

*Psychological Strains in Concealed Identities: Evaluation of Racism in
The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett*

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Abstract

This study deals with complex emotional landscape of racial passing in the novel *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett. Employing Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, focus of the study is on characters' experiences revealing identities, social expectations, and internal struggles that define their lives. The inner desire of characters for acceptance, the interaction between personal desires and practical realities, and internalized moral values constitute complex psychological development. Through the lens of Freud's Id, Ego, and Superego, the paper presents the characters' lives as an in-depth examination of the psychological tensions associated with the concealment of racial identity. The findings highlight the enduring consequences of carrying a dual identity in a racialized society. This study provides a glimpse into the psychoanalytic analysis of *The Vanishing Half*, offering a compelling perspective on the characters' psychological complexities as they wrestle with the profound implications of racial passing. The study not only highlights the literary value of the novel, but also contributes to a deeper understanding of the human psyche in terms of identity and race in particular.

Keywords: Bennett, racial passing, concealed identities, *The Vanishing Half*, Freud, psyche

1. Introduction

The books written by African American authors often seem to discuss two significant issues: race (like where people come from) and identity (who they are). These topics have been important for a long time, even back when writers like Toni Morrison were sharing their thoughts. Toni Morrison wrote books like "Jazz," "Beloved," "The Bluest Eye," and "A Mercy" that talk about how Black and White people interacted, especially during the time of slavery in America.

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This study looks at how today's young African Americans are going through similar things as the older generation. Even though things have changed over time and sometimes people try to forget where they come from, there's still this strong feeling of wanting to know more about their background and who they really are, especially about their history and where they belong. As Brit Bennett says that a man can escape a town but cannot escape from blood. So, it's all about how both old and new generations of African Americans are trying to find and understand their true roots and history.

Brit Bennett is an American writer based in Los Angeles. Her debut novel "The Mothers" (2016) was a New York Times best-seller. Her second novel, *The Vanishing Half* (2020), was also a New York Times best-seller and it was chosen as a Good Morning America, Book Club selection. *The Vanishing Half* was selected as one of The New York Times ten best books of 2020 and shortlisted for the 2021 Women's Prize for Fiction.

This paper explores how artistically writer focuses on the main concern of Africans in general, race and its psychological strain of concealment. The fascination, with the complexities of identity and the emotional toll, of hiding oneself has captivated scholars delving into the depths of human existence. In novel, theme like racial passing emerges as a multifaceted exploration of identity and its complexities. This literary masterpiece vividly portrays the struggles endured by those who choose to pass as a race unveiling the internal conflicts and emotional upheaval that accompany such a decision.

Racial passing, a phenomenon with significant socio-cultural implications, remains highly relevant in contemporary discussions about race relations and personal identity. Within the narrative characters navigate the balance between expectations, individual identity and the profound consequences of concealing or altering their racial heritage.

This study is about how hiding who you really are can really mess with your mind. This paper digs deep into the characters' experiences to understand the emotional struggles, inner battles, and how they handle being someone else. The goal is to see how hiding affects their mental health, how they see themselves, and their relationships. It's about juggling two very different lives. People thought that being one of a kind made you special. No, it just made you lonely. What was special was belonging with someone else.

Plus, this paper aims to connect these ideas to society as a whole. This study wants to give new, detailed thoughts about how keeping secrets can really mess with your head, especially when it comes to who you are and what society expects from you.

The Vanishing Half is categorized into six sections, all sections highlight a different character and different time period and follow a specific order This book serves as a touchy portrayal of racism, where characters wrestle with the decision to live within or beyond their racial identity.

This paper aims to delve into the aspects of passing depicted in the novel. By shining a light, on the battles, emotional burdens and complex dynamics experienced by characters engaged in hiding their identities this research seeks to enhance our understanding of this phenomenon and provide insight into their human experiences.

This study seeks to make a contribution, to the conversation surrounding identity, race and the deep influence of societal expectations, on individual's minds. By delving into the struggles, emotional challenges and psychological consequences of concealing one's racial identity researchers aim to shed light on these complex issues.

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2. Literature Review

There are numerous collections of literary works that shed light on the challenges faced by black individuals worldwide. Upon careful observation, it becomes evident how racial bias and attitudes have contributed to an identity crisis among black individuals. However African Americans live with the brain of bondage and battle to maintain a harmony between being a dark on the one side and an American on the other. They strive for liberation from a dominant collective identity that is common globally yet struggle to establish a clear sense of self within their own individual and cultural contexts.

African Americans supposed that nobody could inscribed their issues of rights and race other than the African American writers who had experienced the awful experiences of exile and persecution. They went through a reconstruction of their characters, relocating them to various urban communities. Loomba wrote that racial contrast has worked as one of the most remarkable yet most delicate markers of human character, hard to forces and keep up with yet diligent, a built thought at this point all too genuine in its overwhelming impacts. Are people basically something similar or unique? Is difference characterized by racial or social credits (Loomba, 2015)?

In the other half of the 18th century, African American literature started to get published and the main focus of their publication was equality and justice. The forerunners of African American literature were 18th century writers. These writers try to reveal their concealed history and introduce readers to racism, oppression and colorism. 'African' used as an alternative word for Negro or Black people. James, a professor of History, in his book "Africa in Early African American Literature" mentioned:

In America and England Britishers often used a word "Africans" as an alternative with "Blacks" or "Negroes" for the people they smuggled (Sidbury, 2010).

Examining racial passing has been a recurring theme in literature, where authors examine the complexities of identity, social expectations, and psychological strain in individuals living with racial difference. Diversity in people working together affects their sense of being and performance (Khan & Javaid, 2023). The literary exploration of racial passing finds roots in historical accounts as 'Passing' (1929) by Nella and 'The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man' by Weldon in 1912. These foundational narratives have a pivotal part in determining subsequent examinations of secretion of racism, offering profound insights into the social and psychological dimensions. As in 'Passing' the narrative revolves around the lives of two African American females who are not fair skinned to license as superior. Larsen deals with the details of racial passing in early 20th-century America, exploring themes of friendship, identity, and the psychological toll tolerated by individuals navigating a society with rigid racial boundaries. The novel provides a refinement exploration of the characters' internal conflicts and the social pressures that associate with their decisions to pass (Larsen, Passing, 1929). Embittered minds are resulted if gender and racial differences are causing injustice. Expressive writing brings out trauma and helps literature writers broaden concept on merge of psychology and language expression (Javaid et al., 2023).

And the other one takes the form of a novelized account and explores the life of a biracial man who deals with social expectations tied to racial identity. Johnson's narrative provides a convincing examination of the challenges faced by individuals showing the blurred

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boundaries of race during the early 20th century. The protagonist's reflections on identity, culture, and the consequences of passing contribute to the rich tapestry of racial passing literature (Johnson, 1912).

Racial passing has emerged as a catchy literary term, providing writers with a subtle canvas to question the fluidity of identity. Works such as Philip Roth's 'The Human Stain' (2000) and Nella Larsen's 'Quicksand' (1928) engage with the theme, illustrating the complexity of characters showing the unrealistic lines of racial boundaries and social expectations.

Philip Roth offers a contemporary exploration of racial passing, set against the backdrop of America's radical and public landscape. The novel explores life of protagonist, Coleman Silk, a fair looking character who chooses to pass as white. Roth's narrative navigates the complexities of identity, secrecy, and the consequences of concealing one's racial heritage, providing readers with a thought-provoking exploration of social expectations and the impact of such choices on one's life (Roth, 2000).

Nella Larsen's contribution to the theme of racial passing, explores the experiences of Helga Crane, a biracial woman who wrestles with her identity in a racially constructed society. Nella's work deals with the psychological complexities faced by individuals navigating the blurred lines of racial boundaries during the Harlem Renaissance. 'Quicksand' stands as evidence to the enduring relevance of the theme and its exploration of the internal conflicts and social pressures mixed to racial passing (Larsen, Quicksand, 1928).

Senna's novel provides a contemporary lens on racial passing, exploring the psychological complexities faced by characters get on racial boundaries. The narrative sheds light on the emotional strain and internal conflicts inherent navigating multiple facets of identity (Senna, 1998). Another writer Chimamanda engages with the psychological complexities of race and identity by exploring the experiences of a Nigerian protagonist showing racial dynamics in America. He adds a cultural layer to the exploration of racial passing, shedding light on the psychological strains faced by individuals (Adichie, 2013). Language barriers causes psychological strains (Javaid et al., 2023). Influenced people mark words and persuade significantly (Ramzan et al., 2023).

An American writer Charles Waddell Chesnutt explores issues of racism in the post-Civil War South. In his famous novel 'The House Behind the Cedars' he reveals psychological complexities of racial passing in post-Reconstruction America (Chesnutt, 1900). David L. Eng's academic work emerges as an important input, offering a novel on the complex interplay of racial identity and gender within the realm of Asian American experiences. Eng delves into the psychological dimensions that shape individuals directing the intricate landscape of racial identity, unscrambling the unique challenges posed by the intersectionality of race and gender. His work serves as a critical lens through which readers can examine the multifaceted aspects of identity, exploring how social and cultural expectations, and personal experiences converge to shape the psychological landscape of Asian Americans. Eng's academic inquiry not only enriches our understanding of the internal dynamics faced by individuals within this specific demographic but also provides broader insights into the intricate intersections of identity and the profound impact on the human psyche (Eng, 2001).

Sandweiss also employs a psychoanalytic lens to analyze the psychosocial dimensions of characters engaged in racial passing, providing valuable insights into their instinctual

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desires, negotiations with societal expectations, and the moral standards shaping their decisions (Sandweiss, January 26, 2010).

Many writers highlighted this issue of racial passing or may called racism and by reviewing early 20th century classics to contemporary masterpieces, following literature precisely summarize the human emotions, internal conflicts, and societal critiques that deals with the act of passing. Julia S. Charles explores racial passing across diverse historical and cultural landscapes. Her collection of essays serves as a vital resource, offering readers a comprehensive view of the psychological impact associated with the complex act of passing. From examining the challenges in post-Reconstruction America to exploring the complexities in European contexts, the anthology expands the scope of understanding the multifaceted dimensions of racial passing. As a comprehensive collection, this work not only contributes to the scholarly discourse on identity, race, and societal expectations but also offers readers a panoramic view of the psychological landscapes shaped by the act of passing in a transatlantic context (Charles, 2020).

The present novel *The Vanishing Half* has got much significance since its publication in 2020 and has attracted scholars. They studied it with different perspectives. Some scholars focus on racial crisis like, "Race and Identity in Brit Bennett's *The Vanishing Half* (Arequi, 2022)", Identical sisters, Stella and Desiree, make choices regarding their racial identity, which ultimately shape their fate and influence their children's beliefs, some focus on Identity problems for instance Kristianto in his article focuses on re-conception of identity in America through *The Vanishing Half* (Kristianto, 2023) The novel explores the concept of identity construction and the rejection of homogeneity based on skin color and sexuality, others on battle between black and white like in "Colorism, Passing for White, and Intertextuality in Brit Bennett's *The Vanishing Half*: Rewriting African American Women's Literary Tradition" (Morgado, 2022) and some deals with its post-colonial perspective.

Although there is a lot of research about *The Vanishing Half*, but there is a gap to analyze the psychological strain of concealment. So, this paper aims to unveil the psychological strain of concealment by exploring racial crisis.

3. Research Methodology

The theoretical framework of this research draws on the psychoanalytical model of Sigmund Freud. The main source of data collection for this research is the literature written on the particular subject. The data is collected by visiting many sites publicized articles, thesis, and research papers. The collected data along with proper referencing has been cited by researchers and has given an accurate form to all the materials.

The researchers use the qualitative method because the collected data is in the form of dialogues, quotes and essays. It is the preliminary and persuasive way of study for scrutinizing, describing data and making conclusions. This classification of research is very favorable for collecting data.

Literature and psychology are connected because literature and psychology both study humans. Both of the fields remain thoroughly related as literature is the product of writer's thought and imagination (Dar, 2022).

In detailed exploration of racial passing in the pages of *The Vanishing Half*, researchers go beyond to visible narratives to discover the complicated ground of the characters' minds.

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Adopting Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic framework provides a unique lens through which to examine the psychological strain associated with the concealment of racial identification. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory provides a unique lens for understanding the psychological strain of concealment in *The Vanishing Half*. This theory delves into the unconscious mind, exploring how hidden desires, conflicts, and emotions influence human behavior. Applying Freud's framework to the characters' experiences with racial passing reveals underlying psychological factors at story. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory is used to examine the psychosocial aspects of people who engage in interracial interactions. The concept of Id, Ego, and Superego becomes a valuable framework for understanding characters' innate desires, interactions with social expectations, and internal moral values that shape their decisions.

The three pillars of Freudian concept, Id, Ego, and Superego, offer a deep understanding of the characters' motivations, conflicts, and the complicated connection between their innermost goals and outside societal pressures. Freud believed our minds have different parts. The "Id" is like our wild desires, the "Ego" is the practical part, and the "Superego" is like our moral compass (Berry, 1995). In *The Vanishing Half*, characters might hide their racial identity because of a conflict between what they desire, what's practical, and what they believe is right.

According to Freud, the basic and innate part of the mind, Id, works on the principle of pleasure, looking for immediate fulfillment of desires and without considering consequences. By navigation through novel, researchers unravel the on the spot and instinctual motivations driving characters like Stella and Desiree to make lifestyles-altering choices.

Other part of the mind that deals with reality, Ego, and intermediates between the desires of the id and the restrictions of outside society. It operates on realistic assumptions, considering practical consequences and social values. Stella's ultra-careful management of her dual identification and Desiree's pursuit of happiness reflect the influence of the Ego on their decision-making processes.

The Superego, the ethical compass shaped through social expectations, crisscross its presence at some stage in the narrative. As researchers discover the characters' inner conflicts, the Superego emerges inside the form of social norms, racial expectations, and the norms of the community they live. It enforces a layer of ethical judgment and study on the characters' picks, adding complexity to the psychological strain related to racial concealment. In this analysis, researchers try to unveil the layers of consciousness in *The Vanishing Half*, where the interplay of Id, Ego, and Superego becomes a blend through which researchers understand the characters' decisions to hide their racial identities. The researchers analyze these layers to uncover the intricate psychological mechanisms that shapes the narrative, providing a profound insight into the human psyche within the framework of racial passing.

4. Textual Analysis

In this pivotal section, researchers explore the comprehensive analysis of the psychological complexities portrayed in *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett. With a focus on the theme of racial passing and the profound strain of concealment, researchers' examination extends beyond the surface narrative to unravel the complex web of emotions, conflicts, and self-discovery experienced by the characters.

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The analysis aims to uncover the delicate threads of the characters' minds in novel. Here, researchers embark on journey to unravel the intricate layers of emotions woven into the fabric of the story. The focus of researchers sharpens on the protagonists' choices to conceal their true racial identities, offering a closer look at the struggles that lie beneath the surface. This exploration isn't just about words on a page; it's a voyage through the characters' internal battles, the weight of societal expectations, and the lasting footprints of those choices. As researchers follow the characters through their twists and turns, not just analyzing, also peeling back layers to reveal the emotional toll of harboring hidden truths. Brit Bennett's artistry in depicting racial passing isn't just about plot points, it's a skillful illumination of the profound emotional landscapes these characters navigate.

The Vanishing Half is a thought-provoking book that explores theme like identity, race, and family. Set in the 1950s and 60s, it is about the story of two identical sisters who take very different paths in life. The novel also highlights the impact of personal choices on family and on loved ones. The characters in the novel are complex and multidimensional. Grappling with their own insecurities and struggles as they navigate the world around me.

Additionally, the novel sheds light on the pervasive effects of racism in society and the toll it takes on characters' lives. Overall, it is a touching and sensible novel offers a powerful commentary on identity, race, and family dynamics.

For the purpose to analyze the text according to Sigmund Freud framework researchers analyze the characters one by one. Firstly, it comes to Stella character,

"Stella stood before the mirror, adjusting the features that she had created. The lightness of her skin, the careful arrangement of her hair, every detail accurately designed to fit into a world that would never accept her as she truly was. Yet, as she gazed at the reflection, a subtle unease crept in, a whisper from the depths of her being, questioning the cost of this careful representation of herself."

In this fragmented text, Stella's careful adjustment of her appearance reflects a primal desire (Id) to fit into a world that might otherwise reject her true racial identity. Id works on the principle of pleasure, looking for instant fulfilment of demands. Stella's actions here suggest an instinctual drive to navigate societal expectations, emphasizing the innate desire for acceptance and belonging. This piece of text also highlights the role of the Ego as Stella carefully designs her features to conform to societal norms. The Ego acts as a mediator between desire and reality, considering practical consequences. Stella's actions illustrate the Ego's involvement in managing the practical aspects of racial passing, demonstrating a calculated effort to navigate a world that imposes racial constraints. The indirect unease and questioning described in the passage align with the influence of the Superego. Stella's internal conflict indicates a moral dilemma, suggesting the Superego's role in enforcing societal norms and values. The unease serves as a psychological consequence of the internalized moral standards, questioning the cost of the cover-up she accurately maintains. The passage summarizes the intricate interplay between the Id, Ego, and Superego in Stella's psyche. Her desire for acceptance (Id) leads to careful adjustments (Ego), but the subtle unease reflects the internal moral conflict (Superego). In applying Freud's psychoanalytic theory to this passage, researchers gain insight into Stella's internal struggles, highlighting the psychological complexity of racial passing in *The Vanishing Half*.

"Mallard whispered what he expected, an invisible hand guiding the lives of its inhabitants.

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Stella felt the weight of these whispered commands, shaping her decisions like an unseen force. Her steps as she walked the streets reflected her internal conflict each step was a dialogue between the desire for acceptance and her desire to let go of the oppressive expectations that were woven into the fabric of town."

Mallard's whispered expectations serve as an external representation of social desires (Id), influencing Stella's actions. The desire to be accepted is an ancient instinct deeply rooted in societal norms, and Mallard, as a symbolic entity, embodies these innate expectations that drive Stella's actions. Stella's wandering the streets mirrors the internal conflict within her ego. Each step represents an interaction between the desire for acceptance (Ego) and the desire for independence. The Ego mediates between the external societal expectations and Stella's internal desire for individuality and autonomy. The burden of whispered commands and the stifling expectations reflects the influence of the Superego. Mallard's expectations become internalized moral values that shape Stella's decisions. The inner struggle emphasizes the role of the Superego in enforcing societal norms and the psychological strain resulting from the tension between conformity and individual freedom.

In this passage, Freud's psychoanalytic theory provides insight into the psychological dynamics at play as Stella deals with Mallard's social expectations. The interaction between external whispered mandates (Id), the Stella's internal communication of ego, and the internalized moral standards of the Superego reveals complex psychological forces that organize her decisions at in the city's expectations, contributing to the psychological complexity explored in *The Vanishing Half*.

In the character of Desiree, the writer also explains how racial passing affects the lives of people and their peace of mind.

"Desiree hesitated at the threshold of Mallard, a town that whispered old secrets and determined the fate of its inhabitants. Family expectations weighed heavily on her, pulling at the core of her identity. As she contemplated her return, the echoes of her mother's voice reverberated in her mind, questioning the consequences of unraveling the tightly woven fabric of Mallard's racism."

Desiree's hesitation at the Mallard threshold reflects a primal instinct (Id) to confront her familial ties and the social expectations associated to her identity. The desire to return and unravel the town's secrets suggests an instinctual drive to explore her roots and perhaps challenge the status quo, indicating an underlying desire for authenticity. The burden of familial expectations pulling at Desiree signifies the involvement of the Ego, the mediator between desire and reality. Desiree grapples with the practical considerations of returning to Mallard, aware that her actions may have consequences. The observation of her return reflects the Ego's role in navigating societal and familial norms. The echoes of her mother's voice and the consideration of the consequences indicate the influence of the Superego. Desiree is challenged with an internal moral compass that questions the impact of her actions on Mallard's racism. The Superego, shaped by familial and societal values, plays a crucial role in the psychological conflict Desiree faces.

In this passage, Freud's psychoanalytic framework unveils Desiree's internal conflicts as she contemplates her return to Mallard. The interaction between her innate desires (Id), the behavioral considerations (Ego) of familial expectations, and the internal moral values (Superego) highlights the complexity of her psychological landscape. Desiree grapples with

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the tension between personal desires and societal expectations, setting the stage for a detailed exploration of identity and belonging in *The Vanishing Half*.

"Desiree's return to Mallard was a confrontation with her past, the narrow streets of the town echoing with the ghosts of her memories. As she passed familiar places, there was the pull of nostalgia intertwined with a sense of anxiety. Return is a dynamic psychological terrain where the blissful images of her youth collided with the harsh realities of racial expectations." Desiree's return to Mallard serves as a confrontation with her past and, by extension, her blissful images of youth (Id). The desire to reconnect with familiar objects and memories reflects an innate longing for a time stainless by the complexities of racial expectations, suggesting an inner drive for authenticity. The tug of nostalgia and sense of anxiety indicate the involvement of the Ego. Desiree's walk through the town becomes a negotiation between the desire to reconnect with the past (Ego) and the practical considerations of the harsh realities of racial expectations. The Ego is tasked with balancing these conflicting elements. The harsh realities of racial expectations represent the influence of the Superego. Desiree's anxiety is linked to the internalized moral standards shaped by social norms. The Superego acts as a silent judge, reminding her of the consequences and expectations associated with racial identity in Mallard.

In this passage, Freud's psychoanalytic theory illuminates the psychological dynamics as Desiree confronts her past in Mallard. The interplay between instinctual desires (Id), the negotiation and balance of conflicting emotions (Ego), and the influence of internalized moral standards (Superego) creates a rich psychological terrain. Desiree's return becomes a complex journey where the idyllic images of her youth collide with the societal expectations in-built in Mallard's racial landscape, contributing to the intricate exploration of identity and memory in *The Vanishing Half*.

"Jude stared at her reflection, a blend of her parents' features staring back at her. The mirror seemed to hold a silent interrogation, prompting her to question the fragments of her identity. As she traced the contours of her face, a sense of curiosity mingled with a subtle unease, as if the answers she sought lay hidden in the depths of her subconscious."

In this part, Freud's psychoanalytic lens reveals the complexities of Jude's self-exploration. Jude's contemplation of her reflection reflects an innate interest (Id) about her identity. The desire to understand a particular mix of parents' features suggests an innate desire to explore the roots of her being. The silent interrogation from the mirror symbolizes the Id's quest for self-knowledge and immediate understanding. The unease that mingles with Jude's curiosity suggests the involvement of the Ego. As she questions the fragments of her identity, the Ego comes into play, mediating between the desire for self-discovery and the practical considerations of understanding one's complex heritage. The subtle unease reflects the Ego's acknowledgment of potential conflicts and challenges in this exploration. The sense of curiosity mingled with unease suggests the influence of the Superego. Jude's internal questioning is not just a matter of personal desire; it reflects an awareness of societal expectations and norms. The answers she seeks are not only about personal identity but also about the broader context of societal and familial values that shape her understanding.

The interplay of instinctual curiosity (Id), practical considerations and unease (Ego), and the influence of societal and familial values (Superego) creates a psychological climate in which personal identity becomes an internal and external curiosity. As Jude traces the contours of

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her face, Bennett intricately captures the complex negotiation of self-discovery within the broader framework of societal and familial expectations.

Basically, this novel is full of exploration of racial passing and its associated psychological strain. Examining the language, character dynamics, thematic elements, and structural choices within the text, researchers aim to reveal the hidden layers of meaning and psychological depth. Bennett expertise a linguistic tapestry that underscores the characters' concealed identities. For instance, Mallard's description in earlier chapters as a place **"where nobody married dark"** subtly foreshadows the racial expectations that contribute to the characters' decisions (Bennett, 2020). Throughout the novel, the recurring use of light and darkness metaphors serves as a linguistic device, symbolizing the complexities of racial identity concealment.

The dynamics between Desiree and Stella are rich with unspoken tensions that can't be overstated. In Chapter 2, Desiree's observation, **"You act like you're not colored,"** highlights the unsaid conflicts beneath the surface, encapsulating the psychological strain of Stella's decision to pass. Additionally, Stella's internal monologues, such as **"No one knew. No one would ever know,"** emphasizes the psychological toll of her concealed racial identity (Bennett, 2020).

The story is filled with issues of identity and social expectations. The thematic resonance is evident in the exploration of Jude's experiences in school, with racial identity as a focal point. Bennett's portrayal of the complexities that Jude faces mirrors the broader thematic exploration of racial passing and its psychological consequences (Bennett, 2020).

Bennett's choice of structures contributes significantly to the narrative impact. The alternating timelines, evident in the juxtaposition of Desiree's departure from Mallard and Stella's life in Los Angeles, create a narrative rhythm that heightens the psychological tension (Bennett, 2020). The choice to interweave past and present invites readers to engage with the changing mindset of characters and the lasting consequences of their decisions.

In this meticulous textual analysis, the layers of *The Vanishing Half* are peeled back to expose the complex psychology that shapes the characters' experiences. Through unique language choices, character dynamics, recurring themes, and structural complexities, Bennett crafts a story that invites readers to seek deeper insights into the human psyche within the unique context of racial passing.

5. Conclusions

In the analysis of *The Vanishing Half*, researchers going into the psychological ground of racial passing has discovered profound insights into the complexities of identity, social expectations, and the internal conflicts that shape the characters' lives. By using the lens of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory with the focus on Id, Ego, and Superego researchers has showed the characters' experiences, shedding light on the multifaceted psychological tension associated with covering one's racial identity.

The characters' innate desires for acceptance become powerful motivators driving their decisions to pass. Representing primal instincts, the Id emphasizes the characters' innate desires and the psychological damage that occurs in navigating social expectations. The interaction between desire for acceptance and the practical consideration of racial crossing emphasizes the role of the Ego. Characters, like Stella and Desiree, grapple with the

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challenges of managing their dual identities, creating a complex situation between personal desires and the harsh realities imposed by the external world. In Mallard, the burden of whispered commands and the harsh realities of racial expectations speak the influence of the Superego. Characters internalize social norms, creating a moral compass that guides their decisions. Psychological tensions occur as they navigate the conflict between individual desires and the expectations embedded in the fabric of their environment. *The Vanishing Half* is a complex literary exploration, contributing to a discussion about social expectations of identity, authenticity, and lasting impact.

In conclusion, the journeys of the characters in *The Vanishing Half* provide a deep canvas to explore the psychological complexities of racial crossing while revealing layers of identity, desires, and social impact, the novel becomes a rich tapestry that not only tickles but also offers readers to look on the complexities of human being in context of race and identity.

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