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LIFE-AFFIRMING PHILOSOPHY IN THE NOVEL OF DANIELLE STEEL
“BEAUTIFUL”

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INTRODUCTION

Literature always has played the main role in the emotional formation of a personality. Despite the lack of attention to reading habits, there are writers who show their prosaic skills to the fullest so that the reader may reshape the meaning of their existence. The novel “Beautiful” is not an exception in the list of the novels which can change inner thoughts of a human being. However in this case, the work of Danielle Steel is one of the most popular bestsellers which achieved immediate success in several weeks after publication in 2022 by Dell Publishing House in New York.

Nevertheless, in a Ukrainian research field, there is lack of information regarding that writer. That means that the topic is on a demand and needs to be discussed, since the life-affirming philosophy being mentioned at the core of the novel “Beautiful” is important in a harsh and challenging times we have in the twenty-first century.

As a result, in the bachelor thesis we have analyzed the works of the famous American woman bestseller writer Danielle Steel, the full name of whom is Danielle Fernandes Dominique Schuelein Steel. We have delved into the biography of the author and the significant episodes from her life that helped her write her own stories. Based on the general review of a creative life of Steel, we have analyzed the novels by this author, focusing on the biographical similarities, plot specialties and the importance of going ahead and overcoming the problems and obstacles of life.

The aim of our thesis is to investigate the theme of life-affirming philosophy, its connection to the Danielle Steel’s harsh periods in her history. In the thesis we will find the answer to the question related to the reasons of writing such heartbreaking stories as “Beautiful”, her first novel ever “Going Home”, “Until the End of Time”, etc.

Hence, the **main tasks** are:

- To showcase the life of Danielle Steel for better understanding of her position and general psychological portrait;
- To analyze the novel “Beautiful” by Danielle Steel;
- To examine the plot of a story;
- To describe and analyze the characters from the novel and focus on their motivation in the actions they make throughout the novel;
- To highlight the idea of self-improving and life-affirming mindset.

We used such **methods of investigation** as comparative, historical, descriptive, theoretical and empirical. Therefore our research was based on a holistic analysis of the book “Beautiful”, exploring each part of the novel separately and in details.

The **theoretical basis** of our research is the works of famous literary critics such as Baker K., Chin P., Heyne E., Leach S. and others, and the magazine articles from The Guardians and Meidum as well.

The subject of the thesis is the novel “Beautiful” by Danielle Steel. The novels of Danielle Steel were also used frequently while delving into the problem of genre and thematic diversity of Danielle Steel’s works. More than three novels were represented and selected to describe that topic, especially such works as: “Going Home” (1978) “Until the End of Time” (1994); “Miracle” (2016). Her non-fiction books were analyzed as well, including “His Bright Light: The Story of Nick Traina” (1998) and “Expect a Miracle” (2020).

The object of a thesis is the concept of vital and life-affirming position as they serves the main source of explaining the philosophy that the author pursues in almost all of her works.

The relevance of the investigation lies in the fact that in Ukrainian literary studies D.Steel’s creative work and life-affirming ideas and philosophy provided by the author have not been investigated enough by literary critics. There are only two scientific researches regarding the thematic nature of works of Steel. Moreover, one of the publications written by Davidenko and some other authors serves as a guidebook for students in the course of modern literature. With such redundancy of material, a new discourse is pertinent.

The theoretical value of the thesis is based on its novelty and contributes into the development of the concept of life-affirming philosophy in literary discourse. **The practical value** of it, however, makes it possible for teachers to include the novel “Beautiful” into the American literature optional course and to use the results of the research in teaching and learning modern American literature to the students of secondary schools and higher educational establishments. The material included in this work would help with class preparation and proper management of the lesson.

Structurally the thesis consists of introduction, three parts, conclusions and references.

Introduction includes relevance of the investigation, its aim, tasks, methods of investigation, theoretical basis, subject, subject and practical value. Part 1 gives general review of D. Steel’s

biography and creative life. Part 2 focuses on genre and thematic diversity of D. Steel's creative work and biographical aspect in the novel "Beautiful". Part 3 gives holistic analysis of D. Steel's novel "Beautiful". It makes problematic and thematic analysis and plot and compositional analysis as well. Conclusions sum up the results of the research.

PART 1. General review of D. Steel's biography and creative life

Danielle Steel (full name of the writer – Danielle Fernandes Dominique Schuelein-Steel) is an American writer who is mostly famous for her romance and inspirational novels. She is also known as a very prolific novelist since she publishes approximately five to seven books per year. That enormous amount of books allowed her to reach a score of publishing more than 180 books according to the data since 2019. (Samantha Leach, 2019). 24 of her novels were adapted into TV shows. As a result, two of them received the prize of a Golden Globe.

Her books were translated into 43 languages in total, including Hungarian and German, which proves the undoubted fact that her literature is indeed popular worldwide. (Forbes, 2023). In addition to that, her different novels were adapted to a TV format as a kind of show, where Danielle's written stories were told in a graphical way.

She was born on the 14th of August, 1947, two years right after the World War II. For the United States of America where Danielle was brought to life, this period symbolized the beginning of the Cold War between the most two powerful imperialistic economic forces: communism and capitalism. The "secret" fight emerged between the two countries that got the name "arms race". Other than that, the US and Soviet Union competed in a variety of social and political spheres. In the literature, the competition was held with identical influence. That is why novels like "Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison and "Collected Stories" by William Faulkner were the outcome of cultural explosion and literal richness (Sanford Pinsker, 2000).

Danielle spent the beginning of her childhood in New York City with her family, where she was the only child. The uniqueness of the family tree of the writer is that her father, John Schuelein Steel, has deep German routes in the beer makers, who carry the name "Löwenbräu". Her mother Norma da Camara Stone dos Reis, on the other side, is the Portuguese daughter of a diplomat. "I had a very adult childhood, attending formal social functions and dinner parties with my parents" – recalls Danielle from her own experience. ("Transworld", 2002). Later on, after a tremendous break-up between her parents, Danielle stayed with her father in Paris, France. There, she graduated from the Lycée Français being 14 years old. (Carrie Snyder, 2019).

Her further education way proceeds to New York institutions. When she moved to her homeland, she immediately applied her documents to New York's Parsons School of Design. Danielle's plan was to become a professional designer, but unfortunately, she was forced to leave the school due to physical indisposition (stomach ulcer). Her plans suddenly changed when she tried to apply to New York University and succeeded. Steel studied there for four years,

starting from 1963 to 1967, until she married the French-American baker, Claude-Eric Lazard (Carrie Snyder, 2019).

Her family life then became interesting and full of romantic relationships which mostly ended up with divorces. In her personal life, one can count up to five marriages and none of them were quite successful. Even her career as an overworking novelist started right after the break up with Claude-Eric. The motive for starting her writing career was the closure of the agency called Supergirls Ltd. which was located in New York City. Her role as a vice president of public relations ended when the company went bankrupt. (Britannica, 2023).

In 1972 she wrote her first novel ever published and seen by a community of readers called “Going Home” under the influence of such a harsh decision of fate. This heartwarming story of the ups and downs of a resident of San Francisco whose name was Gillian Forrester was criticized by literature reviewers, getting the lowest attention possible. Renovating herself after a divorce and covering for the unsuccessful publication, she decided to continue her writing job. (Britannica, 2023).

Until 1981, her marriage life was unstable. She got married to two more partners, one of them being a prisoner twice while being romantically interested in a young novelist. His name was Danny Zugelder, a 22-year-old man who already violated the law by stealing cars, drinking alcohol, and robbing banks. When Danielle moved from New York to San Francisco, she visited Danny quite often. Exactly at the time of the previous divorce with Claude, in 1973 she moved to another address in the same town with her daughter of the first marriage Beatrix, and Zugelder. Steel’s romantic life with this man was short as she parted ways with him right after Danny was accused of robbing and sexual abuse. As Zugelder did not want to tell the truth, Danielle stood for him and even married the prisoner in the prison canteen in 1975. Yet, both of them were too different to be together; as a result, in 1978 she divorced again. (Paula Chin, 1992)

The outcome of these romantic “rollercoasters” were the novels created by Danielle Steel such as “Now and Forever” (1978) and “Passion’s Promise” (1977). We are going to analyze the influence of Danielle’s partnership with Zugelder on those two stories in a more detailed way in the second half of the first chapter of the work due to the characterization of her work.

Danielle Steel married her third husband, William George Toth, in 1978. Yet they divorced three years later in 1981. After this marriage, a son named Nick left for her to look for.

Her fourth marriage with John Traina was successful in terms of the quantity of a family. They had five children in total; additionally, the husband of hers, John Traina, adopted Nick who was a child from Danielle’s previous marriage. Every kid in this enormously huge family

received equal love and support from their mother, although it was barely impossible to work and be a mother simultaneously. For Danielle Steel keeping her two favorite types of occupation is easier than it seems for other people. She shares her secret of productive writing work in her interview for the website “Reader’s Club” back in 2004: “...*I don’t sleep! My kids are more precious to me than anything. I’m with them all day, and I write all night.*” (Rosanne L., 2004) Since the start of the 21st century, she still believes her own words the same way as it was before. The evidence of that is another interview for “Glamour” that is the closest to the modern time: “*I don’t get to bed until I’m so tired I could sleep on the floor. If I have four hours [of sleep], it’s really a good night for me.*” (Samantha Leach, 2019)

Danielle’s last husband, Tomas James Perkins, was memorable to the public as the couple with the shortest time spent with each other. Officially they were a couple for four years from 1991, yet in the news, journalists researched that both of them got separated after 17 months. Then, a very close friend of both partners stated their cordial relationship had been held for five months already at the time of 1992. (Pat Steger, 1992) Their official marriage fell apart in 2002. After the divorce, they dedicated each other their authentic books: from Danielle Steel it was a humouristic novel “The Klone and I” written in 1998; from the side of her ex-husband Tomas it was another novel called “Sex and the Single Zillionaire”.

Another interesting fact from her biography that influenced her not only as a writer but also changed her life is the incident of the death of Nick caused by suicide at the age of 19. The son of Danielle and John Traina (biologically – a son of William George Toth) suffered from bipolar disorder while being in the rock band “Link 80”. His death caused Danielle to write a novel based on the real events in her and Nick’s life “His Bright Light”. With this publishment, she created a foundation in cooperation with Ann Fay Barry “Nick Traina Foundation” which helps children to overcome mental struggles. (Carolyne Zinko, 2002) From this generous act, it is logical to come to the conclusion that Danielle Steel is an ideal mother despite any situations that may happen in her “marriage line”.

Danielle spread her carefulness and willingness to help not only by organizing her foundation for mental health recovery. In addition to regulating emotional well-being of teenagers and youth, Steel opened a gallery with paintings that she collected throughout years of settling relationships with various artists. On the seventh of October 2003, the world stumbled upon a line of creators that were unnoticeable before or got severe economic problems stopping them from making new masterpieces. Those artists like Peter Forakis, Sam Messer, and other

unknown to the public geniuses gained a new wave of recognition, as well as received enough material support from connoisseurs of art. (Kenneth Baker, 2003)

After her life became stable Danielle Steel continued to focus her mind on writing novels for her fanatic readers. Her most famous works that she created are: “The Promise” (1978), “Kaleidoscope” (1987), “His Bright Light” (1998), “Safe Harbour” (2004), “A Gift of Hope: Helping the Homeless” (2010), “Blessing in Disguise” (2019), “Fine Things” (2021), “Worthy Opponents” (2023), and, finally, the novel that will be analyzed in our work called “Beautiful” (2022). She is in the same way considered as a number one bestseller specifically in New York and America. At least one of her books leads the way through the line of top best sellers of the year. (Danielle Steele, 2022)

Till April of 2023, Danielle wrote her blog about her life and behind the scenes of a novelist. However, she stopped keeping her online diary due to her personal growth as a person and writer and the growth of a platform she was going to switch to, which is Instagram. Previously, as she shared it with her community, she has seen a certain amount of content on Instagram containing food photos and images. Now, in the second decade of the 21st century, Instagram has become a comfortable platform to post updates about life four times a week; that was a plan Danielle set for herself to achieve. (Danielle Steel, 2023)

Steel’s passion for writing novels was nurtured from the place of her work in the company called “Supergirls Ltd.”. As it was mentioned before in this chapter, she worked in this firm as a vice president, and one of her clients was John Mack Carter. This person is an active player in the fate of future novelist because he was the first advisor that suggested to her to enter the writing industry. Danielle gave that idea a thought for three months after finally letting herself write her first novel “Going Home”. (Paula Chin, 1992)

Nevertheless, her publication was not a success right away: she had to face problems in achieving her goal of a continuous and non-stoppable writing career. Therefore, her next five novels were rejected by most of the publishing houses in America, until her final seventh book being finally bought by a publisher and brought into the light – “Summer’s End” (1976). From those harsh denial periods, Steel formed a kind of advice for the future generation of novelists: “...*If I had quit after the second or third or even fourth unpublished book, I would never had the career that I do today*”. (Kiri Masters, 2023)

Moreover, the family life of the author has not made her give up on her writings whatsoever. Despite the troubles and hardships, Danielle Steel continued to write novels since it was her passion and reason for living a life. As evidence, in an interview posted on the platform

of “The Guardian” it was mentioned that she works more than 20 hours a day. Until her draft is finished she will not leave the desk under any circumstances. Overworking that much makes her physical health a bit lowered from the normal indicator. (Elle Hunt, 2019) In addition, journalist Samantha Leach discovered in her own article, that Steel prefers to work with her old standard typewriter “1946 Olympia” on her desk, barely brushing her hair with a comb, sitting in her good old cashmere nightgown and typing out every single letter, feeling her finger muscles ache after monotonously pressing buttons. As an author mentions to the journalist herself, “*dead or alive, rain or shine, I get to my desk and I do my work.*” (Samantha Leach, 2019)

Danielle is known for being shy in public and introverted due to her devotion to novel writing. That passion, unbreakable spirit, dedicated workaholicism and committed professionalism brought her to higher places in the writing community. As an example, we can refer to her rightfully achieved awards in several categories, mostly centered in the sphere of writing. She gained an award in her homeland in France which is called “Officier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres” for contributing her novels to the culture of the country in 2002.

A year later, she received an award in San Francisco for the same literature contributions made for this special region mentioned before – “Outstanding Achievement Award”. Steel was inducted into the California Hall of Fame in 2009, which is an outstanding development in modern literature history. Finally, her foundation for her son, Nick Traina, has not gone unnoticed, and she was rewarded with a nomination for “Distinguished Service in Mental Health Award”; this exact outstanding generosity created by Steel and the book based on it (“His Bright Light”) achieved such a triumph for the first time. (Aishwarya Gurg, 2023) By writing the novel about the struggles of Nick Traina in one of her documental books, Danielle was given an opportunity to serve as a speaker for the American Human Association’s National Committee on a Child Abuse. From her activity, we may observe her fascination and love not only for her kids but for every each child in the world. (Davidenko, 2008)

As a continuation of Danielle Steel’s successful literature and governmental achievements, she has been elected as a leader of the National American Library Association. That is, she was a member of the library unity and was interested in the future of American publishing matter. (Samantha Leach, 2019)

Unfortunately, Steel knows how harsh can be the fate not only from gossip. In her novels, she seldom deals with a theme of traumatizing injuries or health issues that may cause a downfall in the future. Danielle herself was not an exception since she witnessed and felt the progress of an illness on herself. Thus, she went through poliomyelitis and cancer. In spite of having those

diagnoses, Danielle Steel continued her work. Her secret to such productivity in problematic times is that, first of all, the process of writing keeps her spirit motivated. On the other hand, Steel creates her books with a consideration in mind that this is her job too. She cannot just easily surrender after the achievements she got on her hard way into the publishing sphere. Moreover, her literature art brings her food and living, so that she and her kids may feel safe and sound (Davidenko, 2008).

Another interesting fact about Danielle Steel is that she never confused herself when she writes a novel. As for example, she tries to produce the content, not to consume it. In another words, Steel have a limit to her time when she can read the book: mostly she delves into the other literature piece created by another author on her weekends. Unlike the assumptions of the readers and habitual way of allocation of holidays, Danielle Steel has only one week in the entire year to spend time with her family or enjoy few pages of a novel. (Kiri Masters, 2023)

Summing this all up, the biography of Danielle Steel is bright and full of intense periods and episodes of her life. She achieved tremendous success in literature despite life difficulties, which makes her mindset life-affirming, as the novel we are going to analyze in this work. She wrote all of her novels in an old-fashioned way and never stopped working. Her spirit is hardworking, thus, it shows us an example of resistance and braveness toward the job.

PART 2. Genre and thematic diversity of D. Steel's creative work

2.1. General analysis of Steel's writing style

All works of Danielle Steel are very similar in their thematic variety and genre, although they may have been written in a different period of time. That stability is a result of her hard work and dedication to the writing she produces. We already mentioned in the first part of this chapter that Danielle has a tendency to overwork in her office. Furthermore, it is already a well-known fact that one of the main sources for her novels from the perspective of inspiration is her family and private life.

According to the words of critics, her novels have a tremendous understanding of the human soul. In general, she describes the life of a family and depicts the smallest details of it. Having experienced it herself, she is able to combine both fictional and realistic literary essentials. Additionally, her novels are directed at the women audience, which means that the “women's literature” and Danielle Steel are synonyms. (I. Samilyk, 2014) Thus, to better understand characteristic features that are suited for Danielle Steel only and make her novels unique from other writers, the reader may consider the possibility to analyze the novels in detail. In the process of this analysis, the main genre and theme would be distinctively noticed.

Before the analysis, we should categorize Steel's novels into fictional and non-fictional works. Fictional literature describes imaginary situations and characters, while non-fictional stories serve the purpose of a form of communication based on events and personalities across time; the narrative of such a story is dimensional and historical (Eric Heyne, 2001). Although there is a superior advantage in the first type of books, Steel is also known for emotionally wrapped autobiographies. The idea of the text has not changed and stays even in the so-called “novel documentaries”: each of her stories has a pursuit to motivate and encourage readers to break the rules and drastically change their lives. Moreover, she continues to describe the family peculiarities from the perspective of being a mother herself.

As we proceed to analyze other novels for the purpose of an example of the statement, we will have a chance to prove the referred standpoints.

To start with, the first novel that Steel wrote resembles a theme that quite frequently appears in future texts of hers. The name of the novel that is being referred to as “Going Home”, being published in 1973. The story tells us about a young mother of a five-year-old child Gillian Forrester. On her way to take a perspective career, she meets Christian Matthews and falls in love with him. Unfortunately, their love is represented in this book as far from ideal due to the actions of Chris. As an example, the major conflict in the novel shows the triangle of love, in

which Gillian, Chris, and his other woman. In addition, there is an incomprehensible fact about the personality of Chris that makes him psychologically disturbing and unacceptable in society circles.

Firstly, he has not been silent toward Gillian about living with a lover, which he states covertly, yet with an extremely understandable context behind the words that were said by this character: *“The revelation that Chris was living with someone had come as something of a shock. The possibility that he was had crossed my mind the first day, but I had shoved the thought away. I didn’t want to know. I didn’t want him to have anyone else.”* (Danielle Steele, 1973, p. 39). In this text extract from the fifth chapter, Gillian desperately does not want to hear her logical consciousness and tends to believe that Chris is only hers.

Nevertheless, there is another evidence of inadequate behavior of Chris that does not sound enough convenient to the main character until the very end of the novel. The example is based on a particular episode in the novel where the boyfriend aggressively tries to persuade Gillian to have an abortion: *“Jesus. Well, you’ve got to do it [abortion] the best way for you. We’ll talk about it. But you’re taking on a hell of a lot to handle, Gill.”* (Danielle Steele, 1973, p. 81) That way, the heart of an upcoming mother is totally broken and left behind by a person to whom she was attached from the beginning of their relationship.

The end of the story circulates on finding another way through the obstacles of life. In the aftermath, Gill meets Gordon Harte, a manager of the fashion magazine publishing house. Therefore, the young mother evades his compliments and romantic commentary of his throughout the whole novel. Fortunately, they are getting closer and closer each time both of them have a coincidence to meet each other.

At the very end of the novel, Gordon and Gillian seem to plan a happy life which also includes both of them. After starting to notice this manager, she begins to recognise how unreasonable she was for falling in love with a careless yet beautiful person. That statement makes her understand the flaws of the previous romantic relationship with Chris. Furthermore, it elevates her spirit and courage to fight against the unjust behavior toward her; there is a citation from the book itself at the end which symbolizes her brave decision to break ties with her past: *“Watch your step, madame, it’s a very big step. Watch your step...”* (Danielle Steel, 1973, p. 274). That huge step on the way to a new home for the newborn couple in Paris is a symbol of major changes and breakthroughs in life.

Another novel by Danielle Steel showcases the two pairs in different time intervals (approximately with a thirty-eight years gap). The name of the novel is “Until the End of Time”

and it was officially published in 1994. In general, the book shares the histories of four unique personalities, each of them intervening in their destinies in some romantic way. The main characters of the story – Bill and Jenny, Robert and Lilibet – accidentally meet with each other. Subsequently, throughout further encounters, they start to realize how much they have to keep together at any cost. Without proper and sudden recognition, they come to the conclusion of being common among themselves and having strong and irresistible love that cannot be defeated whatsoever.

While both stories compiled in a single book have their disparity reflected in names and the actions that happened in the story, the similarity of those novels is based on persistence, bravery, and the compassion of one of the participants of a romantic couple. Mostly, Jenny and Lilibet have such a strong character build that helps them stay with loved ones. As an example, we have to compare both of them so that the resemblance would be perfectly seen.

Firstly, the book starts with the events of 1975 and the recently married couple Jenny and Bill Arden. After they got married, Bill suddenly changed his mind about pursuing the career of a lawyer. That way, he applied for the job of a priest in every church that was available and had some vacancies. Unfortunately, those churches ignored his requests or even did not consider the possibility of Bill becoming a minister there. The only place that allowed him to work as he desired was a place far away from the city the husband and wife lived in, New York. However, the problem arises before Bill agrees to work in Wyoming: that means that the tiny family of two members should leave their home in order for Bill to serve as a priest. Despite the disagreement with the family of her husband, who decisively expected him to be the lawyer, and the possible outcomes of this decision, Jenny sacrifices her career for the sake of his own profession: “Jenny sounded serious when she answered: *“Maybe it could hurt my marriage if we stay...”* (...) *It was a huge sacrifice for her to make.*” (Danielle Steel, 1994, p. 62) After moving to Wyoming, Jenny felt a kind of relief since she really enjoyed being in this city. As a part of the adaptation to the new place, she created a fashion group for teenagers. Thus, she did everything to help her husband get the job he wanted to get so much.

On the contrary, she faced troubles with her clients from New York being unable to work at a distance. Instead, she entrusts a vacation of a fashion stylist to her best friend since she learned enormous and useful tips from her. Whereas Jenny Arden dissociated herself more with her past: “*Jenny was finding it harder and harder to focus on her clients in New York. Her life was here now, with Bill, his congregation, and their baby in a few weeks.*” (Danielle Steel, 1994,

p. 115) Unfortunately, this love story ended with the tragic death of Bill. He suffered an accident riding a horse. Jenny, on the other hand, died after delivering the baby.

It is important to emphasize the novels, which include the description of women's fate and their struggles in achieving triumph over their gender opponents. Sending us into the year 2013, which is far in the future, the author describes another duo of Lilibet Petersen and Robert (Bob) Bellagio. Each character is unbelievably dissimilar: the first opposites of Lilly and Bob is their social status. As it turns out, Lilibet is a young Amish girl who helps her huge family of farmers to stay alive. She carries the household chores alone without any help from the participants of the family due to various reasons, starting from the illness of her twin brothers Josiah and Markus and her older brother Willy; and ending with her father Henryk who is physically unable to care for cows, goats, any other domestic animal and the farm issues at all. Robert, on the other hand, is a handsome book publisher from New York. Later on, he notices a draft of a novel written by Lilibet and wishes to know the author personally.

In the course of events, the father of Lilibet dislikes her travels to New York and banishes her from the farming house. Bewildered, she has nothing else to do but to drive to the city where Bob is located as he is the only person she could address in such a critical situation: "She didn't want to call Bob in the condition she was in and admit how cruel her father had been to her and that she'd been shunned. It was her worst nightmare come true, and she was terrified and deeply ashamed, of herself and her father" (Danielle Steel, 1994, p. 213). Although Lilibet also appears to have a horrible accident by hitting the car of a stranger by the drunk taxi driver, she survives and lives her calm and peaceful life in New York with Robert. Subsequently, he falls in love with a farmer girl and promises never to leave her again.

The title of the novel "Until the End of Time" repeats quite often which has a sentimental effect on the reader. Examples of it can be given both from the first couple of Bill and Jenny: "...Bill never missed an opportunity to tell Jenny that he loved her until the end of time." (Danielle Steel, 1994, p. 106); and the second couple of Robert and Lilibet: "*I love you, Lilli, and I will until the end of time.*" (Danielle Steel, 1994, p. 226) The repetition and the usage of the title in dialogues symbolize the eternal affection of relationships in the two stories included in the book. This phrase connects the stories and unites them with the single idea: love cannot be easily broken.

The novel "Leap of Faith", written in 2001, is a great and amazing example of the role of faith in the writings of the author. Marie-Ange Hawkins, the main character of this book, loses

her relatives in a car accident, which makes her an orphan. However, she finds her great-aunt and lives with her over one roof. Eventually, the local guy called Billy Parker falls in love with her.

Whereas Marie-Ange does not feel the same way and chooses Comte Bernard de Beauchamp as her husband. Although they were wealthy and prosperous, the wife suspected that Bernard may lie about his “eternal love for her”. Through the desperate measures of burning the private residence where they lived, Marie-Ange erased her fiancé from her memories and decided to return to the origins. The title of the novel justifies itself since she reunites with Billy, already being an adult.

The moral of the story lies in faith and hope, since no matter what happens with the main character, she believes in herself and her ability to live freely with the kind of love she deserves. Although Marie-Ange seems to weigh her each opinion, she proceeds to stand against the unconcerned Bernard to not allow him to drain her interest in her existence. This theme is deeply correlated with others such as a theme of friendship, loneliness, loyalty, and the establishment of a character (I. Samilyuk, 2014)

Last but not least, the recent novel that is worth analysing and is close to the romantic theme of the first book is “Miracle”. This writing is theoretically modern and fresh; nevertheless, it discovers the same idea of personality development, growth, unpredictable romantic fate, and “the triangle of love”. The plot is placed straight in Paris, where the “white parties/dinners” are held. This celebration happens once a year and only those with a kind heart and pure intentions can be invited to the party: *“The event is still open only to invited guests, a tradition that is respected by everyone. Over the years, the venue has become one of the best-kept secrets in Paris... People are expected to behave and leave the place as decently as they arrived”*. (Danielle Steel, 2016, p. 5) The party originated thirty years ago from the starting point of the events, where a married couple celebrated their anniversary with 20 guests wearing white suits. As events continue to develop, Jean-Phillippe Dumas, a frequent guest of the White Dinner, gets permission to invite his friend to the location.

Further in the story, he experiences the fate of several couples that he requested to come: Gregorio and his lover, Chantal and the young handsome man. After all, Jean-Phillip himself suffers from the distance between him and Valerie, his wife. As it seems to be, the story is all about the twists and turns of love that can both heal and ruin a human personality.

As an example, the author describes in detail the problem of each couple, making their experiences intervene with each other further on in the story. It can be represented through the dialogue between Valerie, the wife of Jean-Phillip, and Benedett, the wife of Gregorio. When

both women share their experiences about their loved ones, Benedett mentions difficulties with her man of life: *“In addition to the business she had to run in his absence, she had the same worries as any woman whose husband had two children with a mistress almost twenty years her junior. She was beginning to think that he might stay with another woman and not come at all.”* (Danielle Steel, 2016, p. 98) The issue of love becomes realistic even for those who have never witnessed it before, such as a couple of Valerie and Jean-Phillip: *“She thought so. Valerie and Jean-Phillippe had such an orderly life. They were the perfect couple, with three adorable children, good jobs, great friends and a spotless house. They were an example to everyone... “Not quite [well]. We’re in a bit of a crisis ourselves””* (Danielle Steel, 2016, p. 99). Thus, both characters feel unsafe and heartbroken by the outcome of their relationships with partners. Although they feel a connection with each other, there is a trouble that needs to be solved.

At the end of the novel, each couple gets what they wanted at the White Dinner. The celebration brings them together and gives hope for their possible bright future. Fate decides to spare every participant of the evening party after all, getting each marriage and partner safe.

Heading to the conclusion, these novels reveal imperfect relationships that are going to be fixed later on by the accident of fate. Some characters like Bill and Jenny from “Until the End of Time”, Gillian from “Going Home” faced inevitable periods in their existence which were far from ideal and calm. Nevertheless, each of them has a lot in common: they are kind-hearted, heartbroken, and mentally strong. As a result, they deal with their problems with pride. Moreover, each romantic couple comes out of a dreadful occasion as a winner.

In fact, when we mention the fate in writings of Danielle Steel, we can discover how highly often it is used as a crucial game-changer that prevents the problems which have already been collected through the interactions of romantic couples. Moreover, the story is focused around love and the intense search for it. Additionally, the main characters of each of those novels had enormous obstacles in their way of peaceful living. Despite having challenges that seem to be unsolvable, Danielle Steel considers her character to change. Furthermore, the individuals in her stories do not only recover from the abuse and burden of the past but significantly change their lives and impact the being of the closest humans, relatives, romantic partners. From the examples of three novels – from the first one Danielle wrote to the nearest to nowadays publication, - we are able to notice a straight life-affirmative philosophy.

That philosophy continues to be mentioned in almost every novel that Danielle Steel wrote. “Beautiful” is not an exception, having an incredibly heart-touching theme of losing the

dearest people and the career of a young model Veronique with an attempt to pursue the normal and peaceful existence.

In general, the genre of novels of Steel is mostly related to novels, romance novels, and non-fiction. From the analysed texts above, we may conclude that Danielle Steel touches in her novel's themes of:

- loss of dearest people;
- struggles and place of a woman in society (from 1970 to 2020);
- relationship issues, romantic triangles;
- abusive and unacceptable behavior toward a woman;
- fate as a center, a guideline which can either support or break the life of a person;
- experience of traumatised characters, their attempts to find the motivation to move forward;
- hope as a tool for defeating the uncertainty of the future.

All of these features make the writings of Danielle Steel unique and distinctive among other literature pieces. Danielle Steel's style is encouraging, and full of life energy that keeps the characters of the story continually succeeding in their personal growth. Furthermore, it shows the development of women's literature, clarifying the uplifting progress of novels written by and made for the female gender.

2.2. Biographical aspect of Danielle Steel's writing

According to the library archives, there are four books published that have a non-fictional component in their writings. All of them are based on the real-life of the author and include such novels as: "His Bright Light" (1998), "A Gift of Hope" (2010), "Pure Joy" (2013), "Expect a Miracle" (2020). Despite the lack of frequency regarding the publication of non-fictional releases, Danielle Steel never compromised her principles that concern the style of her writings. She always directs her efforts on the emotional flow of the narration. Furthermore, she repeatedly aims at readers with heartbroken souls. That way, she may dismantle the components of a problem as much as help those injured by tragic faith personalities and mentally unstable beings as their consequence. Moreover, she believes that her novels can achieve the hearts of the reader, especially if we consider the non-fictional literature, which basically represents the author and her life struggles as an example of overcoming unexpected issues.

We should start our analysis of the non-fictional works of Danielle Steel with the novel "His Bright Light". The novel is far from a lightweight novella in its emotional understanding since it is a poignant chronicle of Nick Traina. As it turns out from the book, he was a son of Danielle's third marriage and tragically passed away due to having bipolar disorder.

Overall, this non-fictional writing describes the life story of Nick from his birth until the age of nineteen, the age he committed suicide. As the author mentions herself in a prologue, she wants *"Nick's life to be not only a tender memory for us, but a gift to others. There is much to learn here, not only about one life, but about a disease that afflicts between two and three million Americans, one third of whom, it is believed, die from it, possibly as many as two thirds."* (Danielle Steel, 1998, p. 4) Danielle wishes to spread awareness of the dangers and effects that maniacal episodes of bipolar disorder have on both people surrounding the likes of Nick and themselves. She hopes to prevent the appalling impact of a disease by writing the most realistic novel she ever had in her career.

"Expect a Miracle", on the other hand, stands out among all previously analysed novels in this thesis. Although this book is considered non-fiction, which means that it surely describes Danielle Steel's way of living, the content of that book lacks a story itself. It has no particular characters or events that happened in the book, however, there is a prominent background story that lies in "Expect a Miracle". Once, the author's grandmother presented her with a gift of an old notebook with a decrepit cover. The little Danielle did not have any clue what she needed to do with that object, but the idea came immediately to her. The concept of that idea was to write their citations and sayings of famous writers, businessmen, famous personalities. Suddenly,

Danielle realized that it would be an amazing idea to create the same version of the citations but in a book layout so that other readers across the world would engage in her favorite phrases that keep her motivated.

Initially, as the author mentions, she framed the quotations on her wall. Later on, those phrases appeared on the pages of her notebook, and then years later transformed into merchandise. Although Steel never considered any of her books to be about earning money. She truly believes that those words have an impact on her life and should get into the soul of the readers themselves: *“The right words can bring you back to reality or make you dream, can comfort you if you’re in despair or make you laugh out. The right words can open your mind or give you hope... The right words give me courage, strength, and peace.”* (Danielle Steel, 2020). Therefore, she wishes to reach the hearts of empathic people who may lost their hope, yet are ready to chase it by gaining more love for themselves and for the surrounding community.

We should not definitely omit the historical novels of Danielle Steel, although they never represented the author in them as a kind of person. In her practice, several releases got the attention of historical scientists. Nevertheless, let us remember that most of those novels were more based on the fictional component, which also signaled that a majority of her novels that contained some existed backstory of a real character resembled the imagery picture. To prove the point, there are a few writings that share the events of a real action that happened far into the past, such as “Crossings”, “No Greater Love” and “Zoya”. Despite their unsimilar thematic and ideological concepts, they have a single unifying feature: all three of them are established from the chronological history period of humanity. As an example, “No Greater Love” concentrates on the happenings of the Titanic ship sinking. Whereas “Crossings” depicts the reality of World War II, etc. (Mintsys E., Kryshstopa L., 2023)

In those novels, Danielle Steel tries to communicate with a potential reader through the existing historical figures, which may not only bring positive engaging effects but create an aesthetic that is quite unique and archaic. Additionally, literate humans surely will recognize every single detail and will understand dozens of indicated phrases or character specialties. For this type of reader, the historical events will play in another shade, revealing something totally new and never discovered by literary critics yet.

That is important to allocate Danielle Steel’s approach to writing biographical pieces. In one of her interviews, the journalist asked about her having a ghost-writer who helps her either with coping to model a plot or changing the story in an interesting way. The fascinating fact is that not only does she have any other personnel to provide assistance for her books. What is

more that she even prefers to discover a topic for her writing, except for some cases when she requires help from a specialist in the field of history. In that situation, Danielle asks her researcher, Nancy Eisenbart, to consult about historical events. That way, Danielle Steel's work would not only let her readers imagine the period of ancient or relatively close dates but clears the narration from mistakes that can appear in the process of writing. Ensuring the correctness of her writing is one of Danielle Steel's priorities. After all, she contacts pretty often with the management of her publisher's house. (Kiri Masters, 2023)

In conclusion, the author mentions in various interviews the following phrase: "I want not only to entertain a readers but to make them think." (Samilyk I., 2014). This citation characterizes not only whole her career but bio- and autobiographical novels as well. Daniella Steel mostly writes her novels based on what she feels, her intentions, and the message that she wants to give to society. That is one of her features, that makes her novel one-of-a-kind.

PART 3. Holistic analysis of D. Steel's novel "Beautiful"

3.1. Problematic and thematic analysis

The novel "Beautiful" which is being analysed in this thesis divides into two basic yet important features. They are present widely in major types of classical and modern literature. Those characteristics are the theme, idea, and problems of the novel.

The main theme of the novel depicts struggles of the main character Veronique Vincent, an idol in the model industry. This novel concentrates attention on the Zaventem Airport tragedy, which happened in Brussels in 2016. After experiencing the greatest calamity in her life, Veronique faces difficulties with accepting the cruel reality, in which she lost every dear and close person to her. She attempts to regain her will to live through the uneasy turns and twists of life. Though it seems like an impossible achievement, Veronique manages to find meaning in her existence, proclaiming her beauty still thriving and continuing to prevail.

Being only twenty-two years old, Veronique Vincent bravely steps into the business of modeling. Nevertheless, she never considered her job as a precious time of opportunities. She considered being a model in a way of ordinary profession which has neither insignificant differences between other important industries such as teaching: "*She never lacked for assignments, and had to juggle them all. She was part of an industry in which she was the commodity she was selling*". (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 5)

However, it appeared horribly clear to the main character of the story that her life would never be calm and straightforward. Terrorist bomb attack in Brussels Zaventem Airport was a point in the life of Veronique where her past life abruptly vanished in a blink of an eye. Her thoroughly built world crashed in a second and immediately took away the life of her beloved mother and her innocent boyfriend Cyril. Without any starting point, the young woman tries to change her uncanny fate by as many means as she can think of. Therefore, her spirit, which used to be charming, seeks another path by which she can return to believing in the power of beauty.

By this conclusion, we are able to identify the idea of a novel that is strongly life-affirming. Danielle Steel pursues the concept of the beautiness in various aspects. Though beauty can be expressed through the appearance of other personalities around us, the author of the novel decided to appeal to such regularly used attribute to emphasize the importance of human continuation of life. Nearly at the end of a story, there is a philosophical line that suits best in describing the general idea of a novel: "*Life is beautiful, and nothing could change that, scars and all.*" (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 270)

Another example that helps readers to understand the idea more deeply is the dialogue between Veronique Vincent and Jean-Louis, a French makeup artist. The conversation went quite philosophical through the process of preparing the documental film about the Zaventem Airport tragedy which we have a chance to spectate at the example: “...*You have to find a way to live with it. That’s true for the people who lost their limbs too. Some of them are remarkable in how they view it and are adjusting to it. It’s the ones who are filled with hate or anger or self-pity who don’t survive it, or not well.*” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 214) By saying that near the end of the novel, Veronique implies the importance of continuing and adjusting to the social environment. Furthermore, she considers people infused with fear and feeling sorry for themselves to be nothing more than humans lacking the quality of bravery. That way, having such personal traits as bravery, self-confidence, and self-love is the way through which humanity is considered to proceed in the social aspect of life.

Apart from this, further characters describe not only the same idea in their dialogue. As for the example, the famous Irish photographer Douglas Kelly told Veronique on the phone call after her return from the trip to New York: “*Some people want to put good energy back into the universe by doing good things. What happened to you and your mom was so wrong in so many ways. People feel helpless to fight it, so they do the best thing they can think of. It doesn’t change what happened, but it’s nice to know there are people like that in the world. It almost makes up for the others.*” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 153) He becomes the closest friend to the young and already retired model, thus encouraging her to dream and never give up. However, the successful photographer did not just emphasize motivation and its power: he described the importance of a kind-hearted community whose support and energy can enlighten even the darkest periods of a human being. Therefore, we may comprehend the validity of environmental force in attempts to get better life circumstances.

Doug makes it clear that, for sure, such a statement cannot make Veronique's mother and her boyfriend Cyrill reappear after their death. Furthermore, the face of a young woman surely cannot be repaired to the previous brilliant outlook she once had. On the other hand, the photographer countlessly holds a belief that knowing about the existence of nice people compensates for the mental ache in a certain way.

While reading the full sentence shown as an example and experiencing the process of reading the whole book, attentive readers would notice that Danielle Steel never intended to write a novel just about the damaged face of a young fashion girl. The main intention, thus the idea of this story itself, is to make readers with similar experiences discover a world in another

nutshell. By that, it means that the author shows changes in Veronique Vincent through her trudge post-attack adaptation with an intent to help her possibly traumatized readers to overcome harsh periods in their lives. Her changed way of observing the world around her has similar parallels with the fate of girls with lost career and hope.

Therefore, we can come to the conclusion that the novel written by Danielle Steel contains the idea of life affirmation and the aspect of moving forward despite any unpredictable harsh events happening. Later in the work when we are going to analyze the main character of the story, Veronique, it will become more obvious how she managed to cope with the death of her relatives and loved ones, as well as with her face being completely ruined without a possibility to change the outcome. Although from the pieces of evidence in the text we are already able to state that an enormous part in the efforts of Veronique has been played by good-natured personas.

In the novel that is being analyzed, we might be able to observe several problems, one of them being central above others. The main problem that can be noticed by thoroughly reading “Beautiful” by Danielle Steel is the issue of self-love, the love of the world, and regaining it all back from experiencing tragedy. Veronique finds it hard throughout the novel to appreciate her own appearance. Nevertheless, as we already mentioned in this work, she managed to grow psychologically through meeting her closest family relatives (which is the father and brother of Veronique – the only person being alive after the Brussels Airport happening), her saviors-surgeons from New York and her supportive friends from the old life of modeling of Veronique Vincent. All characters described above helped a young woman to understand her body and, first of all, her soul, which in this novel is the one of the important values of the human race.

The answer to this problem raised by the author lies in the last lines of the novel: “... *[Veronique Vincent] discovered in the end that life with all its beauty and tragedy and terror at times was worth living after all.*” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 270) Having experienced drastic disasters in a single year Veronique eventually is aware of reality being mesmerizing and charming. Even though dramatic and horrible events will never cease to exist, Danielle Steel makes us realize through the main character that existence has its significance.

Despite having the primary idea depicted in the novel in detail, Danielle also mentions some other questions that are worth to be analyzed. There are other problems, that are mentioned in the novel.

3.1.1. Experience of losing the dearest persons in the life of Veronique.

Steel in her novel writes about the dearest humans of Veronique Vincent passing away right at the time of the terroristic bomb attack on Zaventem Airport in Brussels. The girl has difficulty comprehending that loss to the extent that she cannot live normally without thinking of how events would be different in the case of her mother, Marie-Helen Vincent, and her British well-mannered boyfriend Cyril. Furthermore, she even imagined her mother being in the room and waiting for the moment she would return to her house in Paris. Although it was obvious to her that mother would never return: *“Her [Veronique’s] fantasy hadn’t happened. Her mother wasn’t waiting for her. Her footsteps echoed in the empty apartment as she walked into the kitchen. She had no idea how she was going to survive living here without her mother.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 80)

3.1.2. Finding the shocking family truth.

Another heart-touching event in the story “Beautiful” is tightly connected to the mysterious father of Veronique. From the words of Miss Marie-Helen, her dad, Bill Smith, was an American lawyer from New York City. Unfortunately, he had died in a car catastrophe while Veronique was at the age of six months old. Hence, this was the only well-known information that Veronique knew until the accident in the airport. As a result of such a calamity, the letter was sent to the former model by Bernard Aubert, a partner of Miss Vincent in law practice. The letter has been intended to appear at the hands of adult Veronique on the day of her twenty-first birthday since it was written that day. However, her daughter received a written message after the tragedy: in it, she revealed the truth about her father, who in reality chose the path of participating in a presidential campaign, which resulted in mandatory separation. The reason for such a decision was that the government of America at that moment should never have discovered him being divorced from his civil wife with three kids; for his political reputation should have been clear and unspoiled.

In some way, Veronique started being angry at the choice of her father, the real name of whose was William Hayes. In spite of the first impression which was kind of emotional, she was going to visit him in New York with this thought in mind: *“She was no longer an orphan now, as she had thought. She had lost her mother, but her father was alive. The temptation was great to try and see him, so that she had a connection with someone in the world, and wasn’t entirely alone. She hated what he had done to her mother and how selfish he had been, but he was still her father and she was curious about him.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 53) Accordingly, Danielle Steel set a hope in the heart of a young woman that somewhere in the globe there is a person

who is relative to her. We can conduct a philosophical thought that the author brings here in the novel about the possibility of never being alone.

3.1.3. The problem of facing “the old world”.

After the health therapy that Veronique received, the days of modeling melted away from her. Thus, she felt uncomfortable thinking about her model agency and in what way she would explain her five-to-six months of recovery in the military hospital in Brussels. Being released from the medical establishment, Veronique was not ready to face those characters from her “previous life” as she was scared to do so. The example of it we can read in the text of the novel: *“She still didn’t feel ready to contact people from her past. She’d lost contact with her school friends while she was modeling and working and traveling all the time. And her life had become too different from theirs. Some were jealous, and others had moved away, working on pursuing longer studies in other cities.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 161)

The term “previous life” here denotes the carefree being of a young twenty-two-year-old lady and her various less-friendly connections with agents, colleagues, makeup and dressing artists, etc. At this time in the head of Veronique, there were thoughts of hostility towards some of the participants of the fashion industry. Furthermore, her feelings of disgust increased after the tragedy in the airport. Even so, she met her previous manager, her agent Stephanie. The meeting was unsuccessful from the beginning: they met each other by a collision with Stephanie, who already left the shop. Yet upon a conversation with this woman, Veronique sensed freedom: *“She [Veronique] felt oddly free after she’d seen her. She didn’t need to hide anymore, or hope she didn’t run into her. The worst had happened. Stephanie had seen her face, and would tell everyone what she looked like. And then she realized as she walked home that the worst had happened on March 22, when her mother and Cyril and thirty other people had died, and so many others had been injured. The rest, and what Stephanie said about her face, didn’t matter at all.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 159) That situation with the agent is a symbol of Vincent finally cutting her relations with the model industry forever. She was released from her old career and memories; thus, she was ready for new accomplishments.

Danielle Steel mentioned this problem to illustrate a scenario that can be close to reality. Moreover, by this depiction author gives the reader an immediate solution which seems to work in the novel. The solution here is to face the fear so that it would be easier for your mental health to grow higher and stronger.

3.1.4. The issue of trust.

Several times in the novel author points out the trust issues of one of the main characters Veronique Vincent. It is displayed in countless dialogues with minor characters, especially with the producer of the documental film and two doctors in the surgery clinic in New York. We already touched upon the subject of the bravery of Veronique towards having a French documental film about an airport tragedy done. Therefore, to discover the topic of the problem with trust, we are going to present an episode of an operation held far abroad.

The surgical adventures for Veronique started with the photographer Douglas. He shared a business card with her telling her to try. However, the young woman declined the offer feeling embarrassed and culpable. She could not believe that surgeons had the ability to change her fate. After some time of consideration, she visited the private beauty clinic of Philip Talbot: “...[she] hesitated. She didn’t know if she wanted to call him [doctor Talbot] or not. The Belgian surgeons had been so definite that little improvement was possible, if any, that it seemed pointless. And then, in an optimistic mood after seeing her father, she decided to put it in the hands of fate.” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 128)

Veronique was pessimistic about the face surgery until she met two doctors there – doctor Talbot himself and his partner Dr. Dennis. Her damages were severe, yet they promised her that they would be able to make the size of the scar on the face more invisible than before. Doctors stated that the face would not be perfectly ideal, but they would correct the unreasonable mistake which should never have happened to her at all. From that moment Veronique commenced to have faith in this world: “*There were still truly good human beings in the world, and clearly the two doctors she had met thanks to Doug were among them.*” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 144)

3.1.5. Troubles with eagerness to share the experience of a tragedy.

Reaching a year after the Zaventem Airport terrorist attack French television company decided to film a documentary about it. Veronique denied being involved in a cinematic work. She has her reasons for it, and the main one is about overcoming the demons in the head of Veronique by herself: “...she told them flatly that there was no way she would participate in it. She preferred to recover quietly in the shadows.” (Danielle Steel, 2002, p, 208) Whereas the producer of this documental film not only convinced the former model to contribute to the historical record but also to share her experience for the sake of reducing possible outcomes. If there were other casualties similar to the tragic situation of young Vincent, they would recover faster. To illustrate this thought, let us have an example from the book at the moment where the producer addresses this issue to Veronique: “*There are scores of people who can no longer work, nurses, secretaries, teachers, mothers, who have lost their arms and legs and can’t take*

care of their children, a doctor who can no longer practice. Don't let the world think that it's over. It's not over for any of the survivors, or the next victims because it will happen again." (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 209)

3.2. Plot and compositional analysis

3.2.1. The plot of the novel

The plot of the novel is ordinary, yet has an inspirational meaning.

The story tells us about young Veronique Vincent, being only 22 years old. She is passionate about her job which is modeling. At this age of hers, she already participates in different model activities, such as Fashion Week podium shows, advertisement campaigns, several famous photoshoots, etc. Her mother, Marie-Helen Vincent, is very close to her even though being so far geographically from her daughter. Despite her intimate relations with Veronique, Miss Vincent was concerned about her daughter receiving a star sickness. Fortunately for both of them, Veronique continued to be herself: *"Her mother was relieved that so far none of it had gone to her head, despite so much attention focused on her. Veronique treated it like a job she was serious about, and never let herself be distracted, as any other girls did, their heads turned by their own beauty."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 5) Additionally, in the first pages of the novel, the relationships between mother and daughter are shown more closely than ever. The author makes an introduction to the story by describing the main characters and their behavior towards each other.

In addition to character development, Danielle Steel brings us information about her father, Bill Smith. As Veronique tells the reader in the beginning, he was a lawyer and met Marie-Helen Vincent at one of the worldwide conventions. Then, after Marie-Helen delivered a child, Bill died in a car accident being sixty-one years old. At a certain point in the story, Veronique will get a shocking truth about her father since he was alive at the time.

Until the realization, Veronique visits her mom and prepares for the vacation adventure in Miami. Cyril Buxton, the boyfriend of a model, accompanied both women to the Brussels Airport as a place of departure. Unfortunately, unknown terrorists organized an explosion of the whole airport, killing in the result sixteen people at once. Veronique was lucky to survive this attack, whereas Marie-Helen and Cyril appeared to be dead.

The girl wakes up in the military hospital after three months of the controlled comma. By that time she already overcame three recovering and successful surgeries. In a meanwhile,

Bernard Aubert, who was extremely close to Marie-Helen at her workplace, visits the traumatized Veronique. Through those common visits, he lets her know about the reality that she is supposed to face with. One of those meetings shattered the mystery of the father of Veronique; Bernard brought the letter from her mother with explanations about the identity of her father: *“The reason they hadn't married was that he already was, to someone else, with three children from that marriage. He had wanted to divorce his wife for years, and especially once he met Marie-Helene, but he had had powerful political aspirations, possibly even a shot at the presidency. In fact, Marie-Helene explained, he had run as a vice presidential candidate, lost the election with his running mate, and had subsequently become a senator. But a scandal, having an affair as a married man, with a love child and a mistress in France, would have ruined him if it had come out, and destroyed his dreams of politics forever.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 51)

In shock, Veronique notices that her face will never be the same as before. The right half of the face was damaged cosmetically by an enormous scar, while the left half was perfectly fine. This significant contrast cannot allow her to continue her model career, which meant that she would retire from this profession for the rest of her life.

The scar on the cheek was not the only shocking discovery that Veronique needed to experience. The matter of the situation is that Marie-Helen left for her daughter a letter with explanations about her real father. The letter from her made Veronique confused, furious, and a bit hopeful at the same time since she could not even imagine how lucky and disturbed she was to have at least one relative alive. Meanwhile, a visit of her old school friend Gabriella made the former model think of some actions towards the future.

Veronique's first touch with reality happened after a conversation with Gabriella. Hence, she wrote a letter to the Buxton family, feeling regret and condolence about the death of Cyril death. Another step to reality was her request for nurses to have a trip to the nearest store with the goal of buying some clothes for her. She thought of such an action due to preparations for leaving the hospital. On the contrary, her other request lies in the fact that Mr Aubert must deliver belongings of Veronique to her previous apartment as Veronique lost any hope of returning to New York and her modeling career: *“Finding herself now and a new path in life would be harder than twenty-six surgeries and surviving the bomb. She had to find her way now, and she had no idea how to do it.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 65)

After a few surgeries, Veronique returns home to her house in Paris. There she tries to live normally, although the memories of the past cannot let her easily begin her new life. In the meantime, she asks the priest to bury the ashes of her mom. As a result, on Friday night,

Veronique gets involved in the process of the funeral of her relative: it is a private event to which only Veronique and Mr Aubert are invited. From that point, she tries to delve deeper into the theme of modeling and realises that her soul does not yearn for it anymore. The call from Stephanie, her previous manager, quickly makes her figure out that her desire is not centered in the sphere of fashion, as she believed previously.

The events in the novel continue developing with the appearance of Douglas Kelly, an Irish photographer. He invites the lady to the nearest restaurant to have dinner. In spite of casually spending time in an admirable companionship, a minor character plays in this episode an important role of a motivator for Veronique, since she started thinking of the beauty of her face. Consequently, the young woman removes her mask which covers a huge scar. Afterward, Douglas encourages the main character to walk on the street with no accessories. That way, Veronique embraces her outlook little by little, which also shows the powerful impact of Douglas's words on her. Before the decisiveness of words Douglas spoke, the former model tried to withdraw her mask in public, which was a horrific psychological tragedy for her every time she did that act. In the text, her trials and public reaction may be described as the next citation from the book: *“She was determined to try, as she drifted down the street, and passed a woman walking her small dog. She glanced at Veronique as she passed by and literally gave a start and backed away from her. She looked frightened, as though she was going to scream.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 93)

As a result, the photographer is the first character in the story so far to show Veronique that her face is not an indicator of beautiness, since it comes from human personality traits. Doug undertakes the role of her life-path guide and is part of a mindset that the main character is going to use quite often later on in the novel. That way, the positive thinking that Veronique acquired from the Irish photographer will benefit her in the darkest situations that may appear in the story. With him, she felt that she was not the scar herself. (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 106)

Luckily, tragic events did not occur after the airport terrorist attack. However, Veronique got to experience some other unexpected turns of events. First of all, her father in New York answered her daughter with a letter of reply, stating that he definitely would wish to see her child in person. Therefore, Veronique traveled on a plane to the place where her father lives, although she had to overcome the fear of the process of flight transportation. Afterward, the girl visited William Hayes, her father who was in his late sixties. After a heartwarming conversation and settling the connection with each other, Vincent has nothing to do anymore in the city of opportunities except one matter. Her friend-photographer Douglas, who encouraged the main

character before, gave her a business card from the private clinic. She thought of this idea with a grain of skepticism until she had a chance to actually call the number of the card and contact doctors from the clinic. After all, this bold decision was a sign of her slow but plain transformation from the victim into a confident survivor.

This recommendation will later on change her life drastically, although it will happen not because of the plastic surgery that Veronique would face rest ahead. The change in her spirit will be caused by two doctors, Doctor Talbot and Dennis. In the story, they appoint an operation at Christmas time which is a great date for Veronique. Thus, she would have at least someone who cared for her on such a celestial and bright holiday. Analysing Veronique's situation and considering her struggles, doctors offer to pay for the clinical procedures of the first surgery on the face of a young woman. From this point in the plot, Vincent begins to have faith in humans, since in this world, as Danielle Steel illustrates in the novel, one has the ability to find a helping hand that pulls from the oppressive train of thoughts. For instance, in the book the author states about mental changes of the character in the next line, which is one of the last lines in the ninth chapter: *"There were still truly good human beings in the world, and clearly the two doctors she had met thanks to Doug were among them."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 144). With that in mind, both Douglas and New York doctors impacted the whole story so that it would turn unexpectedly.

From the analysis of the plot, it is obvious, that the previous life of a former model very soon will be just a reflection of the past. However, as each time Veronique returns to her apartment in Paris from long travels, the house where she once lived with her mother makes her feel unsecured and lonely: *"Her heart felt like a lead weight in her chest as she put her suitcase down in her own room, and walked around the apartment, looking for some sign of life."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 145). In contrast to feelings and memories of Veronique, reality reminded her once more about the great loss.

Subsequently, Vincent waits for the time of the surgery with enormous patience; alongside expectancy, she organizes her mother's closet and her mind as well. It is important to emphasize how Veronique collects her thoughts and puts the clothing of her relative in order simultaneously. Furthermore, she prepares a plan of how she would love to spend holidays in another country; Douglas was a part of that plan eventually. In spite of embracing a calm celebratory atmosphere, a young woman yet faces the scariest encounter she never would enjoy experiencing. In particular, she stumbled across her old manager Stephanie. After a complicated

conversation with her, Veronique felt her long-awaited freedom when she could choose her own path in the future without any possible influence from her previous life.

Since her father, William Hayes, had preserved more than a million dollars as an inheritance for the daughter, Veronique thinks of different other ways how to entertain herself. Several activities undergo her attention; that way, time flies very quickly. On the twentieth of December, Danielle Steel sets her character in New York City, with two doctors previously mentioned playing the role of assistance to her nearest beauty transformation. Doctor Dennis in the story does not simply communicate with the beloved patient but also mentions his business trips to Africa. More precisely, the story of Dick Dennis makes the character himself an important figure as Veronique still hesitates about her future career. Doctor's participation in the project HALO Trust will inspire Veronique to join it as well in the future. However, right now in the story, she lies under the scalpel of the two plastic surgeons.

The procedure of surgery follows successfully; Veronique recovers in the premium hotel room for a week. Parallely, as she regained her consciousness back to her, she called her father to congratulate him on Christmas. Despite the kilometers that separated them physically, both dad and daughter reunited once more on the brightest occasion of Jesus being born. The similarity of their mood can be described by their inability to go out into the outdoors of New York with the goal of making some snowballs. After sharing the same personal wishes, Veronique shares with her father a thought which contains the fact that her sleeping through Christmas time is not that awful after all.

New Year's Eve, however, had a great difference from Christmas. First of all, she was not alone, accompanied by Douglas. At midnight, they celebrated and watched on TV the ball drop at the peak of Times Square's highest building. After the event, Doug decides to leave, so that he may not disturb the evening by being drunk and lying on the couch of the hotel room of Veronique. She respects his choice to leave, yet hears her friend's speech about a romantic life. He says that Veronique will surely find her true love: *"...he hoped, that she didn't let the scars on her face keep her from letting love into her life. It would be terrible if she shut herself away."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 181) Therefore, that type of dialogue between them makes Veronique feel as if Douglas is her older brother, who protects her from any possible dangers.

Unfortunately, the festivity mood is abruptly over after Veronique reads an article in the New York Times dedicated to the death of her father, William Hayes, being 83 years old. The cause of his death was pneumonia. With horror the main character realizes that her last call to him was truly the last one; furthermore, the afternoon telephone meeting was the only time that

she could hear the voice of her biological father. Therefore, she became an orphan since she never had any other relatives in any part of the world. As it turns out next, she visits the funeral of Mr Hayes, which is open to the public. At the meeting though, she finds her half-brother, and for the first time, she tries to hide her glance. However, the man standing right next to her recognizes Veronique, searches for her phone number by what the father have told him about it, and persistently calls her. As a consequence, her half-brother whose name is Charles Hayes suggests a reunion between them as a family the next day at five o'clock. With a heavy heart, Veronique accepts the deal, though she waits for some scheming plan from the person she spoke to on the other side of the line.

Hopefully, there is nothing to be afraid of since the meeting was held smoothly. They talk to each other and mostly share their secrets of the family. Veronique explains her mother's death and William's passion for this woman. Furthermore, Charles agrees with her speech considering the tough relationship between his own biological mother and William Hayes. In a conversation her half-brother reveals his sister's thoughts about their dad who passed away: *"My sisters are both very traditional and conservative. They're married. Their husbands are bankers. I don't think it would ever occur to them that our father would have an affair, or another child. They prefer to believe the illusion of our parents' marriage. I don't think they'd want to know the truth, and they might react badly to it."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 201) In contrast, he puts himself, believing Veronique and her story about "romantic divorce" for achieving the goal of a president seat.

As a result, they talked to each other in Bemelmans Bar and then promised to contact more often at least in an online format. Whereas Veronique feels finally at ease knowing that Charles has not betrayed her or done something harmful. With this in mind, she travels home after ten days of recovery after the surgery. Suddenly, she gets involved in another venture including French television. Veronique got invited to shoot a documentary dedicated to the terrorist attack on Zaventem in Brussels Airport. At first, she rejects the invitation; however, the producer who called her convinces her to participate in there: *"They'll listen to you, and those scars on your face give you a legitimate voice. You owe it to your fellow survivors to do it, and all the victims, including your mother."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 209) Accordingly, the former model gives some process of thinking to the proposition until she finally accepts and takes the role of a survivor in the movie.

The next chapter unravels the process of filmmaking and the final outcome. Consequently, Veronique joins the company of Douglas so they can experience watching the

film together. Both of them got emotional and exhausted after viewing the documentary of anniversary of the tragedy in Zaventem Airport. At Veronique's place where they spent time together, the woman shared with Goug her future plans as well: she thought of visiting the place Dr. Dennis was talking about while she got operated in New York.

At the end of the novel, she flies to Luanda, the capital of Angola. The reason that Veronique came to the remote village in Africa lies in her wish to find herself somewhere in this world. It seems from the plot that even losing her parents did not make her alone. However, she felt uncomfortable every time mentioning her half-brothers and half-sisters. Thus, she goes deep into the voluntary work at the medical center and helps those in need.

Simultaneously, a young woman meets kids who were nearly damaged by the mines that are set in their region. In the process of volunteering, Veronique makes an acquaintance with Patrick Weston, a journalist from Britain. The author moves those characters in the plot so that their fates can intervene. However, even though the finale is open in this novel, Danielle Steel describes Patrick as having a similar issue with dying parents that is very familiar to Veronique Vincent. As complete strangers, they avoided each other at first. Then they had a chance to know more about their tough lives. The author suggests that the factor of mutual past experience made them united: *“My scars are on the inside, and they’re no prettier than yours. Yours are more honest, because you can see them...”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 270)

The story ends abruptly, without any explanation of the future of Veronique and her possible boyfriend Patrick. All that we know from the finale is that Veronique stays in Africa with HALO mission and Dr. Dennis a little bit longer. That way, the reader has full rights to create a continuation in their consciousness about the continuation of the novel.

In addition, by the last line of the novel about life being beautiful even with scars, Danielle states that the future of Veronique Vincents is considered to be bright and peaceful.

3.2.2. The composition of the novel

The composition of the novel “Beautiful” is standard. In total, there are 17 chapters. Moreover, the novel consists of 270 pages of printed text. In fact, in the 2022 paperback publication edition, as a tradition from the other novels by Danielle Steel, the author presented her new book at the time called “Worthy Opponents”. The part of the text from this work is shared at the end of the book to get the reader acquainted with a writing that was published already in 2023.

The order of the components is logical and basic. That is, the structure of the novel is plain, ordinary, conventional. The structure of the novel is divided into several parts, including:

1) Exposition – description of Fashion Week in Paris and acquaintance with Veronique Vincent, the main characters (Marie-Helen Vincent, Cyril), and the reality of a model career;

2) Rising action – a trip of Veronique and her mother to a Myami, a tragical incident in the Zaventem Airport of Brussel, Veronique loses consciousness and appears in the Brussels military hospital;

3) Climax – Veronique appears to be an orphan from now on due to the death of her closest persons, the division of Veronique being into two separate parts: her calm, busy, festive past, and her uncertain horrible future;

4) Falling action – Veronique tries to find herself after the tragedy: she meets her real father and relatives, entrusts her face to the doctor, moves into Africa to help those residents who are in need;

5) Resolution – she meets Patrick Weston, a British journalist, having almost the same fate as she does, they discover enormous similarities between each other.

The finale of the novel is open so that we could only guess, how the lives of two objectively-young adults touched in the future. Although, Danielle Steel makes it clear in the last lines of the text that the outcome of the union of Veronique and Patrick would be optimistic only. They had strong similarities in their life – they both experienced tragedies without the possibility of resolving the consequences: “*Our punishment was that we had to live without them [loved ones]. We tried to bury ourselves too. You after Paris, and me after Brussels.*” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 270)

By the last line of the novel – “*Life is beautiful, and nothing could change that*” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 270) we are able to draw in our imagination only best possible finale for the book.

3.3. Analysis of the main and minor characters of the novel

Main characters:

- Veronique Vincent

At the beginning of the novel she is represented as a young talented and hard-working model with incredibly stunning beauty. At age twenty-two, Veronique gets included in famous sidewalks and photoshoots such as Gucci, Chanel, Dior and others. Her appearance helped her achieve higher positions in the industry with ease. Nevertheless, she never got a “star disease” or was influenced by her narcissistic colleagues over the entire period of her career as a model. As a result, four years of work did not damage her reputation and, what is the most important feature for her mother, her soul.

But the Zaventem Attack incident changed her attitude completely toward the fashion industry. We may see her adoring her job before the tragedy; however, she rejects an opportunity to return to the sphere of fashion and become a model once more. After dozens of surgeries in the military hospital of Brussels and the private clinic of New York, Veronique does not wish to restore her past by continuing to work in the same position. Instead, she bravely enters another sphere of human life that as a result makes her more valuable and meaningful. The line from the story that can represent her bold spirit is situated near the end of chapter 14, on the last pages of the novel: *“She was a free woman, heading for her future, and all the surprises it had in store for her. She intended to reach out and grab them. She wasn’t the same woman she’d been a year before, and she could sense that she wouldn’t be the same after the trip either. Everything was new to her, and every day was a gift.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 228)

Surely, she did not come to that conclusion or the type of mindset so effortlessly. Throughout the book, she overcomes the “demons” in her head, as if they were whispering to her thoughts, that crumbled the spirit of a young lady. For example, having her body severely damaged by an airport terrorist attack, the former model reminiscences on standards of beauty which are no longer a path that she may follow. By thinking about her face and the huge scar on her right cheek, she regrets her career as a model having ended rapidly. Moreover, in the example from the text we may find her begrudging for a short amount of time, which she never does often later on in the story: *“She hated the way her career had ended, and she would have gone back if she could have. But she wondered now when she would have tired of it, and how it would have felt when they stopped begging her agent for her for magazine covers and shoots in exotic places. It all seemed so ephemeral, and made her ponder again what she was going to do now. She needed some kind of job eventually, but with a face as severely damaged as hers, who*

would hire her, even for an office job?.. She no longer met anyone's standards for beauty." (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 148-149)

Despite the concerns of Veronique about operations on her face, she trusted her appearance with professional specialists Dr. Dennis and Dr. Talbot. At first, she was ashamed even to raise the topic of another surgery since she could not believe that any action may change the awfulness of her physical trauma on the face. Instead, *"she was determined to learn to live with her altered face, rather than comb the world looking for surgeons who made empty promises and couldn't do anything about it anyway."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 113) After a while of consideration, Veronique contacts Dr. Talbot and agrees to the changes, even though they were going to be slight: *"They [doctors] keep telling me that it won't be a huge improvement, just a slight one with each surgery, but eventually it won't look quite as shocking as it does now. It is what it is. It won't ever go away completely."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 183) This decision for her was a symbol of her soul preparing to change in a better way. She expressed her readiness to transform her faith and the path she is going to walk further on.

Veronique is without a doubt an angelic human person. She cares about people around her the same way they treat her, which correlates with the genuine reaction from the social aspect of the environment. As an example of her kindness, she handles the task of child care in Africa: *"She had never thought she was good with children, nor was particularly interested in them. But here it was different. She liked being around them, and helping wherever she could."* (Daniella Steel, 2022, p. 245) Furthermore, she felt that Africa is the place where she belongs and is needed the most: *"I feel like I'm supposed to do something important now. I just don't know what it is. That's why I came here... It's very impressive. And I'm happy here."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 259) The former model, being impressed by life in St. Matthew medical centre in Africa makes the greatest donation from her savings that her father William Hayes gave her. Moreover, she invited the already known French producer to the country to make a film about the place where she volunteered.

- Marie-Helen Vincent

The mother of Veronique Vincent is the exact copy of her daughter. It can be explained by Marie-Helen being an example for her child. For example, the woman never married her beloved Bill Smith the same way Veronique did not think yet about her marriage. Furthermore, Marie-Helen can be characterized as intense, brave, righteous, and sometimes strict as a mother. Those features of her mental state helped her to protect her daughter from the dangers of "star

disease”. Moreover, she tries to convince her to stay on her morals and never be influenced or persuaded by Veronique’s producers, colleagues, or fashion managers.

The psychology of Vincent was constructed that way due to her past which was far from the ideal concept of a family. As it turns out, Marie-Helen was raised in a strict, traditional and aristocratic family. Subsequently, she was supposed to marry a wealthy hard-working husband and relax most of the time. It appears in the novel that those expectations for young Marie-Helen were not fulfilled as she chose to pursue her dream in the court field. As a result, thoughts of being married and having a peaceful family made Marie-Helen angry all of the time. Hopefully, she could stop thinking about it after being completely free from the mother’s and father’s management: *“They hadn’t lived long enough to know that she never married and had had a love child, which would have horrified them.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 9).

Despite having an awful past, Marie-Helen confidentially builds the future for her one and only daughter whom she keeps from any danger. Simultaneously, she performs an amazing and stunning role of mother effortlessly. Until she died in the airport from the terrorist attack, she enjoyed the life she had and never regretted her actions. As the novel goes deeper into the theme of love and affection, Marie-Helen never interfered in the modeling business of her daughter, although she wished her to listen to her wise words until it is not too late.

It is also important to mention her hesitation to share the information about the truth considering the father of Veronique. From the text at the beginning of the novel we may conclude that her unwillingness appeared due to her fear of traumatizing her daughter’s soul: *“... Veronique learned not to press her about it [“death” of her father], and didn’t want to upset her, even now that she was grown up. She didn’t want to make her mother uncomfortable, and she knew as much as there was to know about her father...”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 9)

- Bill Smith (William Hayes)

He is an American lawyer and a candidate to the senate seat in US government. To chase his dreams of becoming a president in America, he left Marie-Helen, his lover, and married another woman officially. Accordingly, he saved his political reputation from the backlash of newspapers and journalists.

However, William Hayes repeatedly stated that his decision was horrible. He thinks of the possibility of changing the events to a better conclusion, although it is not realistically possible. When Veronique finds out about her father being alive, William speak the philosophical sentence, that he believes to be his life’s motto for the rest of his life: *“He said that*

her mother's untimely death was a reminder that no one could never be sure of the future." (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 107).

Every time he sees his daughter in person, messages her through letters, or hears her voice on the phone, the old but passionate father of Veronique asks for forgiveness. Due to this act of his own will, he admits his drawbacks, believing that he made a terrifying mistake leaving Marie-Helen with a daughter alone. However, he supported the family in Paris with money until the end. In addition, Veronique's mother loved "Bill Smith" to the core of her heart, yet never talked too much about him with her child trying to prevent a scandal in the family she perfectly built. As a result, William respected her choice as well as she respected the choice of Hayes too. They were both driven by a career and were passionate about it, which resulted in a moral separation that made William's heart suffer.

An interesting fact is that at his last dying moments he called Veronique and spoke with her for a while. Instead of asking his son or one of his legal marriage daughters, William contacted Veronique only. That may symbolize his craving soul that wishes to fix what he has done throughout the years. At the moment, where death came nearer to him, he blamed himself and his past decisions. Thus, Hayes thought of this call to Vincent as a last goodbye, asking for forgiveness and last warning for the dangers of the world that may appear in life: *"I always [loved you]. Be careful of the choices you make. We regret our mistakes all our lives."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 185)

- Cyril Buxton

He is considered to be a gentleman from the British aristocracy family. He is twenty-seven years old, yet from the description in the novel we have a piece of evidence that shows his child-like behavior. Lord Cyril originates from a rich family, that expected him to work in a bank. In spite of putting their hope in him, Cyril chose the way of endless entertainment in Paris.

The relationships between Veronique and Cyril are not as romantic as it seems to look like. In fact, they do not think about marrying each other or having a serious dating experience. However, even such barely present contact which has its boundary on basic communication between the two, ruins in a blink of an eye. As has been noted before, Cyril died together with Veronique's mother in a Zaventem Airport terrorist attack.

The former model herself did not want to believe in his departure, although they were not so engaged with each other in a romantic way. As a result, she missed his presence and even sent a mail to his family, feeling sorry for Cyril passing away: *"She didn't expect a response, but she felt relieved after she wrote it... She remembered his address by heart, and felt a wave of*

survivor guilt wash over her again that night.” (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 67) However, the unexpected answer from the Buxton family was indifferent toward Veronique.

Cyril is a kindhearted soul as well but does not wish to improve his life. He would rather continue visiting parties and enjoying the pleasure with Veronique, his romantic partner. Additionally, his parents scolded Cyril due to his innocent spirit and even irresponsible behavior related to his future plans: *“They wanted him to fast-forward through this stage of his life and get serious about his work and grow up. He had no interest in becoming responsible and giving up his fun life or dating the women they thought he should. They wanted him with a British aristocrat like himself.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 6) Despite an unwillingness to the marriage from both sides of the couple of Cyril and Veronique, they felt very connected to each other.

Minor characters:

- Douglas Kelly

A successful Irish photographer from New York was the only person in the life of Veronique that was not only from her past career turmoil but also supported her all the way to what she has achieved in Africa with Dr Dick Dennis.

At first, he was just another indifferent stranger who asked all the time about the mask on Veronique’s mask and tried to convince her that she was charming despite the trauma. Later on, he became a part of her life, helping her to orient throughout the swirls of fate: *“Doug has turned things around for her the night before and set her off down the right path. All she had to do now was hang on to what he had said and keep going.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 107) As an outcome of events, Doug became her main motivator in a battle for survival in an unjustified world. For Veronique, he became a brother who makes her safe and sound and with whom she can share any secrets knowing that he will not be a predator.

It is important to emphasize on relationships of Veronique and Douglas, which were more about warmth and care rather than romantic love. Furthermore, Douglas met other models on photoshoots and had some interactions with them. Although he spends his time in New York with young pretty women, he keeps respect for Veronique as a closest friend: *“They were too far down the path of friendship now to turn back or change it, and the relationship they had suited them both and meant much more than his revolving door of one-night stands... He was much better as a friend, and she intended it to keep it that way.”* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 109)

- Model agent Stephanie

Stephanie is the face of the fashion industry, representative of a misleading outlook and cruel unnecessary standards. She is intrusive and persistent. She does not care about the health of her co-workers and staff. In contrast, she would rather care about the feelings of herself and commercial directors. That way, she wants to persuade Veronique to come back into the modeling. The only thing is that the former model already witnessed how rotten the place where she worked is and never intended to return. In spite of several rejections from the Veronique's side, Stephanie continues to have faith in her comeback: *"I can see it [scar] now. But can't they do something about it? You can't just leave it like that."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 157)

- Dr. Phillip Talbot & Dr. Dick Dennis

The American surgeons from New York that were recommended by none other than Douglas Kelly. As a consequence, they saved the face of Veronique: at least they tried to make it less scary than it appeared from the start.

While listening to the hardship that Veronique overcame, both doctors decided to spread some kindness and make her first surgery and her stay in the hotel after the recovery for free. Firstly the former model has an apprehension that the surgery will be done for nothing and would only be a waste of time and money. Nevertheless, doctors showed the utmost care and respect for her privacy and the terrific situation she has happened to be in by the accident of fate.

One of the doctors whose name is Dick Dennis opened an opportunity for Veronique to discover Africa with a HALO Trust mission, known for the support from Princess Diana and Prince Harry. He believed that a month or two in a remote village would help Veronique to find her true self, simultaneously landing a hand for children with diseases and injuries from mines on the fields of their own village. It appeared later on that the doctor was right and made a great suggestion to a young girl: *"I hope you stay for a while. We can always use a spare pair off hands."* *"That's why I'm here."* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 244); *"She looked happy and at ease... She liked being around them, and helping wherever she could. She felt comfortable in her own skin for the first time in a year,"* (Danielle Steel, 2022, p. 245)

CONCLUSIONS

In extremely difficult times, when people are dying in wars, literature helps them stand up and continue living. Despite the pain, sudden circumstances, and unexpected twists of fate, humanity still exists. Literature, as a form of creativity shaping one's consciousness and personality, contributes to this resilience. Through books, novels, poems, and other forms of writing, we come to understand and realize our own selves, finding solace from anxieties and problems. In order to find answers literature is often turned to long-standing questions that trouble the restless soul. Through books, we gain new experiences and empathize with the actions of other characters, trying on their roles for ourselves.

An American writer frequently touches upon the themes of destiny and a happy future in her works. We are referring to Danielle Steel, who is known for her fictional and real-life stories; moreover, Danielle's books consistently attain bestseller status. By analyzing Steel's works in this thesis, we have not only understood the reasons of her popularity but also answered a crucial question: does the theme of resilience exist in her novel "Beautiful"?

To identify the motivational component of the novel, we analyzed both the main theme and idea, as well as the characters of the book. We discovered that the story is narrated from the perspective of Veronique Vincent, a young career-driven model who encounters a tragic accident at Zaventem Airport in Brussels. Left with nothing, the 22-year-old girl seeks her purpose in life, as she can no longer pursue modeling due to a massive scar on her face, compounded by the tragic incident of a terrorist attack and the deaths of loved ones.

In this bachelor's thesis, we delved into Danielle Steel's biography to further understand the intricacies of her creativity, life values, and events that influenced the writing of her subsequent plots. Through the analysis of the author's biography, we found that a significant portion of the events from the woman's real life found their way into the pages of "Beautiful". This parallel between Veronique and her creator, Danielle, is particularly evident. Both women, facing unpleasant circumstances, ultimately emerge as heroines, bravely defending their own futures.

We managed to answer the question regarding the lifelike motifs in the novel "Beautiful": they exist as the driving force of the plot, the main idea of the work, and its primary purpose. The author emphasizes that one should never give up even in the most challenging situations. Additionally, she speaks about true beauty, which lies not in external appearance but in the

human soul. Only a person's behavior can determine his or her incredibility, maturity and beauty. Moreover, despite any upheavals or negative aspects in lives, Danielle Steel hints through the dialogues to the importance of self-love and love for the world. Even amidst darkness, the author recommends to find the brightest star. After all, according to the last lines in the novel, life is beautiful, despite the scars.

In our work, we also explored the composition of the work. We have analysed 55 examples from the novel and have not found any specific artistic techniques or devices. We have understood that the work is written lightly and understandably, allowing a broad, general audience of readers to comprehend what they read. Indeed, Danielle targets such an audience—she writes novels for people to live and thrive.

The novel "Beautiful" resonates particularly strongly in these fearful, dark times of war in Ukraine, where families lose their loved ones every day. Works with similar plots are extremely necessary in our time, filled with chaos and misunderstanding. They find resonance in the hearts of readers and change their lives for the better.

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РЕЗЮМЕ

У надзвичайно важкі часи, коли люди гинуть під час війни, саме література допомагає стати на ноги та продовжувати жити далі. Незважаючи на біль, на раптові обставини, на неочікувані повороти долі, людство не перестає існувати. І цьому можна завдячувати також і літературі як виду творчості, що формує свідомість і особистість людини. Завдяки книжкам, романам, віршам та іншій письменницькій діяльності ми усвідомлюємо та реалізуємо власне «я», а також заспокоюємося від тривог та проблем. До літератури зазвичай звертаються з ціллю віднайти відповіді на запитання, що давно турбували схвильовану душу. Через книжки ми маємо можливість здобути новий досвід та відчутти на собі дії інших персонажів, приміряючи їхні ролі на себе.

Одна з американських письменниць дуже часто у своїх творах торкається теми долі та щасливого майбуття. Йдеться про Даніелу Стіл. Вона є найвідомішою в сфері написання вигаданих і реальних історій; до того ж, книги Даніели постійно здобувають титул «бестселлеру». Проаналізувавши твори Стіл у цій роботі, ми зрозуміли не лише причину такої популярності, але й відповіли на надважливе запитання: чи присутня у її романі «Красива» тема життєствердності?

Щоби знайти мотиваційну складову роману, ми аналізували як головну тему та ідею, так і персонажей книги. З'ясували, що історія ведеться від імені Вероніки Вінсент, молодої кар'єристки у модельному світі, що потрапляє у трагічну аварію в Завентемському Аеропорті в Брюсселі. Залишившись ні з чим, 22-річна дівчина шукає власне призначення в житті, адже не може більше стати моделлю ні через величезний шрам на щоці, ні завдяки трагічному випадку терористичної атаки та смертям близьких людей.

У бакалаврській роботі ми розкрили біографію Даніели Стіл, щоби детальніше заглибитися в особливості її творчості, життєві цінності та загалом події, що так чи інакше вплинули на написання подальших сюжетів. З аналізу біографії письменниці ми вияснили, що велика частка подій з реального життя жінки потрапили на сторінки «Красива». Особливо чітко можемо побачити це завдяки проведенню паралелей між Веронікою та її творцем, Даніелою. Обидві жінки, що стикнулися з неприємними обставинами, в кінці вийшли героїнями, сміливо обороняючи власне майбутнє.

Нам вдалося знайти відповідь на запитання стосовно життєствердних мотивів у творі «Красива»: вони існують як головний рушій сюжету, основна ідея твору, першочергова мета його написання. Авторка наголошує у романі на тому, що ніколи не варто опускати руки навіть у найскладніших ситуаціях. Також, вона говорить у творі про істинну красу, яка полягає не в зовнішній оболонці, а в людській душі. Тільки поведінка людини може визначити її неймовірність, зрілість, прекрасність. До того ж, попри будь-які негативні речі у нашому житті Даніела Стіл натякає через рядки діалогів персонажів про важливість любові до себе та світу. Навіть якщо довкола темрява, письменниця рекомендує знайти у ній найяскравішу зірку. Адже, згідно з останнім рядком у творі – життя красиве, незважаючи на шрами.

У роботі ми також дослідили композицію твору і не виявили особливих художніх прийомів чи компонентів. Ми зрозуміли, що твір написаний легко й зрозуміло, що дає змогу широкій, загальній публіці читачів усвідомити прочитане. Власне, саме на таку аудиторію розраховує Даніела – вона пише романи для людей, аби дати їм можливість жити та насолоджуватися життям.

Твір «Красива» особливо сильно резонує в лячні, темні часи війни в Україні, де сім'ї втрачають рідних щодня. Твори з подібним сюжетом надзвичайно необхідні у наш час, сповнений хаосу та непорозуміння. Вони знаходять відгук у серцях читачів та змінюють їхнє життя на краще.

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