer, whose burden is his fault finding mother and fragile sister. The play is presented by the playwright through his memory, filtered through his remembered desire to escape from the world of his mother's apartment. He also desires to leave the shoe-factory, warehouse job. His nature is not 'remorseless, but to escape from a trap he has to act without pity." (p.vii) He feels guilty of having abandoned his sister. The play deals with human suffering in light of man's guilt consciousness.

The Wingfield family which lives in a shabby apartment in St. Louis consists three members- Amanda, the mother, Tom, her son and Laura, her daughter. Amanda Wingfield is a frustrated Southern Belle woman. The crisis cropped up in her life when one morning her husband had left her. The days of financial crisis made her an embittered lady. Now, she is wandering in her fanciful past. She continues to ponder in afternoons when seventeen gentlemen callers were interested for her company and she chose one of them, a telephone man of high spirit "who fell in love with long distances;" (pp.5-6) and lived his life quite away from the home and, at the end, deserted the family.
Presently, Amanda's main aim is to find a suitable life partner for her daughter Laura. To do so, she motivates her to attend church and its functions. She gets her admitted to secure a business education, a secretarial course so that she may come in contact with a variety of people. Later on, she is enrolled in a business school but is unable to face realities of life. She is very much conscious of her weakness which increases in a psychological fear. She is seriously ill during her first examination. She leaves the school but doesn't tell her mother. She goes to school everyday but walks in the park, visits botanical gardens and sometimes goes to see movies that she has saved out of her lunch money.

Amanda has now the only task to entrap any handsome man for Laura. She is hopeful that his son Tom will find a suitable person for his sister. He as a man of poetic attitude turns nervous to face the family responsibilities. His job at the warehouse is also very dreary and uninteresting.

The play reaches its climax when Tom brings home a bachelor, suitable for Laura from the warehouse. He is Jim O'Connor, who had been a loving fellow for Laura in high school. He is a clerk in the warehouse with Tom and is trying hard to improve himself. When Tom takes him home he doesn't know that his sister and Jim have been students at the same high school. Jim's presence brings a short happiness for both Laura and Amanda. After dinner, Laura meets him, feels happy and lets him kiss her. But Jim shatters her illusion shortly by declaring that he is engaged with a woman and will be married very soon. Soon after Jim departs and Amada blames Tom for his
foolishness for the entire catastrophe who brings another girl's fiance and tells him, "then go to the moon- you selfish dreamer! (p.122). The play ends as Amanda is comforting Laura who is huddled upon the sofa; and at the close of Tom's confessions, Laura blows out the candles.

In the play, Amanda, Tom and Laura are not ready to understand the reality. They are failures in their lives because of their sensitive natures, and try to escape from the reality. Amanda relieves herself wandering in the memories of the past; Tom relieves himself going to the movies while Laura makes herself busy in her collection of glass animals. Through these characters, Williams presents the destructive, tragic consequences of Amanda's fantasizing the results of which are only too apparent in the lives of her children.

The play revolves around the introversion of Laura who is now psychologically withdrawn from her life due to her crippled state and futility of early "crush" on a fellow student at high school. Her tender but moth-like attitude makes her unable to compromise with the harsh world.

Williams's portrayal of Laura is definitely drawn from his close confrontation with his sister Rose Williams. With some variations, of course, Rose Williams and Laura Wingfield stand close to each other. In the play, Laura also clarifies that her fellow at high school used to call her 'Blue Roses'. She tells Amanda the reason:
When I had that attack of pleurosis- he asked me what was the matter when I came back. I said pleurosis-- he thought that I said Blue Roses! So that's what he always called me after that. Whenever he saw me, he'd holler, "Hello, Blue Roses!" (pp.20-21)

Recalling his memories of those days when the playwright himself and his sister Rose lived together in an apartment, he describes about her collection of glass animals:

Those little glass animals... came to represent in my memory all the softest emotions that belong to recollections of things past. They stood for all the small and tender things that relieve the austere pattern of life and make it endurable to the sensitive.¹¹

Rose had ever been an essence of ideal for him. Presentation of Laura is explicitly presentation of Rose in the play. Laura's physical incapability--lameness and venereal state reflects Rose's mental affliction.

Amanda's getting Laura enrolled at Rubicam's business college, is her serious attempt to make Laura bold and to interact with people. It becomes a futile attempt as she finds her not showing interest to her studies when she visits her school. She encounters the reality and tells Laura:

I stopped at Rubicam's business college to speak your teachers about your having a cold...... I went to the typing instructor and introduced
myself as your mother. She didn't know who you were. Wingfield, she said. We don't have any such student enrolled at the school! (pp.15-16)

Now, only, Laura clears her situation how she passes her times in museums and other places of distraction:

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. (p.18)

During the last scenes, suddenly Laura comes alive as an individual. Unique and different with her charm more real than earlier. Williams describes, "A fragile, unearthly prettiness has come out in LAURA: she is like a piece of translucent glass touched by light." (pp.62-63). Jim finds medium of enchantment in her charm. At first, she hesitates to come on the table of dinner because she is quite upset meeting the idealized hero of her school days. She runs away to her chamber and weeps lying on her couch. Jim brings shortly her out from her shyness and her inner loveliness becomes transparent. She overcomes her shyness. Jim introduces her to the real world and through his physical love incites her to come in the main stream of worldly life. Williams evaluates the scene as "the climax of her secret life" (p.88) Laura's hesitation is removed and she recognizes Jim and her enjoyment of songs during school-days. Their conversation makes them happy. Jim finds everything in him except confidence and tries his best to
awake it in her. He encourages her telling her lameness as a small defect and advises her to ignore it:

JIM: (Abruptly)

You know what I judge to be trouble with you?

Inferiority complex! ....

You--- that's what I judge to be your principal trouble. A lack of confidence in yourself as a person. You don't have the proper amount of faith in yourself.... A little physical defect is what you have. Hardly noticeable even! Magnified thousands of times by imagination!

You know what my strong advice to you is? Think of yourself as superior in some way! (pp.102-3)

Quick response of the encouragement of Jim is to be seen in Laura; she feels happy and shows him her collection of glass animals, dances with him and lets him kiss. These glass animals are her escape world to which she adores as she is unable to face the real world. Here Jim becomes able to remove her lack of confidence in herself to a certain extent.

While dancing, "They suddenly bump into the table. JIM stops" (p.109) the horn of one unicorn is broken; Laura is not disturbed. "Symbolically, her calm reaction represents her desire now to become a normal person and no longer remain a unique individual apart from others."13 Their conversation
reflects her slowly growing mature mind and she learns the art of living in the real world:

JIM:

You'll never forgive me. I bet that was your favourite piece of glass.

LAURA:

I don't have favourites much, It's no tragedy, Freckles. Glass breaks so easily. No matter how careful you are.

JIM:

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

LAURA:

I'll just imagine he had an operation.

The horn was removed to make him feel less-freakish!

(*They both laugh*) (p.110)

The evening becomes more charming for them but Laura reveals her loveliness while Jim feels guilty for his romantic interest in her. He knows that she is ignorant of her engagement with Betty. Most probably, he wants to make her more confident and so neglects to come once again. But, revelation of his engagement ends the beginning of Laura's return in "normal life". "Her brief joy is snuffed out and her loveliness is only intensified."14
Both return to their world-- Jim to his world of reality and Betty, Laura to her reality and glass menagerie. He has increased Laura's pathos and infinite desolation. "The holy candles in the altar of LAURA's face have been snuffed out. There is a look of almost infinite desolation." (p.115) Amanda's duty to care Laura becomes tougher as Tom moves on his "father's footsteps, attempting to find in motion". (p.123) Here all the three persons are victims of circumstances which destroy each other. "The major characters in this play are so wrapped and their lives so distorted and perverted by fantasies that each is left with only broken fragments of what might have been."\(^{15}\)

Laura is a sensitive and delicate girl who becomes unable to stand with her mother since her childhood. She also wants to be charming and decent to attract gentlemen callers and even tries to put on her mother's coat. But she fails to go ahead. Her inferiority complex makes her escape from the real world. She is a character whose destruction in the play is most touching. She does not reject but is rejected because of her sensitive and misunderstood exile. She is a fugitive-like character who is punished to live in a malignant world for ever.

Laura's portrayal is similar to Lawrence's Miriam in Sons and Lovers and Norman J. Fedder has beautifully drawn the lines of comparison of characters:

Both find difficult to adjust to normal social relationships -- each more at home in a less threatening non-human world: Laura's beloved collection of little glass animals, Miriam's fixation with
the flowers surrounding her woodland home. . . The virile young men-- Jim and Paul-- who attempt to awaken them, only meet with failure."¹⁶

Amanda consoles her by reeling back into past which was a fascinated world. Tom seems to have escaped from this world as he abandons those people whom he has to share. The pay seems autobiographical in touch as most of the characters seem to be playwright's members of family. Amanda, Laura and Tom appear as members of his family. Bigsby is appropriate in his comment that it is "purely reflexive as Williams creates a play about a writer, named after himself, who dramatises his own life in order to exorcise the guilt which is the price he paid for freedom."¹⁷

Williams describes Amanda as "a little woman of great but confused vitality . . . having failed to establish contact with reality," (p.vii) whose life becomes more disappointing after her marriage. "Rooted in a tradition of the genteel Southerner, she can have no social position, no financial security apart from husband,"¹⁸ whose desertion made her more disappointing.

Like, Laura she also escapes from the world of reality and is talking nostalgically about her past golden days. Her continuous explanation of the seventeen gentlemen callers clears her romantic attitude placed in an unromantic setting. Her present is totally opposite to her imagined past. She is regretting for the "tragic mistake" in choosing a husband smart but below her standard. She tells Tom:
That innocent look of your father's had every one fooled!
He smiled--- the world was enchanted!
No girl can do worse than put herself at the mercy of a handsome appearance! (p.56)

Her another escape from reality is her refusal of Laura's shyness. As she tells Tom, "Don't say crippled! You know that I never allow that word to be used!" (p.58) She imposed her own values on her children to make them introvert who proved misfit in the speedy commercial world. Joseph K. Davis writes:

Because she herself has withdrawn from reality, preferring rather dreams of a lost time in the South, Amanda had handed her children over to a similar, if not a worse, psychology grim fate.\(^{19}\) She is guilty of not caring and understanding her children. She is a Terrible Mother, a woman who fixes, ensnares, destroys initiative, stunts growth and even dismembers her young ones."\(^{20}\)

Amanda's problem starts in the play with her consciousness to get an appropriate bachelor for her daughter as Laura says, "Mother's afraid I'm going to be an old maid." (p.12) She knows the hardships faced by a single woman, so is determined to marry Laura at any cost. She explains the situation:

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 mouse-trap 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! . .

Of course------ some girls do marry." (p.19)

In the play, Amanda also breaks the image of a sentimental mother, stereotype as well as the popular image of the southern belle. Williams presents painful experiences of Wingfield family in St. Louis in the play. Both, Amanda and Laura refuse to face realities of their lives. Amanda retreats into her past and she explains her relations with seventeen gentlemen caller to her children:

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 sent the nigger over to bring in folding chairs from the parish house. (pp.8-9)

We can witness that Amanda tries to hold the whole family together economically and spiritually. She tries to help her children to lead a normal life. Her special care is upon Laura and she sends her to business school and now she is curious on making a plan for a gentleman caller for her.

The crisis that led Amanda's illusion as well as the crisis of the family starts with the play. Her husband's desertion of her and the family's shock
send her back into the golden days of her girlhood. McGlinn rightly analyses
the situation:

Since Amanda cannot face the reality that she was unable to hold
her husband's love, indulges in memories of that one supreme
moment of her youth, the day when she might have chosen
seventeen gentlemen callers, all rich and successful and caring
for their wives.²¹

Jim O'Connor's coming to dinner is also interesting. Amanda enters the
room wearing a girlish frock as he was her gentleman caller. She welcomes
him with warmth of her Southern aristocratic hospitality. Williams has
argued that Amanda's courage constitutes the core of the play. She has been
presented as a confused and pathetic lady in the play. She blames Tom at not
knowing the reality about his friend and having no responsibility of the
family. She tells, "don't think about us, a mother deserted, and unmarried
sister who is crippled and has no job!" (p.122)

Here, Williams is careful to distinguish the constant flaw of Amanda
from a neurotic flood of language, with which tries to break silence of her
daughter. The Gentleman Caller, who disappoints Laura's hope of another life
is learning the art of public speaking. He is hoping that this will open up a
clear path to power. He believes that language will give him control over life
that otherwise seems to be slipping away from him. After his departure,
Amanda becomes angry with Tom for his ignorance about Jim's personal life:
AMANDA:

   The gentleman caller has made an early departure. What a wonderful joke you played on us! . . .

   You didn't mention that he was engaged to be marred.

TOM:

   Jim? Engaged?

TOM:

   I will be jiggered! I didn't know about that . . .

AMANDA:

   It seems extremely peculiar that you wouldn't know your best friend was going to be married! (pp.121-22)

When Tom protests himself telling, "The warehouse is where I work, not where I know things about people;" (p.122) Amanda complains:

   You don't know things anywhere! You live in a dream; you manufacture illusions! (p.122)

Amanda is easy enough to be forgotten, but Laura continues to haunt her brother Tom. Since Tom is not about to return to the stifling world of St. Louis tenements, however, Tom's only escape from Laura is through mindless activity, drinks, movies or strangers, whatever can blow out her candles and destroy his image of Laura:
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 drink, I speak to the nearest stranger— anything that can blow your candles out!

(LAURA bends over the candles.)

---for nowadays the world is lit by lighting! Blow out your candles, Laura— and so good-by. . .

(She blows the candles out.) (p.124)

_The Long Goodbye_, an early one act version of _The Glass Menagerie_ clarifies Tom's situation and the destructive nature of his actions. According to George Neisen:

Tom, like Joe, represents a destructive force, though more subtly. Tom's final lines for example, indicate that he is trying to erase Laura and her candles from his memory.\(^22\)

Tom's departure at the end of the play is like his earlier attempt to depart when he had shattered some glass collections of Laura. She feels her world of psyche wounded and hurt. Her mind is closely associated with her glass menagerie. Here Tom's action, on subconscious level, is an attempt to destroy her Tom cannot abandon her without destroying, though it is not his intention. Both Tom and Laura live in a world of dreams, which is for them
as an omnipresent world. Being a boy, Tom has no such relation with his mother Amanda. He can leave his mother freely and go anywhere where he would like. "He destroys her hopes and dreams, he shatters her dictates, but she remains finely with her "dignity and tragic beauty."23

People, unable to bear the pressures of their social and emotional life, often seek escape into an inner world. Tom's life, pressurised buy his family relationships-- desertion of his father, responsibilities of a crippled sister and demanding disillusioned mother-- seeks shelter in the world of movies. As his own life is devoid of any adventure, he projects his own desire for adventure on the characters that move on the curtains of celluloid. His emotional unfulfilled world finds same solace in his creativity. He pens down poems on shoe boxes for which he gets fired.

*The Glass Menagerie* is a warm play of Tennessee Williams in which the narrator regards his mother and sister with mixture of guilt. Tom who wants to be a poet is trapped by his family responsibilities. It is a kind of tragedy and presents a tragic situation of characters who despite their moodiness and foolishness and self-deception have a sense of the tragic. Play is also the sexual proclivity of the main characters and is the true elegy of their past hopes, not achieved but still desired. It presents a dream of unfulfilled romance in it.

*The Glass Menagerie* is closely compared with D.H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers and it is pertinent to record Fedder's critical remarks:
Both works focus on situations involving a domineering mother, a weak father, and artistically inclined son, and the abortive relationship between a virginal girl and virile young man she loves."\(^{24}\)

The Rose Tattoo (1951)\(^{25}\) is a rowdy, lusty comedy dealing with happier depiction of sex. It was just written after Williams's pleasurable visit to Italy in late forties, a country always idealized for healthy sensuality. The play is "one of his few comedies, it was inspired by his relationship with Frank Merlo,"\(^{26}\) one of his intimate homosexual friends. It deals with direct influences of "the vitality, humanity and love of life expressed by the Italian people."\(^{27}\) It is "a paean of praise to the Dionysian elements of life--- a celebration of the forces of rejuvenation, fertility, fecundity."\(^{28}\) It is full of life and passion and fire, presenting a Sicilian widow living on the American Gulf Coast, and Alvaro, her clownish Italian suitor. The play is one of the warmest and most human pays of the author. It has a special place in his heart as he exposes, "I worked on it very intensively. I wrote it during a period in which I was very happy."\(^{29}\)

Serafina Delle Rose, a full-bodied woman, is one of the most obsessed characters of the dramatist. Williams describes her, "Serafina looks like a plump little Italian opera singer in the role of Madame Butterfly," (p.2) when she first appears n the play. She is a passionate puritan who idealizes her late husband. She grieves after her dead husband, though three years have been passed. She worships his memory preserving and enshrining his ashes in a
marble urn. In the process she retreats from the world, quits taking care of herself and passes her life as a nun in a cloister, quite isolated from her Sicilian Gulf Coast community. She is a dressmaker, and was stitching clothes for festivals, but has stopped that also. She is cured of her obsession with the memory of her husband when she knows that he was not faithful to her. She learns about her husband Rosario's affair with the blackjack dealer at the local casino and Estelle Hohengarten. She passionately casts away his memory from her heart. She falls in love with Alvaro Mangiacevallo (Eat-a-horse), a vigorous, lusty man, who like her husband drives a banana truck and has rose tattoo on his chest. Williams describes about him:

*He is about twenty-five years old, dark and very good looking. . .*  
*He is short stature, has massively sculptural torso and bluish-black curls. His face and manner are clownish; he has a charming awkwardness.* (p.76)

He is a man "with three dependents" (p.95) and his relationship with Serafina is based more on economic convenience than on love. But Serafina accepts his notes of love and he becomes medicine for her melancholy and it saves her from illusions.

Serafina's daughter Rosa is fifteen now and is intensely alive in the flesh. She has fallen in love with a young sailor Jack, who had met her at a high school dance. She desperately wants to consummate her love by marrying him but Serafina seriously objects to this relationship. Jack promises Serafina before the statue of Holy Mother that he will respect
Rosa's innocence; and he does so. Here Rosa stands quite opposite to her mother, because she tries to seduce Jack despite his promise to respect innocence. But, when Rosa learns of her mother's relationship with Alvaro, she accuses her of hypocrisy and double standards. Shamefaced Serafina allows her to go to Jack and the play ends with a pregnant Serafina. She gives a rose coloured satin shirt to Alvaro, which was originally made for her husband. Her husband Rosario Delle Rose was a Dionysian whose death means rebirth.

Serafina is Williams's most positive creation. She appears before us as "an original human being and a symbol of healthy, unashamed womanhood."³⁰ After her husband’s death she has gone into a shattering decline and fights rumours that her husband was not faithful. On learning her husband's true reality, his infidelity, she does not react as Amanda does after her husband's desertion. She kicks out the memory of her adulterous husband and goes to bed with another truck driver:

When Serafina learns after years of homage that Rosario defiled their marriage bed, she is freed from her illusion. She does not react as Amanda does to her husband's desertion. Instead the truth frees Serafina from adoration of a memory.³¹

The truth makes her to realize that the perfectness' of her marriage was only in her mind. Then she casts off ashes of her dead husband and finds salvation in Alvaro. In this way the three-year sex tormented widow discards the memory of her man of roses and turns out the lights. She directs Alvaro how
to leave and return secretly so that neighbours would not suspect. She realizes
that life is more important than memory of a dead man and we regard her
bravery.

At the beginning of the play Serafina is presented proud and confident
of the faithfulness of her husband. She has mixed her personality in her
devotion to Rosario. When two ladies come to take their clothes after the
death of her husband and when they talk in her house she asks them to get out
in the street and calls them 'men-crazy'. Even as the Doctor explains to Father
De Leo, some people "find God in each other. And when they lose each
other, they lose God and they're lost. And its hard to help them." (p.18) Now
Serafina whose husband is dead has no reason to make her attractive. She has
put her "heart in the marble urn with the ashes" (p.100) and makes herself
buried to the world for three years. Father De Leo aso makes her cautious:

    You are still a young woman. Eligible for-- loving and-- bearing
again! I remember you dressed in pale blue silk at Mass on Easter
morning, yes like a lady wearing a-- piece of the --weather!
(p.69)

But she clearly denies his advice telling, "to me the big bed was beautiful like
a religion. Now I lie on it with dreams, with memories only!" (p.70)

Memories of her marriage days have kept her alive. Serafina relieves
herself wandering in the memories of her late husband. She says; "I count up
the nights I held him all night in my arms, and I can tell you how many. Each
night for twelve years. Four thousand—three hundred-- eighty." (p.40) He was an ideal husband for her and she gets contented in his memories;"-- At night I sit here and I'm satisfied to remember, because I had the best. --- Not the third best and not the second best, but the first best, the only best! (p.39) She further says to Alvaro, "when my husband was living, when my husband comes home, when he was living-- I had a clean dress on! And sometimes even, I-- put a rose in my hair..." (p.99) She also explains two female clowns Bessie and Flora:

    When I think of men I think about my husband. My husband was a Sicilian. We had love together every night of the week, we never skipped one, from the night we was married till the night he was killed in his fruit truck on that road there! (p.38)

She further explains that after his beautiful memories she could not become interested in "some middle-aged man, not young, not full of young passion, but getting a pot belly on him and losing his hair and smelling sweat and liquor-. . . I'm satisfied to remember the love of a man that was mine only mine! Never touched by the hand of nobody! Nobody but me!-- Just me!" (p.40) Naturally, anything after that would be an anti-climax for her.

    Just prior t the death of Rosario, Estelle Hohengarten, a woman who works at a nearby hotel had asked Serafina to make a shirt of rose-coloured silk for a man "wild like a Gypsy" (p.11). Serafina never fully realized the shirt was for her own husband with whom that lady had an affair. Ignorant of the other woman in her husband's life, she continues to live in his sweet
memories. Except Serafina, the whole town knows about the affair between Rosario and Estelle.

Serafina's husband Rosario who had rose tattoo on his chest has been killed in an accident while delivering narcotics hidden under a load of banana. Serafina was pregnant at that time and lost the baby from the shock of her husband's death. Now, Alvaro who has rose tattoo on his chest is also a truck driver like Rosario who tries to tempt the widow from her sexual fast. He becomes successful in his mission to germinate 'desire' in her. "Serafina seizes the marble urn and hurls it violently into the furthest corner of the room." (p.123) When they come close together in their relationship. Serafina shows him her dead husband's photograph and explains:

I'll tell you something about the tattoo of my husband. My husband, he had this rose tattoo on his chest. One night I woke up with a burning pain on me here. I turn on the light. I look at my naked breast and on it, I see the rose tattoo of my husband, on me, on my breast, his tattoo. (p.89)

Alvaro also shows Serafina a rose tattoo on his chest. The relationship between Serafina and Alvaro is described by the author like a play of two children in the play. "Their fumbling communication has a curious intimacy and sweetness, like the meeting of two lonely children for the first time." (p.88)
In the play a telephone call of Estelle confirms her husband's unfaithfulness and Serafina cuts the last confining hold of his memory, she breaks the marble urn and pretends going and coming to her lover Alvaro through the back door in the night:

Then look at the window tonight. If the shutters are open and there is a light in the window, you can stop by for your--jacket--but if the shutters are closed, you better not stop because my Rosa will be home. Rosa's my daughter. She has gone to picnic--maybe--home early---but you know how picnics are. They---wait for the moon to---start singing. (p.101)

By evening Serafina is totally changed by discarding her nunship, and dressing for the new man. Alvaro comes with rose oil in his hair and rose tattoo on his chest and they start their quiet conversation. In their sexual confrontation Serafina leads Alvaro--"Now we can go on with our--conversation." (p.125)

But she still remembers Rosario subconsciously. While making love with Alvaro she dreams of Rosario, "Ohhhh----Rosario!" (p.127) She has been mourning continuous for three years which reflects her faithful dedication to her dead husband, Rosario. The love making with Alvaro acts as a 'purgative,' and she is reeled back in the past. The ashes, the symbol of his memories, are blown in the night. She also says to Assunta:
A man, when he burns, leaves only a handful of ashes. No woman can hold him. The wind must blow him away. (p.141)

In this way, the torture of sex with memories of three years of her dead husband wounds Serafina as a widow who encounters a new world.

In the scene outside the house, Rosa and Jack are engaged in the sexual acts to each other. Rosa tries to tempt him any how she can. Rosa, although underage, realizes the importance of sexual affair and considers sex as God:

It is only thing in my life that I want to remember! (p.129) . . .

One time, one time, only once, it could be---God!---to remember.--- Other times? Yes--they'd be something--- But only once, God--to remember. (p.130)

But Jack, having given his word to Serafina doesn't accept her appeal. Rosa becomes angry for Serafina's interfering in her life and presents her anger, "This was the happiest day of my life, and this is the saddest night." (p.126) Her love for Jack makes her endearing of all in the play.

At last night Rosa and Jack return from the picnic from the nearby island. They listen the whisper of Serafina and Alvaro in the house. Rosa asks Jack to listen it carefully, whether her mother is dreaming about her father: "Oh! That's Mama dreaming about my father" (p.126) and after three hours when she enters the room; she finds Alvaro who catches hold of Rosa thinking her to be Serafina in the dark room: "I thought that you was your Mama!" (p.136)
Serafina pretends as if she doesn't know him and asks Rosa, "Who is this man? How did this man get here?" (p.137) Rosa understands the situation and tells her mother to give his clothes so that he can leave the place:

Mama don't any more. Just give him his clothes in the bedroom so he can get out! (p.137)

When Rosa asks Serafina, "Has the man gone? she pretends, "I don't know he got in. May be the back door was open." (p.138) It is noteworthy to record their conversation:

SERAFINA:

I want you to understand about that man. That was a man that-- that was--- that was a man that . . .

ROSA:

You can't think of a lie?

SERAFINA:

He was a -- truckdriver, Cara. He got in a fight, he was chase by -- policemen!

ROSA:

The chased him into your bedroom?

SERAFINA:

I took pity on hi, I give him first aid, I let him sleep on the floor. He give me his promise--- he . . . (pp. 138-39)
But later on she explains the whole situation to her daughter as "no longer has any secrets"\textsuperscript{32} hidden to her. She tells Rosa that she found the image of her father in that man:

He was Sicilian; he had rose oil in his hair and the rose tattoo of your father. In the dark room I couldn't see his clown face. I closed my eyes and dreamed that he was your father! (p.139)

After sometimes a lady named Peppina comes and says, "There is a man on the road without the shirt! . . . All he got on his chest is a rose tattoo!" (p.142) Serafina feels burning on her breast. In this way she realizes the futility of her ideals, she acknowledges Alvaro before everyone as her lover. She also sends Rosa to Jack before he can sail away telling, "How beautiful--is my daughter! Go to the boy!" (p.140)

Serafina Delle Rose becomes positive for life coming in the contact of Alvaro. She is a character "who triumphs through her sexual instinct. She is to be a kind of Stanley Kowalski without his negativism."\textsuperscript{33} When she laments that the time of roses is over for her, Alvaro assures her "It's always for everybody the time of roses! The rose is the heart of the world like the heart is the-- heart of the--- body!" (p.100)

Serafina's remembrance of Rosario is directly related to their activities in bed. But, we know that he was involved in extra-marital affair and hence he couldn't have loved her well. So, Serafina is quick to break the marble urn and jumps into bed with Alvaro. He is an opportunist who sees in Serafina a
golden goose. He even admits that he has been looking for a woman like Serafina to improve his living condition as he says, "I am hoping to meet some sensible older lady. Maybe a lady a little older than me . . . And I want her to have a well-furnished house and profitable little business of some kind..." (p.93) To get home, he offers love to the lady. Definitely, Serafina is not careful of his motives. She dreams in him fulfilment of her desire. Thus, their union becomes a suitable union of two loving souls.

Serafina's new confidence and boldness inspires her to send her daughter to her lover while previously she was against it, even she had locked all the clothes of Rosa in order to prevent her meeting with Jack. Now Serafina is saved and feels that her sexuality and her passionate intensity commands her admiration. "She takes on Alvaro and sheds off her unnatural hermetic withdrawal." Learning from her mistakes, she deals with the whole situation not being illusioned like Laura, Amanda and Blanche and she develop ability to love again.

Through the affairs between Rosa and Jack, the dramatist has tried to present tender and touching story of the awakening of a young woman and young man. Rosa and Jack are more free in love making than Serafina and Alvaro. They "possess a credibility which is more intense than that of the two major protagonists." Here, the widow seems to be unconsciously jealous of her daughter before she finally allows her to put her dress and to go with Jack.
In this play, the dramatist has cultivated a technique for displaying emotional excitement and involvement of 'big double bed'. The only hurdle which bars to the widow Serafina is her extreme loyalty to her dead husband; but the newly shaven, scented with rose oil truck-driver becomes the great temptation for her. Even after three years also her grief exists new and fresh. She has even a centre of attraction and matter of curiosity for children also who play in her yard.

Norman J. Fedder treats the play as "a comic version of Orpheus Descending, because Lady's arousal by and union with Val ends in death. Serafina's courtship and capture by the moronic Mangiacavallo is a joyful spectacle."^36 She has now the immense freedom to be coupled with her lover.

Like Laura, Serafina though rejects reality and confines herself from the reality of the world, when the truck driver Alvaro Mangiacavallo, appears, she returns to the world of life and sexuality. Serafina, who after death of her husband had accepted his ashes as legend and lived in chastity returns to the main stream of the life. The similarity of her dead husband in Alvaro inspires her and she "starts up the embankment toward Alvaro" (p.144) which finally turns into the worshipper of sex in place of the ashes of her husband. Sex is God and it is also the immoral crime. Yet it compels Serafina to welcome it as a real stream of life. Her conversion is both crime as well as punishment that she accepts as a part of dreamy reality. Here, it is not a morality but a typical psychology which mirrors a special touch of her love to reality. It establishes Williams as a special kind of moralist playwright
in light of crime and punishment theory that we have come across the plays of the present chapter.

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