Essay on “A Couple of Quiet Young Guys by Hugh Garner”

[Name of the Writer]

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**Introduction**

"A Couple of Quiet Young Boys" is part of Hugh Garner's Best Stories written in 1963. The story starts off at an all-night diner, where a girl becomes the victim of sexual assault. The character of the girl is denoted as the "pretty little thing." After getting assaulted the girl reports the events to the cook of the diner, named Slim. She questions the cook: "*why do all men act like bastards Slim?"* However, as the girl departs, Slim becomes the victim himself. However, instead of a sexual assault, he is robbed at gunpoint by "a quiet young guy." This paper will analytically analyze and discuss "A Couple of Quiet Young Boys by Hugh Garner" in regards to the dilemma surrounding female sexual assault victims and appearance of the assaulter.

**Discussion**

The author has done justice to the concept of sexual assault by denying the myth that female victims like getting sexually assaulted. It is interesting how the story written by Garner is way ahead of its time in terms of the views that he has pertained. Garner denies the fact that women are masochists and enjoy getting involved with violent men who abuse them. This fact raised by the author is quite significant, because women indeed get questioned that what did they to provoke the attack. In the story, Garner portrays the beauty of the girl as the cause of her misery (Garner, 1071). The author comments on the young woman's transition from a frightened and scared individual who just got assaulted to a composed docile female. This fact shows that the girl is trying to portray herself up to mark with the society's standards. However, her appearance, unruly hair and dirt in her hands tell a completely different story.

This story puts great emphasis on the appearance of individuals. The author tries to tell the reader that at times appearances can be deceiving and one can never judge what the other person will do. For instance, in the story the girl tells Slim about her attacker*: "You saw him tonight…..he wasn’t good looking, but kind of shy and clean.”* Further, even Slim describes his robber as *“a quiet young guy.”* The author tries to tell that girls are more at risk of getting assaulted or attacked by *“a quiet guy”* as opposed to mythical creatures like Frankenstein’s monster and Quasimodo (Garner, 1971). The concept of consent is also highlighted as the girl tells Slim: *“this time was different and the other guys were just dates….if you watched yourself, nothing happened, and sometimes it was fun."* The female character is trying to tell that she has dated in the past and things have never gone far enough that anyone would force her (Garner, 1971). The female character is constantly shunning how women are treated in the male dominant society.

The author in a way is trying to tell that no one asks to get harassed or objectified regardless of how they appear. Garner made it crystal by writing about Slim’s robbery. He did not ask for it and nor was his appearance denoting wealth. Similarly, regardless of how pretty a woman is she is not asking or inviting a man to come and rape her. It is unfortunate that regardless of being a victim the girl chooses to keep her appearance uptight. She is trying to hide all the stains and is brave enough to tell the person she confided in that she will be around and that too for a long time.

**Conclusion**

The way Garner portrays the alienation of women in his stories shows how sensitive he feels about sexual violence. Garner’s stories are important to showcase the national mood. Like all his other stories, in “A Couple of Quiet Young Guys” Garner is trying to create awareness. The way Garner has depicted sexual violence is basically the representation of viciousness on a broader scale. He is trying to tell that the victims are not mere dummies of psychological, physiological and social forces that are past their control. Another important point that Garner's stories raise is that all the victims struggle when they are trying to make a conscious decision. The worst thing is that at times, the decisions that they take can prove to be fatal. Lastly, his stories shed light on the fact that monsters can be hidden behind the calmest and shy faces. A person can never judge someone based on their appearance. It is not necessary for someone to look like a monster to have horrific tendencies.

**References**

Garner, H. (1971). Best stories. Simon and Schuster.