

Beauty: when the other dancer is the self essay



Our perception of things is usually subjective to our experiences. The writer of the essay “ Beauty: When the Other Dancer is the Self”, Alice Walker is not very different from the way she perceives beauty. She begins the essay with an extremely outlook on the time when she knew she was very beautiful. She writes “ I am the prettiest!” as she abuses her beauty for her father to approve. She is adored by her father as she wins his approval to go on a ride with him. She not only liked playing the role of the pretty little girl she was, she was also a tomboy playing with he brothers and doing the boy thing. While playing with one of her brothers, Walker is shot in the eye. The beautiful girl’s eye develops an ugly white scar that destroys her beauty.

After the accident, she becomes self-conscious about her looks, withdrawn and does not raise her head so that people could not stare into hereyes. She would become violent at the children who teased her, like the way she beat the child who called her “ the one-eyed bitch.”

She could even hide herself in her room to avoid people from visiting her. Her pain leaves her when her three-year old daughter sees the ugly white scar in her eye as something different from what it is. She sees it as a world and for the first time, Walker accepts the scar as a part of her that has to be loved and not hated.

The experiences walker had gone through had taught her a lot and she could now see the injury as part of her character and something about Walker that was not bad but only different. She uses several stylistic devices throughout the essay to put across her changing outlook towards her beauty. She also uses several rhetorical strategies that provide coherence in the transition

from one paragraph to another. Rhetorical clauses like “ ‘You did not change,’ they say’ are used to explain the different stages of her life as she explains how she changed. These clauses were used by Walker to convey a luring and a clear story that makes the reader engaged in the description of her life as a flashback. She uses the accident that took place early in her childhood to show how a person’s mindset can be changed due to a terrific experience and how the person’s attitude can be changed from arrogance and conceit into an entirely new person who sees the beauty within one’s life. Walker also uses several points in her life to build up this idea in separate clear stages.

The audience for this essay is those people who tend to handicap themselves and Walker is telling them that they can find peace with themselves and finally accept the shortcoming in their lives. It is ironic how a life can be turned around the way Walker’s was even if her eye was not at all disabled.