



"Why Can't You and Your Brother Be More Like Other People?": Amanda's Way of Dealing with Her Loneliness and Its Effects on Laura

Marion Klotz

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Seminar paper from the year 2003 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1,7 (A-), Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (English Institute), course: Tennessee Williams, language: English, abstract:

When Amanda was young, her life was full of possibilities and also full of excitement. Not only was she part of a seemingly quite rich family, she was also pursued by many young men, her "gentlemen callers". Amanda seems to have been very popular and well-liked everywhere (Williams 240). Most of her gentlemen callers being "planters and sons of planters" (Williams 238) she probably regarded herself as destined to keep on living quite an exciting life brightened up even more by a considerable amount of money.

Things turned out differently, however. Instead of going steady with one of the planters she fell in love with a telephone man and married him. Apparently not satisfied with his life as a family father, Mr. Wingfield left Amanda with their two children, little money and the shattered remnants of her dreams.

Even though Amanda's dream "has been smashed by reality", it "has not been forgotten" (Tischler 98), however. Amanda still remembers how hopeful her future looked when she was a young girl, in a time when "die Erfüllung all ihrer Träume offenstand" (Link, 25). She is, as C.W.E. Bigsby puts it, "left with no more than the ashes of a once burning fire" (Williams, 32).

Her advice to Tom in scene five therefore seems to sum up the story of her life: "The future becomes the present, the present the past, and the past turns into everlasting regret if you don't plan for it" (Williams 269). Amanda says about herself that she "wasn't prepared for what the future brought" her (Williams 285). She was caught off guard by the changes to her once pursued dream in much the same way as she was by the change of seasons she is talking about: "It's come so quick this year. I wasn't prepared. All of a sudden- heavens! Already summer!" (Williams 284).

To Amanda, the past is the time when everything in her world seemed to be going fine. Now she is on herself, she is not part of the upper class that she used to belong to any more, denied of "the social acceptance that is her deep need" (McBride 145). She is lonely because she knows how different her life could have been if her choices had been different.

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