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4/23/2023

In the Novel Birthmarked by Caragh M. O'Brien, There is something really intriguing about the cover. On the cover, there is a quote that reads “Those Marred With A Code Will Determine The Future. One Marred By A Scar Will Unravel The Past”. This quote has great significance because Gaia who is the main character has a scar, and because of the scar she found out that her parents inflicted this on her and that because of it she has low self-esteem as an imperfect baby. The other part of the quote is really for the perfect babies who were taken in by the Enclave who will determine who and what they will be. The text communicates important messages about helpful friends, survival, and discovery.

Another significant thing I came across in the novel is “The Baker With The Black Oven”. This shows the theme of helpful friends. He is a character who advances the plot and impacts the story. The Baker’s name is Derek Vlatir he was close friends with Gaia’s parents and he tells her that they are in the Enclave and sentenced to death. When she heard the news she went to go rescue them she had no idea of the geography of the Enclave so Derek gave her instructions and directions. Derek has been in the Enclave before so he knows. By him telling Gaia this pivotal information she rushes into many dangers that await her in the Enclave.

The Baker With The Black Oven is significant because it shows just how important Derek is in the advancement of the plot. If he was never included in the story Gaia would have never known that her parents were going to be executed also, she would have never known how to walk around in the Enclave without being noticed. Gaia followed Derek's orders and demands but when she got to the Enclave the road ahead of her wasn't an easy one. While there she saw so many horrific things that can be traumatizing. One of the most important things she saw was the execution of a man and a pregnant woman.

The scene when Gaia takes the newborn Maya and runs away ties to the theme of survival. Throughout the story Gaia is going through a Paradox she is desperately trying to rescue her parent, but at the same time, she is trying not to get captured and sentenced to death for sneaking into the Enclave. This is an incredibly hard task that requires the ability to live and survive. Gaia is like a secret agent with one thing on her mind saving her parents and getting out alive. The help of her friends Derek and Sergeant Bartlett made the journey inside the Enclave easier increasing the chances of her survival.

When Gaia runs away this depicts her determination to survive. She sees her mom can no longer run with her so she delivers the baby for her which is her job as a midwife and she runs with her little sister. Her running shows her dedication to living with this dedication she continues to run which is a form of survival. Survival is the state or fact of continuing to live or exist what Gaia did when she ran proves to the reader that she wants to continue living.

Upon figuring out the meaning behind the scar. She is baffled when she realizes that her parents secretly inflicted this upon her because they didn't want to lose her. Back then the Enclave used to let mothers keep their babies for a whole year and the mothers became attached and let the children inflict injury to themselves to become imperfect babies so they won't have to go to the Enclave. Gaia was in the mix of those who did that and all her life she thought it was an accident caused in the kitchen. This event connects to the theme of discovery because her parents hid the truth from her this entire time.

Throughout the novel, Gaia relies on three themes Helpful friends, survival, and discovery. The helpful friends she had throughout the story helped her on many occasions. Derek who is the baker helps Gaia enter the Enclave safely and how to disguise herself among the others. Sergeant Bartlett helped her escape when she was captured in the Enclave. The survival aspect encouraged her to live on. When she ran away she indicated to the reader that she wanted to continue on living. Discovery was also a major aspect of the novel because as Gaia learned more about her past it pushed her to go forward with the knowledge she already has. Gaia played a huge role in the novel Birthmarked. With the three themes above Gaia became a new character.