 Character table

| Alison | Vic | Gail |
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| Alison appears to be physically scarred by a birthmark that has been judged to have an impact on her self-esteem because she doesn’t conform to society’s ideals of physical perfection or beauty. There also seems to be emotional deepness to her character because of the “mask” and her eyes as if she sees beyond the superficial physical world. This is captured in the following description:  “Her birthmark was lurid crimson; it covered half her face and neck, like a mask incompletely removed. Against the splash of colour her thick long hair was blonder and her eyes bluer than seemed possible.” | Vic becomes attracted to her because of her imperfection that is outwardly projected and it counterbalances his inwardly projected imperfection. She appears as though she would be a victim that requires someone with the ability to see beyond the physical attributes. She needs a defender who could understand the inner turmoil and isolation of seeing the deeper issues at play in the world. Vic is looking for someone who doesn’t fit society’s ideals because he doesn’t. This is understood when Gail relates the following,  “Vic’s horror turned to fascination as he saw that the passing girl’s skin was not bubbled with scar tissue but perfectly smooth. Her mark was all colour.” | Gail is disturbed by the attraction and is trying to find empirical evidence that could explain what made her husband the way he is and are the issues in their relationship based on something she is or is not. She has a slight jealous demeanour to Vic’s history and undercuts any revelations in case it gets too close to her emotional self-worth. It appears as if she is doomed to fail to understand because she is trying to avoid being either the victim of imperfection that Vic is naturally attracted to or she doesn’t want to confront her on emotional scars. So she will contend with examining the scars of others. This is best observed with:  “It was obviously congenital yet he still thought of conflagration, as though she’d survived a fire whose heat had never left her face.” |
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