Joyce Carol Oates’ Rape: A Love Story

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**Introduction**

“A Love Story” by Joyce Carol Oates is one of the fictitious tales of love and rape. The novel illustrates an unforgiving tale of gang raped Teena Maguire in Niagara Falls, at early thirties. The novel tells us that Teena was gang raped in front of her daughter and left helpless in the mercy of nobody to save her dear life. Teena wished she could have not been left alive because of the pain and permanent torture rape leaves on people (Oates, 2010). The attackers of Teena were their neighbors who lived two blocks away and therefore, the attackers John Dromoor discovered the helpless body of Teena at their Boathouse and made a statement to get to culprits and ensure that Teena attains justice. However, John Dromoor and Teena daughter, Bethie McGuire largely maintained silent during the interrogation and court proceedings. The silent of Dromoor and Bethie could be as a result of trauma and strategic way to get the details and achieve the intended objectives.

The silent of Bethie McGuire was due to trauma. Bethie watched her mother being ganged raped by a group of young drunkard men, and therefore, the images of what transpired kept lingering in her mind (Oates, 2010). Bethie suffered a lot despite not be beaten or raped by the gangsters. The torture and pain of watching her mother being beaten and raped could be as a hallucination to her but deeply affecting her mind and concentration and therefore, the silence could be as a result of trauma. It is point out that Bethie kept thinking of what happened the fateful night and wonder what would have happened if they would have taken a walk to the park. Bethie hide a cross a corner to avoid getting harmed, therefore, she feels the guilt of not being able to help her mother (Oates, 2010, p. 21). However, it could be possible that Teena’s daughter was traumatized by the campaign launched against them by the defense attorney immediately her mother Teena decided to take legal action against the culprits. The decision by the judge to treat the case as a mere joke could be traumatizing and the Bethie and her mother could not believe the culprits could go free.

It is evident that Teena’s body was discovered by detective Dromoor a day after the incident. Dromoor found the helpless body with blood a situation he compared with his days in the Gulf war. It is traumatizing to find a helpless body though Dromoor had been in the military and have seen multiple helpless bodies, he described the situation and condition as inhuman, which he has never seen for ages and therefore, made a promise to get the culprits. It is therefore, evident that Dromoor was traumatized with what happened and the condition he found Teena and he daughter Bethie (Oates, 2010). The decision by the judge to treat the issue as a joke also did not ogre well with detective Dromoor, traumatizing him further. Detective John Dromoor sympathizes with the victim Teena and started to hunt the assailant one by one. This happened after justice has been died through the courts.

Though the action taken by Dromoor to help the family get justice and hunting the victims one by one, made Bethie to like Dromoor, it not nothing much but can be regarded as love. Bethie had gratitude and hero worshiping of Dromoor could be seen as love towards Dromoor. However, it could be as a result of seeking for attention and protection since Dromoor showed serious commitment to help her family. It is therefore, these people followed the family of Maguire a classic example of victimization over certain issues, which is not stated in the novel buy the author. It is also clear that Teena s a victim of rape and torture and Dromoor acted as a human being. Teena and Dromoor became friends but it is not clear why he could go an extent of putting his career on the line if it is not about love. Dromoor avenge the rape and torture against Teena by going after the assailant one by one including their families. Dromoor action could have been driven by love to Teena. It seems that Dromoor decided to act as a protector to defend the family after realizing the family could not get justice in courts. Dromoor lost his personal freedom and career because of revenge against what happened to Teena.

In conclusion, the silent witness throughout the case as illustrated by the author is as a result of trauma, which occurred as a result of what Dromoor and Teena’s daughter Bethie witnessed. Bethie witnessed her mother being raped and Dromoor discovered the helpless body of Teena left to die. It is also evident that Dromoor was shocked by the turn of events in the court, which made him not to say anything but changed him to take drastic actions which caused him is freedom and career. All these actions committed by Dromoor were driven by love. It is seems Dromoor because friends with the family of Teena and felt in love as well. Therefore, Dromoor’s actions were driven by love but the silent during the process was a as result of trauma of what happened to the family of Teena and decisions made by the judge.

# Bibliography

Oates, o. C. (2010). *Rape: A Love Story.* New York: Pearson Publisher.