Practice I.O.C The Glass Menagerie -Magician Metaphor-

Context

* Tom complains about his life and he gets into an argument with (fight)
* Tom is fed up with Amanda and goes to the movies
* Tom apologizes to Amanda and she asks Tom to bring (introduce) a gentleman caller from the warehouse

Setting & Summary

* At night at the fire escape, then in Tom’s room
* Tom talks about the night (acts and performances) he had at the “movies”

Theme

* Tom’s ambition of getting out of the apartment without hurting his family
* Symbolism of coffin (apartment) trick where no nails (harm) are removed shows
* Important because this scene foreshadows his escape from the apartment when the gather’s picture on the wall lightens up (l.54).

Characters

Laura

* This passage shows her innocence and she believes what Tom says (l.29)
* Stage directions (l.29)
* She cares a lot about her mother (l.48)

Tom

* It is evident that he went to the movies (since he has the scarf and shower of movie tickets), but it is not clear if he has seen so many different programs (tricks) (l.31).
* Might be making up some stories (he is living in his illusion at nights when he drinks).
* He only uses the fire escape to enter the house (l.4).
* He consistently wanting to escape the apartment.
* However, he wants to escape the apartment without hurting his family
* Shows the impossible nature of it (hopeless). (l.39, 40, 51, 52)

Mood & Imagery

* Optimistic (many exclamation marks, enthusiastic about the tricks)
* Sarcastic (l.10 stage directions, 51). He makes fun of Amanda.

Stylistic devices

* Onomatopoeia (l.1).
* Hyperbole (l.41). Shows how small the world he lives in is at the moment. (since he only lives in the apartment where Amanda takes control over him). This links back to the theme where he wants to flee from the apartment.
* Simile (l.2). suggests that he has no power and dignity like almighty, but just a small existence.
* This is because he lives in the apartment??
* Stage directions Tenessee Williams uses create images of the scene in the head (l.1-8, 36, 37, 40-42, 50, 54).

Symbols

The key (l.8)

* Hopes to escape the apartment?
* It slips out of his fingers (suggests the hopelessness of completely being independent from the apartment)

Fire escape (l.4)

* The only entrance he uses throughout the play (enables Tom to escape the apartment)

Coffin (apartment since it is closed) and the nails (Laura and Amanda)

* Symbolizes his ambitions to flee from the apartment without hurting his family

Father’s grinning photograph

* Since father is a person who fled away from the apartment, hurting the whole family (financially and emotionally), when this lightens up, this could mean that Tom is going to do the same…

Links

* In the end of the book, Tom actually flees away from the apartment, but still helps Laura in all ways. (success?)

Final thoughts

* Tenessee Williams’ is very realistic and thus his message was to look after your family.