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Beirut

Beirut, a 2018 thriller film set in 1982 during the Lebanese Civil War illustrates the violence and religious segregation in the Middle East. In the opening scene, protagonist Mason Skiles is a U.S diplomat in Lebanon living in Beirut with his Lebanese wife, Nadia. During this opening scene, Skiles and Nadia are hosting a party in their luxurious home for other dignitaries, along with Karim, a Palestinian 13-year-old boy whom Skiles and Nadia have taken a custody for. As the party continued, matters changed for the worst when Skiles is confronted by his friend, CIA officer Cal Riley, who insists of questioning Karim about his unknown dangerous brother (Abu Rajal) who happens to be linked to the Munich massacre. Eventually, the party gets attacked by Karim's brother Rajal, and Nadia gets shot and dies through crossfire. Skiles life drastically changes after this opening scene. Nadia was Skiles life, he loved her dearly and was getting ready to marry her.



The main protagonist Skiles in the opening scene was transcribed as a wealthy individual with high social class, however, after the death of his wife Nadia, Skiles moves to England and works as a self-employed labor arbitrator; Skiles is portrayed as an alcoholic with low self-esteem. In one of the senses, Skiles gets approached by one of his old clients and on behalf of the U.S government, Skiles has been requested for an academic lecture in

Lebanon. At first, Skiles is hesitant about revisiting Beirut, the same place where he lost everything. Although, Skiles decides to go and meets with government officials; Skiles quickly learns that this request was not for an academic lecture, instead he learns that his old friend Riley has been kidnaped, and the kidnappers have specifically requested Skiles as the negotiator.

Everyone in the world dresses their body. Dress has a long been a means to communicate information about the self to others, to express self creativity, and to protect the self from physical and psychological harm (Lennon, Johnson, Rudd, 2017). Dress can also identify gender, status, color, financial situations, and manners. Referencing to dress, Skiles in the opening scene is wearing a casual suit with his collar opened midway, showcasing comfortability and confidence. Skiles is also nicely groomed and presents himself very elegant in a suit. His body language boosted Skiles confidence due to his “ power pose,” which is holding your body firm and straight. Also, Skiles facial expression reflected his happiness and positive energy, Skiles communicated and mingled with everyone which signified his manners were good. After Skiles

wife Nadia passes away we quickly notice Skiles lavish life make a drastic turn. In the following scenes, the film is shown dark and cold. This strongly reflects Skiles change in appearance.

Skiles is now portrayed as a lonely unhappy alcoholic, who dislikes his current job. Skiles in the following scenes often wakes up and the first thing he does is drink while he is getting ready for work. The viewer quickly would notice that Skiles is not groomed and showcases unhappiness through his facial expression. Also, Skiles wardrobe changes, he wears a suit tightly button, reflecting the unhappiness of working at 9-5 office job. Skiles demonstrates a lack of confidence within himself, and throughout the film shows his lack of energy until he is requested to find his friend, Reily.

In addition to cultural ideals for beauty, Skiles appearance changed throughout the film. This change in appearance allowed the viewer to notice Skiles behavior and status change. The two major factors which illustrate Skiles appearance change is the death of Nadia and alcohol. At the beginning of the film, Skiles is well groomed, formally dressed and withheld high social status. After the death of his wife, Skiles appearance was completely the opposite of before. Skiles emotion and mental instability changed his fashion from formal, confident in his appearance into a sad, less formal and non-confident appearance. Also, alcohol plays an important role in Skiles appearance change. Due to the fact that Skiles relies on alcohol to control and ease his emotions, Skiles facial appearance changes. Skiles in the film beginnings to look sick and hungover, which reflects on his lack of wardrobe appearance. Skiles appearance turns into shambles due to these two factors. The director of the film wants the viewer to visualize and understand that negative circumstances in life can ultimately change a person's

appearance whether is a permanent or temporary situation in our lives, we don't only show our emotion through our appearance but in dress as well.

Skiles demonstrated body satisfaction, Skiles showcased positive thoughts and feelings about his own appearance. He was filled with happiness living his life in Beirut while helping others. He is portrayed as a wealthy individual, however, undergoes a major status change due to the death of his wife and moves to England. After one of Skiles old clients explains to him that the government wants him to travel to Beirut to give a speech, Skiles status changes once again. Skiles is needed and is positioned as an important figure to the plot of the film. Throughout the film, we notice violent scenes which showcase body modifications in Skiles' face. Body modifications are changes made directly to the body itself, either temporary or permanent (Lennon, Johnson, Rudd, 2017). Skiles undergoes many shootings and fights which directly impacts his facial features. Skiles becomes injured temporarily, however permanently scared by negative memories of his wife's death. One important body supplement in the film is the tracking belt placed on Skiles by the government to track his movements. Body supplements are additions of items to the body, such as jewelry, clothing, and accessories (Lennon, Johnson, Rudd, 2017). The tracking belt is a major addition to Skiles appearance, the belt showcased the anti-trust of the government against Skiles. In one important scene, Skiles takes off the belt to dismiss himself from the government's radar. Status change is important to understand because it allows the viewer to understand the different positions and actions Skiles transmits throughout the film. The terrorist who were after skiles had to wear hijabs, in order to protect self-identity.

Skiles undergoes many role changes throughout the film through appearance and dress. Although due to drastic circumstances we notice Skiles status and appearance change based on

his emotion, facial expression, and wardrobe. This film illustrates the relationship between love and high status in correlation with health and formal appearance. And, in connection with negative appearance we notice Skiles status and role changes once he experiences negative circumstances, Skiles shows these negative features when he is in a lower status which then correlates to distorted habits and wardrobe. This film perfectly symbolizes Skiles importance to the plot regardless of many different appearance and social roles. The film is named Beirut because Beirut is the capital and largest city in Lebanon, located in the Middle East. Beirut following World War Two became Lebanon tourist location. Beirut was once called the Paris of The Middle East (imdb 2018) , which correlates to Skiles in the lavish life at the beginning. During Lebanon civil revolution the country experienced violence and terror which caused lost of tourist attraction. This lack of attraction is shown throughout the middle and end of the film. For example when Skiles was convinced to help his friend even though Skiles knew that his life was in danger. Beirut was once a very rich city just like Skiles, but because of the civil war in Lebanon matters negatively changed for beirut and Skiles.

References

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