

Powder's Trauma in Netflix TV Series *Arcane* (2021)

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Abstrak

Trauma adalah luka mental yang terjadi setelah mengalami peristiwa traumatis. Studi ini berfokus pada Powder dari serial TV animasi Netflix *Arcane* (2021) yang ditulis oleh Christian Linke dan Alex Yee, yang memiliki penggambaran trauma setelah insiden traumatis yang melibatkan kematian orang-orang terdekatnya. Peneliti menggunakan teori trauma oleh Cathy Caruth (1996) untuk melihat penyebab utama dan manifestasi trauma dalam kehidupan Powder. Metodologi yang akan digunakan untuk penelitian ini berbentuk analisis konten kualitatif, dimana peneliti akan mengamati serial TV animasi *Arcane* (2021) oleh Christian Linke dan Alex Yee di Netflix dengan menggunakan elemen visual yang ditampilkan dalam serial TV tersebut, bersama dengan data tekstual yang didapatkan dari subtitle serial tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manifestasi trauma Powder muncul dalam bentuk halusinasi dan mimpi buruk di mana dia akan mengingat kematian orang-orang yang dicintainya.

Kata Kunci: Trauma, Cathy Caruth, Animasi, Netflix

Abstract

Trauma is a mental wound that occurs after experiencing a traumatic incident. This study is focused on Powder from Netflix animated TV Series *Arcane* (2021) written by Christian Linke and Alex Yee, who has the depiction of trauma after a traumatic incident that involved the death of her loved ones. The researcher uses the theory of trauma by Cathy Caruth (1996) to see the main cause and manifestation of trauma in Powder's life. The methodology that will be used for this research is in the form of qualitative content analysis, where the researcher will examine the animated TV series *Arcane* (2021) by Christian Linke and Alex Yee on Netflix by using the visual elements expressed in the TV series, alongside the textual data provided from the series' subtitles. The results of the study found out that Powder's manifestation of trauma comes in the form of hallucination and nightmares where she would remember the death of her loved ones.

Keywords: Trauma, Cathy Caruth, Animation, Netflix

INTRODUCTION

Every person has their own life struggles and their way to cope with their experience to get on with their daily lives. Some may go through something complicated that everyone seemed to assume that it was a little thing, but to the victim itself it may severely hurt and scar them deeply. A bigger incident, such as near-death experience, losing a loved one, or childhood abuse could bring an everlasting effect to someone's mental state. The effect of said traumatic event that has happened to the individual might make them recall the incident in the future and make them unconsciously behave in a different manner when exposed to the traumatic stressor.

Trauma is an event which evokes someone's feelings and emotions. Furthermore, trauma may cause severe negative effects toward an individual, as past trauma and

memories indirectly cause changes in the mind of a person (Heidarizadeh, 2015). According to Cathy Caruth's (1996), trauma is an uncontrollable occurrence whose effects appear after the traumatic incident occurs. Additionally, hallucinations and other intrusive thoughts are frequently among these symptoms, which can seriously impair a person's emotional and mental health. Caruth (1996) believes that trauma encompasses not only the immediate incident but also the experience's delayed, frequently fragmented memory and processing. Additionally, the internal and exterior expressions of traumatic experiences are connected. An individual's trauma is mostly shaped by the traumatic event and their recollection of it.

The sudden and unanticipated aspect of an incident or catastrophe is what causes trauma (Caruth, 1996). According to her theory, the major traumatic event itself is

not the only thing that causes trauma; it also includes the lingering effects of the trauma that shows as intrusive thoughts, flashbacks, and nightmares. Caruth claims that the incomprehensibility of trauma at the time of occurrence prevents the sufferer from completely understanding or processing the incident in real time. This frequently results in a delayed reaction, when the traumatic event haunts the person long after the event, which she refers to as belatedness.

Cathy Caruth's (1996) concept of belatedness in the individual's traumatic experience, or a delayed response in the victim's perception of the incident, is also the main focus of her theory of trauma as she argues that the victim has not been able to fully understand the traumatic experience the moment it happens. The aftermath of the trauma then returns to the victim as often in fragmentation like nightmares, flashbacks, or intense emotions triggered by seemingly unrelated events. Belatedness highlights the notion that trauma disrupts the victim's view of the traumatic event. Instead of leaving the event that happened in the past and moving on from the traumatic event, they still experience it belatedly, impacting the victim's perspective in the current time.

Literature or literary works are arts that mirror the way human lives and how it shows what humanity aspires to be in their life (Wellek & Warren, 1954). Creations of literary works are often considered written works covering a large number of genres. Within literary works, we can find poetry, drama, and fiction, each with its own unique insight on human condition through their distinctive styles of narrative techniques. However, the term "literary" and its associated works are also understood to express more than just what is written and not limited to work of text, but also other imaginative forms that people use to express their creative thoughts, emotions, and ideas (Fruzińska, 2012).

Through a variety of media, such as literature and the entertainment sector, people can make their stories come to life and share them with others. Through the use of various storytelling techniques, authors have produced a wide range of trauma interpretations, each of which reflects distinct viewpoints and life experiences. Despite being separate academic disciplines, psychology and literature are closely related because literature frequently acts as a medium for people to express their feelings and personal stories (Aras, 2015). People can examine and communicate difficult psychological experiences, like trauma, in ways that audiences can relate to by using storytelling. Additionally, literature allows people to comprehend and consider their own consciousness and social existence, which aids in the development of identity and self-awareness (Aras, 2015).

As with the definition of literary works and traumatic disorder given above, people are free to portray their own interpretations of a certain psychological illness through any form of literary media, especially trauma itself. Moreover, one example of the portrayal of trauma would be the fictional character Tony Stark from the popular movie series *The Avengers* (2012) directed by Joss Whedon, where Tony got himself symptoms of trauma after his attempt at sacrifice where he entered the alien wormhole to save everyone and witnessed the massive army of aliens that were about to attack New York. Tony's trauma also shows up in the next movie, *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015), also directed by Joss Whedon, where Tony is shown to have flashbacks and nightmares about the incident where his friends are shown as dead if Tony had not done the sacrifice.

Arcane (2021) is a nine episodes animated TV series on Netflix that aired in November 2021 and was written by Christian Linke and Alex Yee. The animated show reached number one on Netflix worldwide for three weeks in a row and reached top 10 in more than 87 countries, despite the writers' first time writing an animated TV series. One of the characters and their battle with trauma are also highlighted in this well-liked Netflix animated TV show adaptation. One of the main characters in *Arcane* (2021), Powder, experiences visions of her trauma as a result of an unintentional traumatic incident. Her trauma serves as the primary conflict that propels the plot. Furthermore, the story itself has the significance of showing how a trauma could manifest in someone through accidental incident that could happen to anyone.



Figure 1. *Arcane* (2021) Netflix Poster

Arcane (2021) centres on two cities and is set in the fictional region of Runeterra. Piltover, referred to as the

"City of Progress," is a highly developed metropolis. On the other hand, Zaun lies beneath Piltover and is an impoverished area where many people are struggling to live their lives. Following a civil war that left Powder and her older sister Vi orphans, they move to Zaun and take up residence with Vander, her adoptive father, and Mylo and Claggor, her adoptive brothers. When Powder's adoptive father was kidnapped, Vi forbade Powder from assisting and advised her to stay at home. Powder nevertheless made the decision to go with Vi and her brothers. Unfortunately, Powder's plan backfired and accidentally injured her sister and killed her father and her brothers. This led to Vi hurting Powder and leaving her behind, traumatizing her.

Powder started displaying a number of symptoms years after the traumatic event, which highlights the psychological effects of her experiences that have persisted for a long time. One of these were severe hallucinations, where Powder would give signs of her unresolved trauma and guilt by recollecting the deaths of her loved ones. She also suffered from flashbacks, where memories of her traumatic past would suddenly reappear and interfere with her daily lives. In addition to the flashbacks which explains the depth of her psychological suffering, these manifestations also demonstrate how long-lasting trauma is, as it continues to influence her thoughts, feelings, and interactions with the world around her.

METHOD

Christian Linke and Alex Yee's nine-episode animated television series *Arcane*, which debuted on Netflix in 2021, will serve as the main source of data for this study. However, because episodes 3 through 6 offer the most pertinent information for examining how Powder's trauma manifests, the study will pay particular attention to these episodes. These episodes explore pivotal points in her psychological journey, providing vivid descriptions and visual clues that show how her traumatic experiences have developed and affected her. This focused strategy guarantees a thorough and in-depth analysis of the main elements of her trauma within the framework of the series.

The study will showcase its findings using visual elements from the animated TV series in addition to the textual data obtained from the subtitles of the series. In order to gather data, video from *Arcane* (2021) will be obtained, and the script, dialogue, settings, story developments, and visual components will all be carefully examined. This in-depth examination will mostly concentrate on Powder, with the goal of investigating how her trauma is portrayed as she becomes adulthood. The study will offer a comprehensive analysis of how Powder's

experiences are depicted and how her trauma appears in the series by combining textual and visual data.

In order to examine the topics and character interactions shown in the animated TV series *Arcane* (2021), the data analysis procedure uses qualitative content analysis. The narrative, language, settings, plot developments, and visual components used throughout the animation are all carefully examined in this method. The study seeks to reveal the complex ways in which trauma is portrayed by closely examining these elements. The conceptual underpinning for this analysis is Cathy Caruth's (1996) trauma theory, whose description of trauma is closely related to Powder's trauma experiences in the series. A greater comprehension of how *Arcane* (2021) depicts the psychological and emotional aspects of trauma through its story and characters is made possible by this fusion of theoretical and textual analysis.

The major foundation for this study is Cathy Caruth's (1996) theory of trauma, which is especially well-suited to examining the trauma that Powder, the main character, endured. Powder's trauma is a crucial topic for investigation as, as the documentary shows, it changes and gets worse as she grows older. Investigating Powder's trauma's underlying causes and its significant impacts on her behaviour and mental health is the goal of this study. The abrupt return of Powder's hallucinations and flashbacks, especially when she sees her sister, can be explained by Caruth's thesis, which sheds light on the delayed and unresolved nature of trauma. The study looks at these episodes of psychological suffering in an effort to identify the underlying processes that underlie Powder's trauma and its effects on her.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Trauma refers to the study that focuses on the impact of trauma to a person's wellbeing. Psychological trauma, with the role of the unconscious mind shaping the individual's mind and identities, is the central topic that define trauma studies (Balaev, 2018). According to Balaev (2018), trauma study focuses on the effects of trauma in literary writing and society through the scope of psychology, culture, and rhetorical significance. Caruth (1996) stated that the emergence of trauma theory started in the 1990s, and was heavily reliant on Freudian theory of psychoanalysis, mainly his theories of *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) and *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). Freud argued in the former theory that the traumatic incident experienced by the victim was not traumatic in itself, but only in the recollection of the trauma itself. Freud later theorized in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) that trauma extends to the defense mechanism of the ego to repress the traumatic incident, however will later come back to haunt the victim as dreams (Balaev, 2018).

According to Caruth (1996), Freudian's intuition of traumatic experience regarding literature has the complex relation of knowing and not knowing which connects the language of literature and psychoanalytic theory of traumatic experience.

Cathy Caruth (1996) asserts that the main cause of trauma is an unexpected and shocking outcome of a traumatic incident, one that frequently surpasses a person's ability to completely process or understand at the time it happens. The victim may have a permanent psychological scar as a result of their failure to immediately comprehend the scope or ramifications of the incident. Later in life, especially as an adult, the unresolved nature of the trauma may reappear as a delayed reaction or response. This traumatic reexperiencing, which is frequently called "belatedness," shows how trauma has a significant and long-lasting impact on a person's mental health. The widespread and lasting effects of unprocessed trauma are demonstrated by the profound effects that delayed onset of traumatic symptoms can have on relationships, decision-making, and general quality of life.

The traumatic experiences that the victim has experienced itself has ended back in the past, however, the victim has their own interpretation of the traumatic incident themselves which also makes their recollection of the event worse overtime. This reinterpretation of the victim's trauma over and over again inside their head would make the event itself more traumatic. According to van der Kolk (2000), the manifestation of trauma shows in visual imagery, emotional states, or nightmares due to the constant reproduction of the terror of the trauma. In contrast to the actual trauma, which had a beginning, middle, and end, while symptoms of trauma are timeless and always persisting (van der Kolk, 2000).

Main Cause of Trauma

Episode 3 of *Arcane* (2021), which explores Powder's turbulent upbringing, is where the primary reason of her trauma starts. Powder unintentionally causes a disastrous accident that throws her life out of control. Her life is shattered when she inadvertently causes the deaths of Mylo and Claggor, her adoptive family members, causing her to suffer severe and startling trauma. The consequences of her brother Vander's death and the mental toll of her sister Vi's abandonment add to this tragic event. Powder's emotional scars are exacerbated by Vi's rejection, which makes her feel alone and unloved. The crux of Powder's trauma is this mix of abandonment, remorse, and loss, which lays the groundwork for her psychological issues throughout the series.



Figure 2. Powder sees her father's dead body



Figure 3. Powder sees her brother's bloodied goggles



Figure 4. Powder cries after seeing her family corpses

Powder	: "Vi, it worked!"
Vi	: "What?"
Powder	: "Did you see me? My monkey bomb finally worked!"
Vi	: "You did this?"
<i>(CAMERA CUTS TO VANDER'S DEAD BODY)</i>	
	"Why?"
	"Why did you do this?"
Powder	: "I...I didn't... I was saving you."
<i>(CAMERA CUTS TO CLAGGOR'S BLOODIED GOGGLES)</i>	
	I only wanted to help. [sobs]"

Due to the belatedness of the trauma and Powder's lack of understanding, as evidenced by her confusion when viewing her adoptive father's lifeless body and the bloodied goggles of her adopted brother, the shock of witnessing her loved one's death has left her traumatized and will soon return to haunt her in the form of memories and hallucinations. Powder immediately regrets her choice and says she just intended to rescue Vi after witnessing the disaster and experiencing sudden guilt. She is overcome

with intense remorse, which negatively affects Powder's emotions and causes her to scream and beg her sister.

Vi assaulting Powder herself results in yet another horrifying trauma. Vi's response to the explosion defines its immediate aftermath. Overcome with shock and sadness, Vi lashes out at Powder, accusing her of being a "jinx" and taking full responsibility for the catastrophe. Powder misinterprets this as the one person she loves and depends on the most abandoning her. Vi is taken prisoner by enforcers shortly later, but Powder thinks her sister fled voluntarily. Powder experiences a severe emotional collapse as a result of her sister's harsh rejection and the disastrous result of her actions.

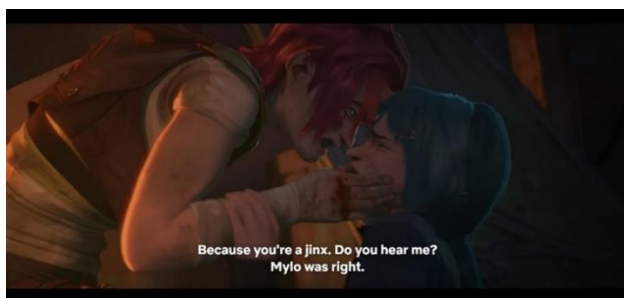


Figure 5. Vi lashes out at Powder



Figure 6. Vi leaves Powder crying

Powder : "Please. Please. Please--"
Vi : "I told you to stay away!"
(VI PUNCHES POWDER)
Powder : "No. Why did you leave me?"
Vi : "Because you're a jinx. Do you hear me? Mylo was right."
Powder : "No. No. No. No. Violet, please. [Powder crying]"
Vi! Vi, come back! Please come back!
Please, Violet. I need you. Please."

Vi's harsh words and deeds have a profound effect on Powder's psyche and, despite their inadvertence, contribute significantly to the development of her trauma. Vi's hurtful comments and seeming desertion leave a deep emotional scar, and Powder becomes extremely upset at the idea of her sister leaving. This crucial event turns into a major catalyst for her mental anguish. Powder's memories of Vi serve as a recurring trauma stressor in the years that follow, reoccurring frequently as hallucinations

and eerie visions. Since Powder's childhood pain and guilt remain unresolved well into adulthood, these recurrent episodes highlight the long-lasting impact of their broken relationship on her mental health.

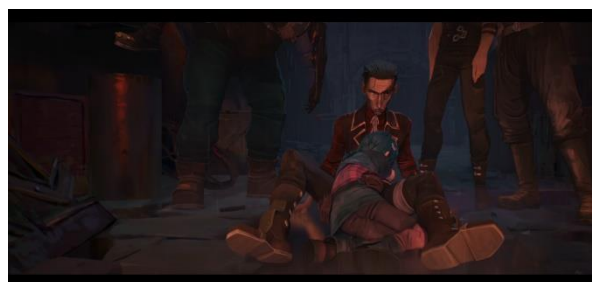


Figure 7. Powder hugs the random stranger

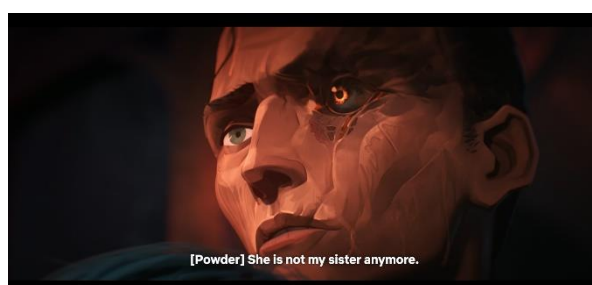


Figure 8. Powder believes that her sister abandoned her

Silco : "Hello, little girl."
"Where's your sister?"
(POWDER HUGS SILCO)
Powder : "She left me."
"She is not my sister anymore."

Additionally, Powder's traumatic experience is reaffirmed when she interacts with other people, especially when she candidly shares her feelings of abandonment by saying that her sister left her. This frequent recognition of her sister's departure exacerbates the emotional wounds caused by the initial traumatic event and acts as a painful reminder of her loss. These incidents show how the abandonment still affects her sense of self-worth and trust in other people, in addition to highlighting the lasting effects of her past. By putting her suffering into words, Powder highlights how her trauma continues to define her and her relationships.

Manifestation of Trauma

Cathy Caruth's (1996) concept of trauma and its belatedness provide an understanding in the manifestation of Powder's trauma, as traumatic events occurring to the victim is understood to be a mirror of their perception of the unavoidability and the horrifying reality of the events seems to connect the mind to the stressor of the mental illness. Caruth argues that trauma is not experienced fully

at the moment it occurs but is often relieved later in the form of flashbacks, nightmares, or intrusive thoughts.

Trauma manifests as intrusive thoughts about the traumatic event, which frequently take the form of flashbacks or hallucinations. The victims are often tormented by intrusive, excruciating memories, which are usually elicited by subtle sensory cues. These reminders would then set off a wave of bothersome memories for the victim. Hallucinations and flashbacks are the intrusive thoughts that Powder encounters; in these, she is continuously reminded of the traumatic event by seeing or feeling things that are similar to her previous trauma. The loss of her brothers and the mention of her sister coming back to look for her highlight her past trauma.

1. Hallucination

The aftermath of Powder's trauma, especially the traumatic incident of the unintentional explosion that turned into a catastrophic event that resulted in her brothers' deaths and her separation from Vi, is what causes her hallucinations. Since Powder's trauma was not properly dealt with at the time, it resurfaces as hallucinations, which are symptoms of her unresolved trauma. As Powder struggles with her past and the hallucinations of her deceased loved ones—Mylo and Claggor in particular, who frequently show up in her visions—her actions become more violent and erratic. Furthermore, the vision would appear at the mere mention of Powder's sister, Vi.

Even though the events occurred many years ago, Powder is still plagued by visions and memories of her traumatic past. She was deeply scarred by the horrific events of her childhood, especially the abandonment by her sister Vi, which still has an impact on her mental health. While on an infiltration mission into Piltover, Powder meets a woman who looks like Vi. Powder is stunned by the encounter and becomes motionless as she recalls what her sister had previously done to her. The current situation demonstrates the persistent nature of Powder's trauma by illustrating how, years later, memories of her past can still elicit strong emotional and psychological responses, emphasising the wounds from her early years.

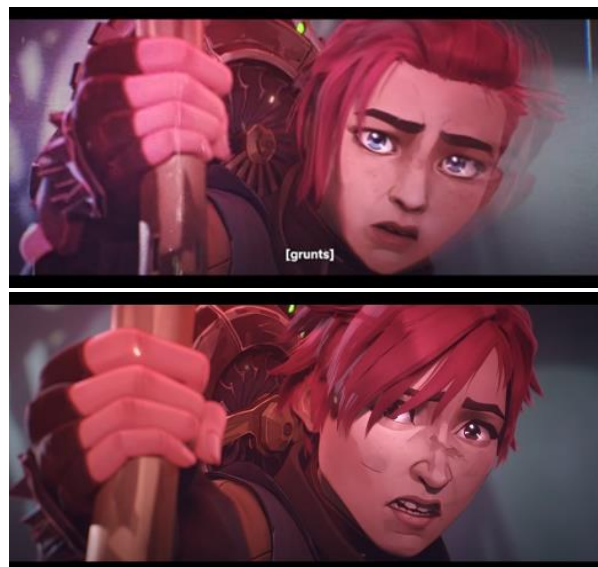


Figure 9. Powder hallucinates the young Vi

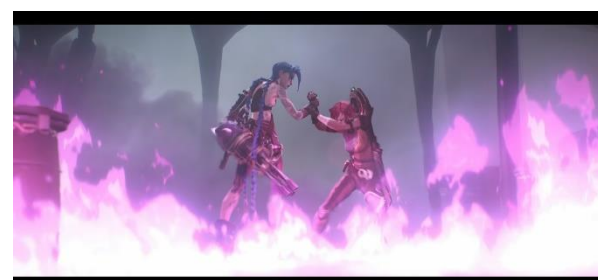


Figure 10. Powder stands motionless while the Vi look-alike tries to run away from her grasp

(POWDER HALLUCINATES THE YOUNG VI)
Powder : "Vi?"

Powder loses her breath suddenly and severely after seeing someone who looks like her sister Vi and going into a delusional state about her. She shoots the woman who appears to be Vi in a panic, instantly killing her. Powder is experiencing heightened psychological arousal as a result of the sensory reminders of the traumatic incident, which causes her to become anxious and panic. A flurry of visual cues that express the overwhelming nature of her emotional and physical response are used to depict this intense reaction. The actual hallucination is intense and disorienting, making it difficult to distinguish between memory and reality.

In addition to having hallucinations of her sister, Powder also imagines talking to her brothers, Mylo and Claggor, who have passed away. She is shown conversing with the fictitious ghosts of her brothers in one particularly sad scene, establishing a tragic yet clear connection with her past. These conversations are far from brief; they are emotionally significant and provide insight into the depth of her psychological trauma. Powder battles her feelings

of loss and guilt through these made-up conversations in addition to looking for consolation and direction. These hallucinations' intensity highlights the long-lasting effects of her unresolved trauma, showing how it still shapes her inner world and affects her behaviour.



Figure 11. Powder hallucinates Mylo's ghost



Figure 12. Powder hallucinates Claggor's ghost

Powder : "It wasn't her. It wasn't."
(ILLUSION OF DEAD MYLO APPEARS)
I know. Just... just some wannabe street trash.
I got confused, that's all."
(ILLUSION OF DEAD CLAGGOR ON CLAGGOR'S DOLL FACE)

Powder uses self-assurance during these made-up discussions, telling herself that she is just perplexed by the mission and that she shouldn't be concerned. In an effort to maintain stability and control in the face of her overwhelming grief and guilt, she uses this self-talk as a coping strategy. Powder attempts to protect herself from the full impact of her traumatic experiences by using these internal dialogues to justify her feelings and behaviours. These instances also highlight her internal conflict, though, as her attempts to remain composed highlight how fragile her mental health is and how her unresolved trauma continues to hold her. This coping mechanism demonstrates her inability to balance her need for assurance with her feelings of self-blame.

2. Flashbacks

Powder's intrusive thoughts would then occur in vision of flashbacks. In *Arcane* (2021), flashbacks are portrayed

with fast, erratic editing and muffled audio, highlighting how fragmented and invasive Powder's memories are. Together, these audio and visual components accentuate Powder's severe emotional turmoil and draw the viewer into her horrific encounter, highlighting the way these bothersome memories rule her consciousness. The overwhelming and unexpected nature of the traumatic incident is portrayed in the TV series' chaotic visual imagery. This depiction of intrusion symptoms offers a more comprehensive understanding of trauma by illuminating the ways in which a person's past traumas can persistently intrude upon their present life, making it challenging for them to achieve stability or serenity.



Figure 13. The crystal explodes



Figure 14. Powder having flashbacks of the incident

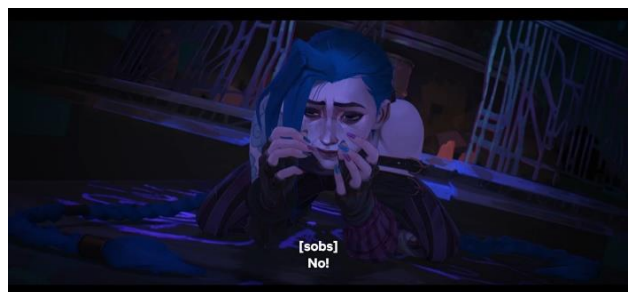


Figure 15. Powder crying, reminiscing her trauma

Powder : "So...here goes."
(CRYSTAL EXPLODES)
(POWDER'S CHILDHOOD FLASHBACKS)
Powder : "[sobs] No!
No! It was a mistake! It was a mistake."

Powder can still clearly remember the horrible things that happened in the warehouse, including how her actions

caused a terrible explosion that killed her brothers. She can't shake the memory; it nags at the back of her mind and pops up at the strangest times. Powder has an accident while conducting an explosive crystal experiment; she does not anticipate the crystal exploding violently and taking her life. An intense flashback to the warehouse incident is brought on by the sudden explosion.

Recalling her unintentional actions at the warehouse, where she killed her father and brothers, causes Powder to become anxious. Powder is left crying and fleeing after her failed experiment results in a crystal explosion. She tells herself that what she did at the time was an error and not her fault. This scene, which highlights how much Powder is still impacted by her previous deeds, is a pivotal point in the series. It draws attention to how invasive trauma is and how suddenly traumatic memories can resurface. One of Powder's main sources of trauma and guilt is the death of a loved one.

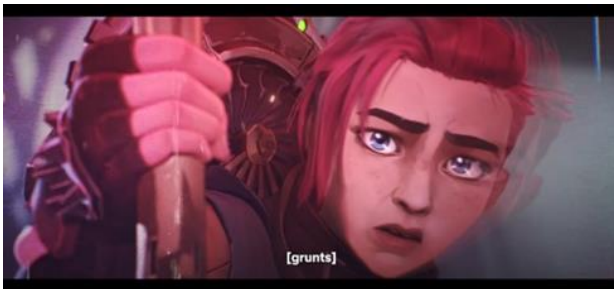


Figure 16. Powder hallucinates the young Vi



Figure 17. The hallucination makes Powder remember her fight with Vi

Moreover, during a tense and chaotic scene in *Arcane*, Powder unexpectedly experiences a flashback to her old memories with her sister Vi. She is fighting a member of the Firelights when she notices an unexpected similarity between her opponent and her sister, who has been missing for a long time. She has worked hard to repress these memories and emotions, but this uncanny resemblance triggers a wave of them. She experiences a mental trip back in time to memories of her time spent apart from Vi.

When Powder's companion reveals that Vi has returned and is looking for her after a period of time,

scenes of her imagining Vi become more intense. The discovery reactivates feelings of abandonment, remorse, and longing, making these hallucinations particularly strong and emotionally powerful. Powder is overcome by the idea of meeting up with her sister and the unresolved hurt of their past, which makes the hallucination a striking and moving representation of her inner struggle.

Her mental condition becomes apparent in the scene, as the hallucination shows the mixed feelings she feels. The scene highlights how significantly Vi's absence has impacted Powder's mental state because just thinking of her sister evokes a strong psychological reaction. It draws attention to the severe emotional wounds caused by their split and the unresolved trauma that still shapes Powder's relationship with her past.



Figure 18. The wounded Sevika reminds Powder of Vi



Figure 19. Powder remembers her separation with Vi

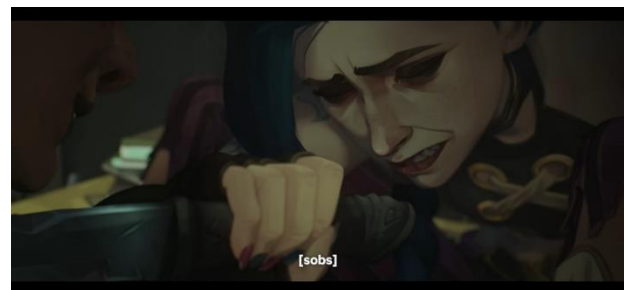


Figure 20. Powder cries after knowing that her sister is still alive

Powder	: "I feel like you and I got off on the wrong arm."
Sevika	: [chuckles] "No need. It's your sister."

(POWDER FLASHBACKS TO
HER TRAUMA)

"She's back. She's looking for
you."

...

Powder : [sobs]

Powder is suddenly bewildered after hearing her companion say that Vi is back and looking for her. This unexpected news catches her completely off guard, and her anxiety immediately surges to the surface. The sudden news makes Powder become vulnerable and sob on the spot on the thought of meeting her sister, implying that she is still guilty on what she has done throughout the years of her life.

CONCLUSION

The study comes to the conclusion that the way Powder's trauma is portrayed in *Arcane* (2021) closely resembles the idea of belatedness as described in Cathy Caruth's (1996) trauma theory, based on the findings and discussions in the previous chapter. The series deftly explores the psychological effects of Powder's horrific experiences, illuminating the ways in which the past still shapes her behaviour and emotional state today. *Arcane* skilfully examines the complex nature of her trauma through its gripping visual storytelling and subtle narrative techniques, providing a thorough depiction of the aftereffects of unresolved grief and loss. In addition to highlighting Powder's inner conflicts, the series places her metamorphosis within the larger framework of trauma theory.

Powder's manifestation of trauma comes in the form of intrusion symptoms where she would get flashbacks and hallucinations of the stressor that reminds her of the traumatic incident, specifically the death of her loved ones and any mention of Vi. The intrusive thoughts of hallucinations were shown as visual effects of Powder hallucinating the face of Vi on a random person's face and Powder talking to her dead brothers. The flashbacks were shown when a trigger of the traumatic incident happens, specifically an explosion that reminded her of the accident, and the slight mention of Vi would send Powder into an anxious state.

SUGGESTION

For other researchers who wish to apply trauma theory to the examination of artistic creations, like films or animations, this study provides insightful information with practical implications. It illustrates how literary and visual studies can successfully incorporate psychological ideas, such as Cathy Caruth's trauma theory, to examine how trauma is portrayed in imaginative stories. Additionally, by highlighting the close relationship between psychology

and literature, this method emphasises how people frequently use artistic creations as a means of expressing and processing their individual or group experiences of trauma. By connecting these fields, this study offers a framework for future researchers to examine related topics in their literary theses, advancing our knowledge of how trauma is portrayed in the arts.

A more thorough examination of the Marxist themes in the animated television series *Arcane* (2021) would be highly beneficial for future research. The glaring contrast between the wealthy, technologically sophisticated city of Piltover and the oppressed undercity of Zaun may be clarified by this line of inquiry. Scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the series' critique of class struggles and power dynamics by exploring the socioeconomic disparities and systemic injustices it portrays. An analysis of this kind might also show how these differences act as a trigger for the growing hostilities and tensions between the two cities, which would deepen our comprehension of the story's larger social and political commentary.

The study might concentrate on the disparate representations of Zaun and Piltover, where Zaun represents poverty, hardship, and resiliency, while Piltover is presented as a society of wealth, privilege, and innovation. Future studies can investigate how socioeconomic differences influence the relationships, motivations, and behaviours of the story's characters by looking at these glaring class differences. For example, the rise of revolutionary movements in Zaun, motivated by the oppressed underclass's desire for equality and justice, could be examined using a Marxist lens. At the same time, the study could explore the actions of Piltover's ruling class to uphold their power and quell opposition, highlighting the fundamental nature of class conflict as a major theme in the story.

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