Practice I.O.C The Glass Menagerie -Menagerie with Jim-

Context

* Jim, who works at the warehouse with Tom, made an appearance at Wndfield’s for dinner.
* Amanda believes that Jim is a gentlemen caller who is going to marry Laura.
* Jim and Laura realize they know each other from high school.
* Laura used to like Jim in high school and has showed his picture to Amanda in yearbook.
* Jim and Laura dance together on the music that comes from the Paradise Dance Hall.
* They hit the table while dancing and accidentally the glass menagerie falls and the unicorn’s horn breaks.

Setting & Summary

* In the living room by themselves.
* Since Jim asked what Laura’s hobby is, Laura and Jim talk about her glass menagerie collection, specifically the unicorn.

Theme

The contrast between the glass menagerie (unicorn) and Laura.

This passage shows both of the possibilities of how Laura might change in the future.

This passage foreshadows that Laura cannot live outside the apartment. However, at the same time, Jim actually encourages her to get out from her own shell that she created around her.

The interaction with Jim, emissary from the reality, might be a changing point. Indicated in l.29

Characters

Laura

It becomes evident that she has been trapped in the apartment for thirteen years when she says “It’s nearly thirteen” (l.6) because the glass menagerie (the unicorn) symbolizes Laura.

When Jim, who is from the reality, is about to touch the unicorn, Laura says “be careful – if you breathe, it breaks!”(l.9). This shows the contrast with her crippled leg and her weakness (not tolerant) against the real world.

It is clear that Laura wants to go to the outside world when she says “he loves the light!”(l.14). Since the unicorn symbolizes Laura and unicorn loves the light, this could indicate that Laura actually loves the light (e.g. sun light) meaning she is willing to go outside as well.

Laura is defensive (protective) about her life in the apartment (she does not think she is lonesome). This is obvious when she says “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.”(l.24)

Laura, however, prefers change in her life for example marrying Jim and get out of the apartment. This is shown when she says “They all like a change of scenery once in a while!”(l.29).

Jim

Jim is clearly a person who does not live in an illusion.

He is highly realistic about the unicorns saying “aren’t they extinct in the modern world?”(l.21). He points out unicorns are not real and thus indicating that Laura cannot live in the real world.

He pities Laura’s loneliness at the apartment by saying “poor little fellow, he must feel sort of lonesome”.

Jim has no shyness and he is rather romantic and active. He asks Laura to dance with him by gently saying “how about cutting the rug a little, Miss Wingfield?”(l.36).

His sense of humor is revealed when he grasps an imaginary card and says “why, every sance is taken! I‘ll just have to scratch some out”(l.38). He encourages Laura to gain self-confidence in herself.

Mood & Imagery

Clumsy (lots of “-“ silence? l.1, l.9 in the sentences and change in topic in l.30, l.33)

Short sentences in l.4-6, shows her nervousness and shyness

Jim says clumsy in l.10

Romantic at the end when the music changes to a dance tune and Jim asks for dance.

This supports the theme of Laura being in between reality and illusion. Clumsiness shows Laura’s hesitation towards the real world since Jim is from that side of the world, and the romantic mood indicates Laura’s willingness towards change (getting out from illusion).

Stylistic Devices

Symbols

Unicorn symbolizes Laura

She is different from other girls, loves the light (outside world), trapped in the apartment for 13 years.

She does not complain about it…

Horn symbolizes the obstruction between Laura and other girls

This obstruction could be her shyness, and her inferiority complex originated from her crippled leg.

This horn is broken in the scene right after

The Music from the Paradise Dance Hall symbolizes the emotional arousal in the characters. The dance hall symbolizes freedom (EDEN)

The EFFECT of the symbolism: While Laura does not speak out how she feels about her own life, through talking about the unicorn that symbolizes her, she can express her emotions and wishes to the outside world so the readers can have a better understanding of Laura’s character.

Links

This scene links to the last part of the novel where Tom cannot leave Laura at the apartment. This indicates that Laura has failed to change herself and go into the reality thus Tom has to take further care of her.

Final thoughts

If Laura was successful at escaping the illusion (the apartment) and changed herself, Tom probably would have never seen Laura and Amanda again.

Practice I.O.C The Glass Menagerie

Context:

Same as above!

Jim kisses Laura after it

Setting

Romantic atmosphere (candles)

Laura trusts him thus gives the unicorn to him

Feels normally accepted by Jim, and gain confidence and forget shyness

(if you were my sister…)

Theme

Contrast between the reality and illusion

(first time actually talking to a person from the real world)

Turning point in the book (gain confidence, socializing)

Laura was in her imaginary world

She notices that there are more important things than glass menagerie because of Jim

Purpose

Laura is able to escape the real world with help!!!

Turning points in the novel, great development in her character

She learns…. And gets introduced to the real world.