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Appendix L2

**(Item No 5 of
Check List) Details of Research
Publications**

S.No	Article	Journal	Other Details Vol/No/Page No/ Year	Published in UGC- CARE / Scopus Indexed/ Web of Science
1	Stigma and Revenge Pornography in Anupama Chandrasekhar's Play Free outgoing	ĀMNĀYIKĪ	Vol. 25, No. 2, 335-339, 2024 (January- June)	UGC-CARE Group I
2	Exploring Self-stigma Among Victims of child sexual Abuse: A critical Analysis of Dina Mehta's Breeding Away with Murder and Mahesh Dattani's Thirty Days in September.	INCLUSIVE	Vol. 2, no. 25, 1311-1318, 2024 (July- August)	UGC-CARE Group I

*Proof of list of Journals from Internet to be attached along with copies of reprints.

Scholar : *T. R. J* 10/11/2024
Supervisor : *Koushik* 7/12/2024

A. Vijayaram
Checked By: 04/12/24

HoD/Dean of Respective School

The scholar Miss. Isai Arasi, T. (19PHENFC09) has published her research articles in the following journals:

1. Annayiki - indexed in UGC Care Group I and
- 2 Inclusive - indexed in UGC Care Group I.

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Stigma and Revenge Pornography in Anupama Chandrasekhar's Play *Free Outgoing*

T. Isai Arasi*, Dr. S. Christina Rebecca**

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the societal stigmatization of victims of revenge pornography, particularly women, and its incapacitating effects on their ability to actively participate in society, as demonstrated through the character Deepa in the play *Free Outgoing* by Anupama Chandrasekhar. Furthermore, this study examines how the perpetuation of stigma often generates negative beliefs, commonly known as stereotypes, which are subsequently embraced as veritable truths, fuelling prejudice, and ultimately fostering a desire to ostracize or exclude individuals possessing stigmatized status, thereby perpetuating discrimination. Deepa, because of stereotypes and gender-based prejudice, is unjustly held accountable for her victimization, subjected to discrimination and devaluation by both her peers and society at large, thereby impacting her psychological well-being and severing her connections with both the external world and her own family.

Keywords: stigma, discrimination, stereotypes, revenge pornography and victimization

Stigma is an attribute that discredits individuals, reducing their social standing and dismissing their worth. The concept of stigma is primarily understood within a framework of social constructivism. In his seminal work *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, sociologist Erving Goffman defines stigma as "bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier. The signs were cut or burnt into the body and advertised that the bearer was a slave, a criminal, or a traitor—a blemished person, ritually polluted, to be avoided, especially in public places" (1). Stigma frequently engenders negative beliefs, known as stereotypes, which are then accepted as true, leading to prejudice, and ultimately fostering a desire to shun or exclude individuals who possess stigmatized statuses, thereby perpetuating discrimination. Goffman contends that the stigma is characterized as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" and puts forth the idea that the stigmatized individual is transformed from a complete and typical individual to one that is "tainted" and "discounted one" (3).

Anupama Chandrasekhar's play, *Free Outgoing*, illuminates the predicament faced by a young adolescent named Deepa, who falls prey to the malicious act of revenge pornography. Revenge pornography has acquired considerable visibility in current media, discourse, and society. This form of digital harassment involves the dissemination of nude or sexually explicit images or videos without the consent of the individuals

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depicted. Commonly referred to as nonconsensual pornography, it is intricately linked to acts of sexual abuse. The play effectively captures the essence of Deepa's unjust labelling as a bad victim, as her very existence is reduced to the confines of her room, leaving her isolated and marginalized. Throughout the entirety of the play, the playwright deliberately omits any physical manifestation of Deepa, rendering her presence entirely intangible and confined solely to the conversations and perceptions of the other characters. This artistic choice emphasizes her invisibility as an individual, highlighting that she is only acknowledged through the negative reputation she carries within society.

Deepa and her boyfriend Jeevan, who is a senior and a friend of her brother, Sharan engage in a sexual encounter after school hours in the classroom. Deepa is unaware of Jeevan's malicious intentions; she consents to him documenting their intimate moment. However, Jeevan callously shares the sex tape with his friends, exploiting Deepa's dignity and violating her privacy. This heinous act inflicts immeasurable harm on Deepa's emotional well-being. As a result, Deepa faces social isolation and becomes a target of stalking, bullying, and harassment. Unfortunately, in this situation, Deepa is unjustly blamed for her victimization, while the true culprits, Jeevan and the unknown person who uploaded the video, escape accountability.

Goffman categorizes stigma into three distinct types: "abominations of the body" (physical stigma), "blemishes of individual character" (stigma of character traits), and "tribal stigma" (stigma of group identity) (4). Deepa in the play *Free Outgoing*, can be classified under the second type, which is the stigma of character traits. Goffman describes this type as "blemishes of individual character perceived as weak will, domineering or unnatural passions, treacherous and rigid beliefs, and dishonesty, these being inferred from a known record of, for example, mental disorder, imprisonment, addiction, alcoholism, homosexuality, unemployment, suicidal attempts, and radical political behavior" (4). After the dissemination of the sexually explicit video featuring Deepa, her reputation as a virtuous and exemplary student in the school was tarnished, resulting in her being stigmatized as promiscuous and devalued by her peers.

In the realm of revenge pornography, the blame is often placed more prominently on the victims rather than the offenders, as it is believed to be the victims' mistake for allowing their intimacy to be exposed. Furthermore, these victims are often categorized as either 'bad' or 'perfect' victims. Yani Dai, in her article entitled "The Phenomenon of Feminist Stigmatization and the Research of Cyber Violence against Women," elaborates on the notion of a 'perfect victim,' which pertains to individuals who conform to societal expectations such as not being alone in public after dark, being submissive to men, dressing modestly, and abstaining from pre-marital sexual intercourse and demonstrating no negligence during the assault. Conversely, victims who do not meet these criteria are labelled as 'bad victims,' potentially leading to the justification of the assault. In the case of Deepa, she is classified as a bad victim due to her involvement with Jeevan, engaging in pre-marital sexual relations, and her concern about recording the incident. Interestingly, the community members are more preoccupied with Deepa's privacy rather than addressing the actual incident itself.

Stigma and Revenge Pornography in Anupama Chandrasekhar's Play *Free Outgoing*

In the play *Free Outgoing*, the playwright sheds light on the gender stereotypes associated with sexuality. Specifically, women who partake in sexual activities are frequently stigmatized as "immoral sluts," whereas men's engagement in sexual endeavors is conventionally esteemed as a matter of "pride" (Citron and Franks 353). This notion is clearly exemplified in the play where Nirmala, the school principal, remarks Deepa:

NIRMALA. In my time, a girl like that was called a slut. Strangely, the boys who were teasing her, they used the same word. Times haven't changed all that much, have they? You have to tread carefully now. Labels like that tend to stick for life. I suspect you'll need the month to sort it all out. (13)

The existence of stereotypical thoughts paves the path for developing prejudicial attitudes. Devine, in his scholarly article entitled "Stereotypes and Prejudice: Their Automatic and Controlled Components," elucidates that "as long as stereotypes exist, prejudice will follow" (5).

Prejudice occurs when people believe in a stereotype and use its generalizations to judge and evaluate individuals who fit it. Stereotypes and prejudice are interrelated yet separate cognitive processes stemming from societal stigmatization. The androcentric society assigns a higher status to men in comparison to women. Within this dramatic work, the media and the public exclusively interrogate Deepa while simultaneously devaluing her, yet they fail to extend the same scrutiny to Jeevan. The absence of inquiries aimed at Jeevan clearly indicates the perpetuation of gender norms, where men remain unchallenged while women must exercise heightened caution; otherwise, they must bear the burden of being victimized in cases of sexual assault. Anupama Chandrasekhar exposes how the media succumbs to the trap of existing gender bias. The media endeavours to fabricate a storyline revolving around Deepa's sexual conduct, maliciously claiming that she has "contracted Aids" (40). Julia T. Wood in her scholarly article entitled, "Gendered Media: The Influence of Media on Views of Gender," highlights the media's biased portrayal of gender in three main themes:

First, women are underrepresented, which falsely implies that men are the cultural standard and women are unimportant or invisible. Second, men and women are portrayed in stereotypical ways that reflect and sustain socially endorsed view of gender. Third, depictions of relationships between men and women emphasize traditional roles and normalize violence against women. (31)

The prejudiced mindset gives rise to another level of decline known as discrimination towards the victims. Discrimination entails the unequal treatment of an individual due to their marginalized status. In his renowned work, *The Nature of Prejudice*, Gordon W. Allport elucidates that "discrimination comes about only when we deny to individuals or groups of people equality of treatment which they may wish" (51). The repercussions of revenge Pornography have had a profound and devastating impact on Deepa's life. She is subjected to discrimination by her peers, who stigmatize her as a "slut," (13) and the school administration expels her, thereby impeding her education and hindering her prospects for the future. Moreover, even the residents in her vicinity

strongly dislike her presence, as they perceive her as a person of ill repute or a blemish in their community. This discrimination further manifests in the form of harassment and humiliation, as the public openly mocks her by symbolically parading “effigy on a donkey” (39). The aggressive conduct exhibited by the community compels her to sever her ties with society and her own family.

Victims of revenge pornography often internalize the stigma and judgment associated with their exposure, consequently, the fear of being targeted and the infringement upon their privacy lead to pervasive feelings of shame and self-loathing which result in social isolation. Deepa to evade the accusations chooses to sever all ties with the outside world and isolates herself within the confines of her room. she seeks solace in the darkness. She not only withdraws from throughout the play she never comes out or even does not respond properly to her family.

A pervasive consequence of revenge pornography victimization is social isolation, characterized by withdrawal from interpersonal relationships, social networks, and community engagement. Victims often fear judgment, stigma, or retribution from peers, family members, or colleagues, leading to a profound sense of alienation and disconnection from others. Moreover, the digital permanence and virality of intimate images or videos can exacerbate feelings of exposure, vulnerability, and distrust, further inhibiting victims' ability to forge meaningful connections and cultivate a sense of belonging.

Social isolation can have profound implications for victims' mental health, exacerbating feelings of loneliness, depression, and emotional distress. Moreover, the absence of social support networks can impede the healing process and prolong the recovery trajectory, leaving victims feeling abandoned, misunderstood, and invalidated. Severe ties from the outside world shatter the mental stability of Deepa and she is completely “shell-shocked” (14). When Sharan, the brother of Deepa, mentions Jeevan, his mother Malini steps in and urges him to be careful with his words, as they might unintentionally worsen Deepa's illness: “please – you'll aggravate her illness” (24). This specific occurrence serves as a powerful illustration of how Deepa's absence in the play does not diminish the depiction of her trauma, which is vividly conveyed through the actions and worries of her family members. Deepa remains trapped, unable to move forward from the traumatic experience that has deeply affected her mental state.

In the play *Free Outgoing*, Deepa is stigmatized by society as immoral, which harms her mental well-being and confines her capacity to partake, in ordinary activities. To eradicate the social stigma surrounding individuals who have fallen victim to revenge pornography, it is of utmost importance to challenge prevailing stereotypes and address the existing gender disparities. Instead of subjecting the victims to discrimination based on their victimization, both the family and society must provide unwavering support, empowering them to overcome the profound trauma they have experienced. In the depicted play, Sharan Deepa's brother emerges as a steadfast advocate for his sister, fearlessly opposing his mother and society's unjust treatment of her.

Stigma and Revenge Pornography in Anupama Chandrasekhar's Play *Free Outgoing*

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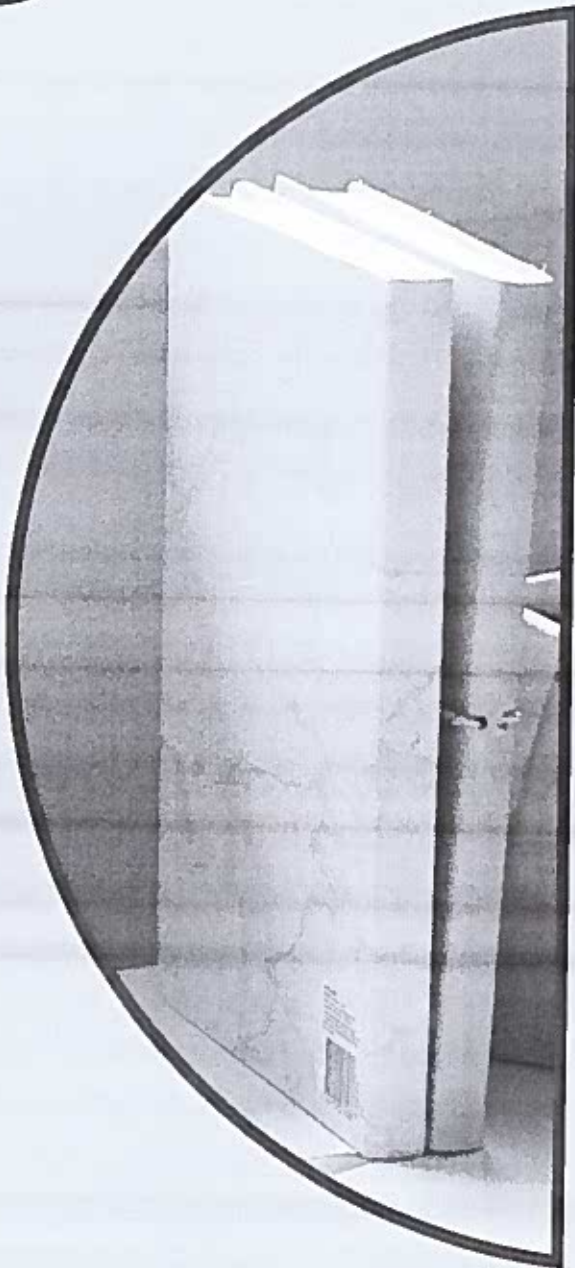
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**Exploring Self-Stigma Among Victims of Child Sexual Abuse: A Critical
Analysis of Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder* and Mahesh
Dattani's *Thirty Days in September***

Isai Arasi T and Christina Rebecca. S

Abstract

*Child sexual abuse is a highly distressing and traumatic incident, often accompanied by negative stereotypes and societal stigma. This study examines the phenomenon of self-stigma experienced by survivors and the subsequent consequences they face, as depicted in the plays *Getting Away with Murder* and *Thirty Days in September*. Self-stigma refers to the internalization of societal devaluation and stereotypes, leading to feelings of shame and self-blame. It worsens symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and affects various aspects of survivors' lives. To address self-stigma, survivors need to focus on rebuilding their self-esteem and resilience. Additionally, the support of family members plays a crucial role in motivating survivors to seek professional assistance from therapists.*

Keywords: Self-stigma, shame, self-blame, PTSD.

Child sexual abuse is an extremely distressing and traumatic event that can have enduring consequences for those who have experienced it. One notable aspect of this ordeal is the presence of stigma, which involves the assignment of devalued stereotypes. This notion is deeply rooted in the fields of sociology and psychology, shedding light on the complex dynamics of social perception and its influence on both individuals and groups. This theory, which gained popularity through the sociologist Erving Goffman's influential work *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, presents a classic definition of stigma as an "attribute that is deeply discrediting." Additionally, it proposes that individuals who bear stigmatization undergo a shift in their perception from being considered whole and ordinary to being seen as "tainted" and "discounted one(s)" (1963, 3).

The existence of social and self-stigma exacerbates the distress experienced by victims of child sexual abuse, rendering it difficult for them to openly discuss their traumatic experiences. Social stigma refers to the negative attitudes held by society towards abuse, whereas self-stigma involves the internalization of these attitudes. Addressing self-stigma poses a particular challenge, as it becomes deeply entrenched in individuals' self-perception and their societal roles. The present study aims to analyze self-stigma among victims of child sexual abuse, examining the characters Sonali in Dina Mehta's *Getting Away with Murder* and Mala in Mahesh Dattani's *Thirty Days in September*.

Mahesh Dattani and Dina Mehta, distinguished Indian Playwrights, explore the complex depths of human psychology and societal stigmatization in their powerful plays. While their plays delve into intricate family dynamics and the consequences of child sexual abuse, a recurring theme that stands out is the self-stigmatization endured by the survivors. By depicting the journeys of characters like Mala, raised by a divorced mother, and Sonali, brought up by a widowed mother, both of whom were victims of sexual abuse by their uncles during childhood, the playwrights adeptly illustrate the inner turmoil of these individuals wrestling with the weight of their previous traumas, frequently resulting in deep-seated self-doubt, shame, and social alienation.

Self-stigma refers to the acknowledgment of devaluation or stereotypes of oneself because of societal norms. Cooley's theory of the "looking glass self" (qtd. in Lucksted and Drapalski 2015, 99) proposes that an individual's self-perception is greatly shaped by their perception of how others view them, resulting in feelings of shame. The internalization of societal biases poses a challenge for marginalized groups, as it reinforces the belief that they are inherently flawed. The social cognitive model of self-stigma posits that individuals who internalize public stereotypes and biases experience a process of self-concordance, emphasizing the link between self-stigma and social stigma.

Self-stigma in survivors of child sexual abuse can arise due to societal misconceptions, victim-blaming attitudes, and lack of support. These negative beliefs can cause them to internalize responsibility for the abuse or feel undeserving of assistance. Finkelhor and Browne's (1985)

study, titled "The Traumatic Impact of Child Sexual Abuse: A Conceptualisation," explores how survivors of child sexual abuse assimilate external influences as stigmatization. Stigma encompasses negative associations such as "shame" and "guilt," which are imposed upon the child, thereby influencing their "self-image." These negative meanings are communicated directly by the perpetrator, through pressure to maintain secrecy, and perpetuated by the attitudes of family and the community. The child may perceive the abusive activity as "deviant" or "taboo," particularly if reactions following disclosure involve shock, hysteria, or blame (qtd. in Kennedy and Prock 2016, 1-2).

Finkelhor and Browne's assertion regarding the negative impact of child sexual abuse being reinforced by both abusers and family members is illustrated in these two plays. In *Thirty Days in September*, Mala's uncle threatens her with the label of a "bad girl" if she discloses the abuse to her mother or others (Dattani 2010, 123). Similarly, in *Getting Away with Murder*, Sonali's uncle coerces her into "silence" and "submission," effectively suppressing her inner turmoil (Mehta 2000, 88). The perpetrators, along with the victims' mothers, contribute to silencing their voices, perpetuating the notion that speaking out is taboo. This traumatic incident becomes internalized, leading to feelings of shame. Candice Feiring and Lynn S. Taska's research article, "The Persistence of Shame Following Sexual Abuse: A Longitudinal Look at Risk and Recovery," emphasizes that "condemnation of the victim by the perpetrator and explicit threats to keep silence promote feelings of shame" (2005, 337).

Shame plays a significant role in the stigmatization of sexual conduct, particularly when it contradicts societal expectations. In societies that prioritize female modesty and chastity, individuals who have lost their virginity may face social stigma. For instance, Sonali and Mala perceive themselves as flawed, believing that they have failed to meet the "social and self-imposed standards" set by their community (Feiring and Taska 2005, 337). This sense of shame is characterized by feelings of inadequacy or being unlovable. Mala's uncle reinforces these beliefs by making her think that she is "ugly" and "good only for this" in reference to sex (Dattani 2010, 124). These damaging thoughts persist in her subconscious, leading her to feel ashamed of her own identity. She even believes that her father abandoned her because she is

not "more lovable" (Dattani 2010, 113). Similarly, in *Getting Away with Murder*, Sonali feels that she is undeserving of her mother's love.

The occurrence of child sexual abuse in a clandestine environment, coupled with the perpetrator's "condemnation of the victim" and the "societal taboos and legal sanctions against sexual acts of adults with children," contribute to the heightened probability of children feeling shame and self-blame for their involvement in child sexual abuse (Feiring et al. 2009, 3). In their article titled "When the Social Self Is Threatened: Shame, Physiology, and Health," Sally S. Dickerson, Tara L. Gruenewald, and Margaret E. Kemeny explore the concept that shame is primarily rooted in negative self-evaluation. This emotion is intertwined with "negative characterological self-related cognitions, and its motivational and behavioral correlates are indicative of a devalued or damaged self (e.g., submission, withdrawal)." Mala and Sonali experience this disturbing emotion making them feel "self-condemnation" and desire to hide their "damaged self" from others (2004, 1195).

Self-stigmatization exhibits thoughts of self-blame. The phenomenon of self-blame has been characterized as the internalization and cognitive experience of feeling responsible for the violence one has endured. In his article titled "Characterological Versus Behavioral Self-Blame: Inquiries into Depression and Rape," Ronnie Janoff-Bulman elucidates that "self-blame as a maladaptive psychological mechanism is generally related to harsh self-criticism and low evaluations of one's worth" (1979, 1799). It frequently arises from a tendency to attribute negative outcomes solely to personal flaws or inadequacies, disregarding external factors or circumstances that are beyond one's control. Individuals predisposed to self-blame may engage in negative self-talk, subjecting themselves to self-reproach for not meeting their own or others' expectations.

Sonali in *Getting Away with Murder* attributes the neglect and gender discrimination from her mother as the primary factors behind the mistreatment she faced at the hands of her uncle. This perspective reinforces her belief that being born female entails being subjected to "violence and servitude." Concurrently, Sonali internalizes the patriarchal ideas instilled by her mother, firmly convinced that "women's failure to bear a son is just retribution for misdeeds in her past

life" (Mehta 2000, 63). Sonali holds herself responsible for her incapacity to conceive a son, perceiving it because of wrongdoing in a previous life. Ronnie Janoff has termed this tendency to self-blame as "behavioral self-blame," where individuals attribute blame to past actions and consider themselves accountable for specific outcomes. This form of self-blame directs victims towards focusing on the "future and what they can do to avoid a recurrence of the negative outcome" (1979, 1800). In Sonali's case, she is determined to avoid having a daughter to shield her child from the abuse she endured.

In *Thirty Days in September*, Mala experiences a deep sense of self-blame, viewing herself as inherently flawed and evaluating her persona. She acknowledges her wrongdoing but feels guilty and deserving of blame. This form of self-blame is referred to as "characterological self-blame," whereby individuals hold themselves accountable for their intrinsic qualities and find fault in their character. Those who engage in characterological self-blame often dwell on the past, pondering what aspects of themselves led to the negative outcomes for which they blame themselves (1979, 1800). Mala internalizes her uncle's derogatory label of her as a "whore," firmly believing that she is solely responsible for the abuse she endures. She expresses feelings of guilt and self-blame, convinced that she brought the mistreatment upon herself. Mala firmly believes that "(i)t's not anybody's fault, except my own" (Dattani 2010, 89). This statement underscores Mala's belief in her own "deservingness" when it comes to the past experiences she has endured.

Individuals who have been subjected to child sexual abuse and are grappling with these sentiments of persistent inadequacy or unworthiness may suffer detrimental repercussions on their psychological well-being. The presence of self-stigma can exacerbate the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in survivors, as they may struggle to seek assistance and internalize detrimental beliefs about themselves. The severity of these symptoms can trigger the resurgence of fragmented memories and disrupt their tranquillity.

PTSD is often accompanied by hallucinations, which are illusions that appear real but are generated by the mind. In the case of Mala in *Thirty Days in September*, constantly feels the presence of her uncle, stating, "I see this man everywhere. I can never be free of him. I am not

so sure I want to be free of him. Even if I were, I am not sure whether I have the ability to love anyone ...else” (Dattani 2010, 134). Similarly, Sonali in *Getting Away with Murder* also experiences hallucinations of her uncle. She hears his voice and senses his breathing, as she reveals, “Every time I took a bath I could hear him outside ... breathing ... waiting to look at me without my clothes on ... (screaming) get away from my door ... get away or I’ll tell Anil you’re hounding me ...” (Mehta 2000, 66). These hallucinations keep the past incidents alive in the victims' minds, causing them to live in turmoil. Sonali describes it as the “worst thing” since it disrupts her tranquil life (Mehta 2000, 64).

Self-stigma has the potential to exacerbate hallucinations by instilling in individuals the belief that they possess personal defects or lack strength, subsequently impacting their self-esteem and inducing feelings of shame. This apprehension acts as a barrier to seeking assistance and heightens the probability of encountering judgment and discrimination, as observed in the case of Sonali and Mala.

In the play *Getting Away with Murder*, the character Sonali conceals a distressing secret that ultimately results in the development of multiple personality disorder. Sonali identifies herself as an eight-year-old girl and adjusts her voice to mimic that of a young child. By adopting the persona of this young girl, she effectively communicates the anguish of her tormented inner self, before transitioning back to her regular voice in a seamless continuum. Using a monologue, the playwright skilfully portrays the inner turmoil of Sonali's afflicted psyche. Similarly, Mala in *Thirty Days in September* also suffers from borderline personality disorder as a consequence of a traumatic incident. Mala exhibits fluctuations in mood and experiences uncertainty in self-perception. Her emotions oscillate between intense intimacy and aversion. Despite her deep affection for Deepak, Mala hesitates to pursue a future with him. In the realm of intimate relationships, she perceives him as an uncle figure, indicating her exclusive attraction to older men.

Overcoming the self-stigma associated with child sexual abuse is an arduous yet essential journey toward healing and self-acceptance. Victims must confront and challenge the negative stereotypes that society may impose upon them. Additionally, they must actively work towards

rebuilding their sense of self-worth and resilience. The role of the family in this process cannot be understated, as they play a pivotal role in assisting the victims in overcoming the self-stigma and trauma caused by sexual abuse. Family members should make concerted efforts to rebuild the trust that may have been shattered and reassure the victims that they are not at fault for their victimization. Moreover, the family must support the victims in seeking professional help from therapists or counsellors who can offer guidance, coping strategies, and the necessary tools to overcome self-stigma.

Anil, Sonali's husband, provides support to help her recover from the trauma by reassuring her that she is not to blame. He promises to stand by her side in any difficult situation and takes on the role of a therapist to help Sonali navigate through her emotional turmoil. Together, they work towards overcoming the stigma and Sonali decides against aborting the girl child. Similarly, in *Thirty Days in September*, Mala is receiving counselling but is hesitant to continue. Her boyfriend encourages her to persist with the therapy, offering his support to help her heal from the traumatic experience. Like Anil, he underscores to Mala that the maltreatment inflicted upon her by her uncle was not her responsibility and acted as a deterrent to her indulgence in self-harming conduct. With the backing of their respective families and cherished individuals, both Sonali and Mala endeavour to reconstruct their self-worth and fortitude.

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