



Research Article

Masks of Beauty: Scent, Stench, and Scars in Oyinkan Braithwaite's *My Sister, the Serial Killer*

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Abstract

Beauty is a phenomenal concept and feature in human society, it has power to build, destroy and devastate that which is built as portrayed in Oyinkan Braithwaite's *My Sister, the Serial Killer*. Extant scholarly views on the text have focused predominantly on patriarchy and feminism, with little or no consideration for the scent, stench and scar of beauty which is the crux of this paper. This paper, therefore, examines how men are enchanted with beauty, the destruction men are prone to and the indelible scars that emanated from an inordinate quest for physical beauty of a woman. Our research instrument shall be the library. The primary text which will serve as the data for this study is Oyinkan Braithwaite's *My Sister, the Serial Killer*, it will be subjected to critical textual analysis. Inspiration will be drawn from Aristotle's Model of Relational Theory of Beauty as theoretical framework; it will also undergird the analysis. It is significantly discovered that physical beauty has ensnared and destroyed men of high substance. It is also discovered that beauty is employed as camouflage for nefariousness. It concludes that beauty is a mask for people who use it as a cover for their real personalities.

Keywords

Beauty, entanglement, destructibility, nightmarish scar

1. Introduction

Scent, stench and scar are metonymic coinage for the enchantment, destructibility and destructive effect of beauty respectively in Braithwaite's *My Sister, the Serial Killer*. Many men of lucid substance have been driven to their grave prematurely as a result of inescapable entanglement of beautiful women throughout the ages. It is indisputable universally that every man is desirous of a beautiful woman as a friend and spouse, but caution must be taken in this regard because not all that glitters is gold. Beauty is always an obvious

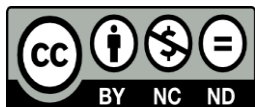
enchantment to any man; it appears as a pleasant scent to a man that needs a wife and companionship.

Beauty is mostly viewed from the lens of admiration and perfection (Fisher 22). Fisher argues that beauty and the beautiful person or thing is felt to be the perfect, exquisite, finest and most harmonious; there is always a quality of the ideal with beauty. Thus, beauty can be perceived as the inherent quality in a person or thing that gives intense pleasure or deep

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satisfaction to the mind. To attest to the notion of admiration and perfection of beauty, (Miller 43) provides evidence that a physical appearance stereotype exists which leads persons to form favorable impressions of persons of high, rare and extreme beauty; this stereotype often categorizes one person as beautiful and another ugly.

In alliance with Fisher and Miller, an investigation into conceptions of beauty, particularly in African philosophy and cultural thought, (Greer 27) has noted that physical attractiveness and imperativeness are the ornament of beauty, he sums up his argument with “every woman knows that, regardless of all her other achievements, she is a failure if she is not physically beautiful”. It can be deduced that beauty is a principal nucleus that makes an ideal woman and a force of fulfillment and happiness to both the beautiful and the beholder. (Pappas 67) describes beauty or the beautiful as a sublimate that yields or connects responses of love and desire, according to him, beauty or the beautiful facilitates the discovery of the good because beautiful thing or person strikes everyone and arouses everyone’s curiosity. Beauty has been epitomized as an essential and luxurious commodity and aspect of human reality.

The concept of beauty is critical to many people despite racial, cultural and gender boundaries as it is objective and relative. Allison corroborates the objectivity and relativity of beauty and the beautiful when he posits that the existence of beauty or beautiful thing or person is a function of our underlying interest in universal communicability, which in turn, is derived from our propensity to society or sociability (Allison 224). This Allison’s view is further buttressed by Ginsburg who opines that judgments of beauty cannot, despite their universal validity, be proved: there are no rules by which someone can be compelled to judge that something or somebody is beautiful (Ginsburg 2).

Dovetailing from the above, beauty, though abstract, is existing at the minds of individual and the conjectures of human society. In fact, much of humanity is perpetually in search of beauty and the beautiful, every man wants to have a beautiful wife, beautiful children and beautiful home. Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and practitioners of other religions spend a large chunk of their time towards preparing for transition into a place called Heaven or Paradise, which they describe as a place of sparkling beauty and most beautiful. In modern history, humanity has spent exorbitant financial resources in building monumental, massive and palatial edifices and enclaves in pursuit of magnificent beauty and perhaps happiness. In its corollary, humanity has encountered costly danger and destruction in their unending search for beauty, beautiful people and beautiful thing. Contemporarily and universally, humanity is still frantically obsessed with the search for beauty in spite of the myriad of dangers and destructions that ambush

beauty, beautiful person, especially beautiful woman. In literary circle, many authors have creatively portrayed beauty as an adorable entity; some have produced female characters that are endowed with radiant and sparkling beauty that makes the female characters to be the cynosures to all men especially men in authority and great influence. William Shakespeare takes a vintage position among writers that explore beauty and beautiful people whose beauty engenders the conflict and traumatic experiences in the life of other characters in one hand and the entire community in the other hand. In Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Ophelia, the queen is described as a woman with a rare and radiant beauty and her beauty becomes a spell to her husband’s brother who callously killed his brother in order to inherit Ophelia as wife. In Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, the cord of attraction of the young lovers in the play is beauty; Romeo is described as the most handsome man in Verona, while Juliet is portrayed as the prettiest lady, as the most physical beautiful characters in the play, the play ends in tragedy with their untimely death. History has it that an Ile-Ife queen, Moremi in Nigeria is highly endowed with physical beauty that a leader of raiders is enchanted with her beauty and she seizes this opportunity to liberate her society by using tricks and beauty to know the secret behind the power of the invaders. There are many instances of portrayal of beauty as harbinger of conflict and disaster in literature throughout the ages.

Previous scholarly engagements on Braithwaite’s *My Sister, the Serial Killer* have focused dominantly on patriarchy. Ben portrays the text from the point view of patriarchal hegemony where social problems and restrictions on women particularly, girl-child are depicted. Ben condemns instances of patriarchal hegemony, he also eulogizes feministic attributes in female characters that are tough and can withstand the whims and pressures of man’s dominance in the text (Ben 62). Thus, Ben’s analysis is tilted towards the significance of African feminist writers who subvert patriarchal norms to amplify the voices of women calling for liberation and gender equality. Similarly, Stanislav employs satiric conventions and symbolism to convey the resistance and perhaps the revolt against patriarchal oppression in the novel (Stanislav 71). Stanislav accentuates the power of beauty in a bid to suppress inordinate yearnings of men in patriarchal setting.

Oloruntola portrays beauty from the negative side. She sees beauty in the text as lethal agent. According to her, beauty is only meant for cruelty, disguise and arrogance, though beauty is sparkling and golden but it destroys more than the venom of vipers. She argues further that the attraction of beauty is a snare used to feign wickedness and callousness, and a mask for covering the real personality of many who uses beauty as a camouflage for their nefariousness (Oloruntola 48). This study will align with Oloruntola’s view but it will go further to examine the good aspect of beauty which is deficient in

Oloruntola's position. Ologunwa views the text, *My Sister, the Serial Killer* as a text that portrays an emotional trauma orchestrated from the deep love from two siblings. She posits that the text has the theme of familial love and unity that is characterized with unconditional love that exists between sisters, though one of the sisters is an ardent killer, the other sister poignantly defends the killer (Ologunwa 42).

Extant critical and scholarly views on the primary text have focused predominantly on patriarchy, feminism and familial love with little or no consideration for the scent, stench and scar of beauty which is the crux of this paper. This paper, therefore, examines how men are enchanted with beauty, the destruction men are prone to and the indelible scars that emanated from their quest for beautiful woman as depicted in the text.

2. Methods

The research instrument shall be the library, both the conventional and the internet. The primary text which will serve as the data for this study is Oyinkan Braithwaite's *My Sister, the Serial Killer*, it will be subjected to critical thematic textual analysis. Inspiration will be drawn from Aristotle's Model of Relational Theory of Beauty as theoretical framework, this is to justify the variant approaches of beauty as a concept and to undergird the analysis. The essence of this theory is to investigate the concept of beauty and its various strands of perceptions in human society that is heavily tilted by racial, cultural and gender biases.

3. Analysis and Discussion

Before textual engagement, it is expedient to examine the brief synopsis of the text in order to situate the textual content with the thrust of this paper. The text is an exploration of the intricacy and bond between two sisters, Korede and Ayoola. They grow up with their parent in Lagos. Their father is a strict disciplinarian who believes firmly on man's dominance in the affairs that concern his family, especially, his children. Ayoola is introduced as a very pretty young lady. She is over pampered by her mother at the consternation of the father and her elder sister, Korede. Ayoola has a stunning habit of killing the men who have love affairs with her. Anytime she kills, she will confide it to Korede who will do the cleaning to avoid suspicion because she (Korede) is a nurse by profession. Korede is always at the cross road psychologically on how to halt her sister's homicidal tendencies by revealing the truth or not. While Ayoola remains unperturbed by her callous killings, Korede is burdened by her sister's nefariousness and worried that Ayoola's troubling behavior will prevent them from finding happy marriages. Having situated the text, it will be

imperative to examine illustratively the issues of beauty's scent, stench and scars respectively.

A scent is a pleasant smell. When beauty is considered as a scent, it depicts the maniac, passionate and supernatural enchantment that beauty possesses. This suggests that beauty or a beautiful person is capable of enchanting, charming, captivating and bewitching people around them naturally. This is profoundly accentuated by Bennett who posits that enchantment entails quality that holds a person's attention by being interesting and pretty, it is just like a magic spell. She sums up her concept of enchantment and beauty like a situation whereby a person is being both caught up and carried away by force of affection (Bennett 32). Axiomatically, many people believe that beauty or a beautiful person is good and this becomes a bias. Surprisingly, according to Langlois, this bias reflects a preconceived idea that people, whether consciously or unconsciously, assume a person's attractiveness reflects that person's inner characteristics and results in more positive feelings and beliefs regarding beautiful men and women (Langlois 566). Regardless of race, tribe and culture, physical beauty or attractiveness can be the deciding factor in who is hired when two applicants are similarly qualified. Physically attractive politicians are perceived to be more competent and are viewed more favorably than unattractive politicians. Teachers judge attractive children as more likely to be intelligent and treat them more favorably. Looking good can also get people out of trouble: people give less severe punishments to attractive students who have cheated in an examination and to criminals who are found guilty of various crimes.

In the text, Ayoola's unrivalled and rare beauty is an indisputable factor that makes her the cynosure of all eyes. Other characters attest to her being faultlessly and perfectly made by nature. Everybody admires her and conceives that she will be flawless based on her radiant physical beauty. Her mother is the first character to be enchanted with the magical spell of Ayoola's beauty. The mother perceives that all satisfactions and fulfillments in life as a mother are embedded in Ayoola right from birth. When she has Korede her first child and daughter, she is hoping that her next child will be a son but she is extremely elated when the second child turns to be the sparkling and beautiful Ayoola. She decides not to have a son anymore because she has found unalloyed joy in Ayoola's beauty. As a result of this enchantment, Ayoola's mother over pampers her, she loves and cares for her more than Korede, the first daughter and older sister of Ayoola. So, Ayoola grows up and never being held accountable for her misdeeds. Her elder sister is always accused and reprimanded for any misdeed or offence done by Ayoola, Ayoola would steal an apple from a store and Korede would be blamed for letting her hungry (25), Ayoola would break a glass and her mother would blame her older sister for giving her that glass (27).

Additionally, Ayoola's mother and her sister discover in the text that Ayoola's beauty is the exact opposite of the unpleasant treatment and experiences of patriarchal hegemony orchestrated by Ayoola's father. So, they see her unequalled beauty as a weapon of revolt against patriarchal society represented by her father. This makes the mother to always avow that Ayoola can never do evil thing because to her, beauty is flawless. It is succinctly obvious that Ayoola's mother is becoming over excited and captivated by her daughter's beauty and she sees this as a means of throwing a subversive challenge to the societal practice that underestimates and objectifies women based on their looks. Korede recognizes the power of Ayoola's beauty. This attests to the fact that though, the two sisters are reared in patriarchal home, the family still sees beauty as an immense influencer. Korede is captivated by her sister's beauty with this expression:

Every head turns her way and stays there ... She looks as though she has brought the sunshine in with her. She is wearing a bright yellow shirtdress ... her feet are in green, strappy heels that make up what she lacks in height ... she smiles at me, and saunters in my direction. I hear a man mutters 'damn' under his breath. (53)

The expression above depicts an aura of an enchantment of beauty and Korede can be appropriately adjudged to have been heavily captivated by her sister's beauty. It is imperative to note that more often than not, men are usually enchanted by the beauty of a woman and women often appear to be impervious of beauty of other woman. This appears to be an aberration with description of Ayoola's beauty as it has spelt a magical spell on other female characters in the text. This depicts that the power of beauty is not limited to gender but to everyone who is caught by its power. Even her elder sister shows her displeasure to the gregarious nature of her mother's enchantment with Ayoola's beauty, "I choose not to respond to my mother's illogical statement, nor acknowledge the fact that she is far more interested in Ayoola's marital fate than in mine. It is as though love is only for the beautiful...(23).

Due to the irresistible and sparkling beauty of Ayoola, all men that have an encounter with her are caught up and carried away with the scent or enchantment of her physical attractiveness. All her suitors celebrate her beauty sumptuously. This makes them to desire her at all cost; the men are caught under the spell of her beauty, though some of the men know she is flirt. Femi, a boyfriend and victim of the enchantment of Ayoola's beauty eulogizes her beauty as he described her as being flawless, "I dare you to find a flaw in her beauty; to bring forth a woman who can stand beside her without wilting ... (14). This expression indicates an extreme kind of enchantment orchestrated by the power and charm of beauty; it suggests also that the admirer can undertake the riskiest

sacrifice to satisfy the beauty so that another person will not take her away. However, the person whose beauty seems flawless physically may exhibit a lot of flaws and laxities behaviorally but the admirer, Femi has been carried away by the spell of her beauty.

The scent or spell of Ayoola's beauty is very captivating that Tade one of her boyfriends is infatuated with her at the first sight. He exclaims, "She is just so pretty! I mean, she is beautiful and perfect. I've never wanted to be with someone this much" (117). It is succinctly obvious that Tade, the admirer has become a prey in the web of Ayoola's beauty and there is nothing humanly possible that he cannot do for her beauty. To buttress his high level of enchantment and infatuation, he ignores the candid advice from Korede, Ayoola's elder sister warning him to be cautious of Ayoola's behavior, he accuses Korede of being jealous of her sister but in the text, the advice is priceless and unfortunately it falls into a deaf ear because Ayoola's beauty is a camouflage for nefariousness. He (Tade) defends the beauty and his infatuation:

It's because she is beautiful, you know. That's all it is. Is it because you don't have someone? He asks. Excuse me? Why don't you want Ayoola to move forward in life? It is like you so want her to depend on you for the rest of her days. He shakes his head in utter disappointment. (117)

Tade is carried away by the enchanting spell of beauty; his emotion and decision are being controlled by physical attractiveness which is just a part but not the whole of a relationship. Also, the policemen in the text are also captivated by the radiance of Ayoola's beauty such that the investigation they ought to carry out is discarded as one of the policemen asserts, "I said shut up. Ayoola is a beautiful child with a wonderful temperament ... (69). This is a misplaced priority because Ayoola is the actual culprit but the policemen fail to realize that appearance, at times, is deceptive. At this juncture, one wonders how beauty can prevent law enforcement agents from discharging their duties lawfully without prejudice; this can be described as power of beauty.

Gboyega is another prey that is ensnared and enchanted by Ayoola's beauty. Gboyega is married with children, he is infatuated with Ayoola's beauty the first day he has an encounter with her. The privileges he has not given to his wife and children, he gives to Ayoola. He even takes her on holiday to Dubai just to prevent other suitors to have access to her. He knows that Ayoola has multiple boyfriends, yet he spends a huge fortune on her at the detriment and expense of his family. He sponsors her fashion education and career. He thinks money will make her to love only him. Unknowingly to Gboyega, Ayoola does not have an iota of love for him; she is only using him as a money bag and person to be responsible for all

her financial needs. When she has eaten Gboyega's wealth to her satisfaction, she eventually detaches herself by taking life out of him through food poison. The beauty that attracts Gboyega eventually becomes the source of death to him and nightmare to his family.

As a matter of fact all men that are in contact directly or indirectly with Ayoola are captivated by her beauty. The enchanting power of Ayoola's beauty controls and informs the decision of everyone or everyman about her and this perhaps is the scent and smell beauty has on any individual who is caught by it. In the text, Ayoola is sitting in the middle of three guys, all of them competing for her attention (78).

In tandem with the above experiences of Ayoola's admirers and the magic spell of beauty, it will be suffice to adjudge that the scent or enchantment of beauty entails the power of beauty which catches it beholder, thereby directing and subjecting the beholder to a blind being whose reasoning and thinking are blurred by the physical attractiveness and power of beauty. When an individual is charmed or enchanted by beauty, he or she will be captivated and assumed that all is well. Therefore, the scent of beauty often affects the thought, action, inaction and behavior of the beholder. We shall proceed to beauty as a stench.

The philosophy of beauty transcends physical attractiveness and enchantment, the concept of beauty and the beautiful is very unique especially in African society. Haselmann posits that beauty connotes celebration of worth, value, quality, essence and desirability (Haselmann 51). This implies that physical attractiveness is just a fragment in the component of beauty; other factors include characters and virtues. A beautiful person without values and virtues will not be considered beautiful in African society. Beauty without virtue is seen as a stench in this study.

To buttress Haselmann, Matiza observes that the concept of beauty or the beautiful in Africa has to do with the external and internal qualities of a person. According to Matiza, a beautiful person or woman must bear or have some moral attitudes and conducts beyond physical attractiveness (Matiza 68). Matiza metaphorically uses attractive pepper that can hurt the tongue when eaten or tasted to describe a beautiful woman who only has radiant physical attractiveness, but lack good manners, such a beautiful woman or lady must be avoided, despised and not desired or valued despite her sparkling physical beauty. The beauty without good manners will be referred to as stench in this study. African society also views beauty from functionality perspective, the concept of beauty must have a purpose which it must fulfill (Ibanga, 43). Beauty must serve to communicate values, norms and morals. The essence of beauty and the beautiful person is to edify the community. Ibanga is of the opinion that beauty is found in good behavior,

skill, knowledge as well as in physical features. There cannot be beauty for its own sake; beauty must be intended to serve society positively. Ikuenobe avers that if a person's beauty is seen as fostering or leading to disharmony and destruction in nature, community and reality, then the beauty is considered bad or ugly (Ikuenobe 129). It is on this note that we will examine how Ayoola's sparkling beauty turns to a stench in this paper.

Piteously, Ayoola's beauty makes her to become arrogant and unruly to her parent especially to her father. She has been made to know through the comments of people around her since childhood that she is the belle in her community, consequently this makes her to be over conscious of her beauty as arrogance, disobedience and unruly behavior become her idols as a child. On several occasions, she disobeys her father and this makes her father to always scream at her and admonish her but she is always impervious to her father's corrections because she believes that her beauty has it all and that she can rule her world with her beauty. Even, Aunt Taiwo, an aunt of Ayoola advises her to always hearken to the voice of her parent especially the father but Ayoola arrogantly pushes the advice to the dustbin, "Ayoola, it is important that you do this for your father, she said in a wheedling voice, this business opportunity is very critical" (158). Ayoola abhors scolding and reprimand from her father and as such she passionately loathes seeing her father. Later in her adulthood, her father becomes the reminiscence and metaphor for everyman that is angry and screams at her.

The outlandish stench orchestrated by Ayoola's beauty is her gruesome homicidal attitude to men that are entrapped by her sparkling beauty. Her apathetic killing of everyman that shows great affection and love to celebrate her unrivalled beauty becomes unfathomable and worrisome to the audience and other characters in the text. One expects a belle to behave beautifully at all times to justify the natural beauty but in case of Ayoola, reverse is the case as she is always unruly and nasty with her lovers. She is inadvertently exhibiting moral laxities, anger and unbridled ill manners on men that are caught up with the spell of her beauty. The first victim of her killing is Femi, a vibrant and promising young man who loves her dearly and writes a poem on Ayoola's sparkling beauty where he metaphorically describes her as "flawless" (14). She kills Femi over a frivolous argument:

On their one-month anniversary, she stabbed him (Femi) in the bathroom of his apartment. She didn't mean to, of course. He was angry, screaming at her, his onion-stained breath hot against her face. But why was she with the knife? (13)

To show how callous Ayoola's beauty has made her to be, she deceives the public and makes the public to appear

culpable for the killing of Femi, her boyfriend. She does this as a camouflage for her stench and nefariousness. Korede, Ayoola's elder sister reveals the message in Ayoola's Instagram:

Femi DurandIsMissing has gone viral. One post in particular is drawing a lot of attention. She has posted a picture of them together, announcing herself as the last person to have seen him alive, with a message begging anyone, to come forward if they know anything that can be of help (23).

Gboyega is another victim of her homicide. She has a love relationship with Gboyega who is rich and married, he knows that Ayoola is flirt and used to sleep around but he is carried away by her physical attractiveness. He spends quite a fortune to sponsor her fashion career, he even takes her for vacation in Dubai just to make her only his. Surprisingly, Ayoola fails to reciprocate this good gesture, instead of her to appreciate and celebrate Gboyega, she murders him through poison without any just cause. She simply murders him as a result of the innate homicidal tendency in her.

Another nauseating stench of Ayoola's beauty is the audacious lack of remorse she exhibited after her serial killings. When she murders Femi, Ayoola remains emotionally undisturbed and she shows no any remorse or fear. She has a strong conviction that her extreme beauty will always exonerate her from being punished or held responsible for her nefariousness and crime. Instead of her to be mourning and sorrowful that her promising and vibrant lover has gone to the world beyond, rather she is happy and engages in merrymaking. Her elder sister, Korede is highly flabbergasted at this unhealthy behavior of Ayoola and she fumes at her elegant lack of remorse:

There is music blasting from Ayoola's room. She is listening to Whitney Houston's "I Wanna Dance with Somebody". It would be more appropriate to play Brimo or Lorde, something solemn or yearning, rather than the musical equivalent of a packet of M&MS. Her movements are in no way rhythmical; they are the movements of someone who has no any audience and no self-consciousness to shackle them. Days ago, we gave a man to the sea, but here she is, dancing (34).

The above indicates that Ayoola's physical attractiveness has made her to be heady and manipulative. Perhaps, this attitude of Ayoola is being informed by the superficiality of beauty which suggests that her actions could be viewed as a subversive challenge to the societal norms that underestimate and objectify women based on their looks. In tandem with the stench orchestrated by her unremorsefulness is her euphemistic manner of expressing her callous killings to her elder sister. The implication of this is that her beauty has beclouded her not to see anything bad in an unpleasant behavior such as

murder, to her, once you are beautiful, you are faultless and unquestionable. This paper will now move to discuss the scar of beauty.

In this study, the scar of beauty will refer to the traumatic effects of Ayoola's beauty and nefariousness to her elder sister and her society, it will emphasize the indelible damages done to human beings and society as a result of man's unbridled rush after extreme physical attractiveness or beauty. Ayoola's elder sister, Korede suffers an intense psychological trauma and she is mentally disturbed because she could not fathom the reasons that are responsible for her sister homicidal acts. Anytime Ayoola kills, she will call Korede to come and clean the corpse and the scene of the murder because she is a nurse. This always places her on a crossroad or dilemma. She could not report the killings to the law enforcement agent and the public because she knows the wrath of law will be too heavy on her sister and she feels heavily disturbed inwardly that she is more or less an accomplice in the killings because she does the cleaning. Korede used to experience the feelings of guilt, helplessness and distress through her sister's homicidal actions. Her (Korede) emotional torture results to nightmare as she has a dream where she has an encounter with Femi, one of the victims of Ayoola's killings. She narrates the dream:

I dream of Femi, not the inanimate Femi. The Femi whose smile was plastered all over Instagram and whose poetry is memorialized in my mind. I have been trying to understand how he became a victim. He was arrogant, there's no doubt about it. But handsome, talented men usually are. His tone on his blog was abrupt and cynical and he didn't appear to suffer fools lightly ... The sort of man who shouldn't have fallen under Ayoola's spell (119).

Throughout the novel, Korede does not have inner rest as the thoughts of the victims of her sister's killings taunt and haunt her. Another scar in the text is that of shame or disgrace. The callous killings by Ayoola have brought shame to her family. Ayoola kills her sugar daddy in Dubai and she does not feel bad about it. This makes Korede to be greatly taken aback by her heartless behavior and describes the heartless behavior "shame" (85). The shame here goes to two families, the family of Ayoola, the murderer and the family of the victim, Gboyega who leaves his wife and children and travels to Dubai with a girlfriend and meets his premature death from the trip. There is a sense of guilt in Ayoola's family because of her inclination to doing bad things and her willingness to do more bad things.

4. Conclusion

Thus far, the exploration of the scent, stench and scar in Oyinkan Braithwaite's *My Sister, the Serial Killer* has been done

through the lens of the Relational Theory of Beauty. It has been shown that the scent of beauty is a great tool in the hands of members of society for a disguise or camouflage to shield the nefariousness of people described as the beautiful. The scent of beauty is also a mask for the covering of the real personality of many who use beauty as a cover for their real personalities.

The study has demonstrated that beauty is capable of stench and wounds that cannot be healed and if healed, the scars will remain indelible. It is succinctly explicit in the study that the enchanting power of beauty on members of society who fail to be inquisitive or make enquiries to know the antecedent or past and background of the beautiful beyond their physical attractiveness is irredeemably disastrous. This study has offered valuable insights into the complex ways individual experiences and copes with beauty and its attendant profundities and traumas in human society.

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