

Picture description

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Picture “ Still me Inside” is a short narrative by Mai Goda. Mai wrote this story as a teenager in high school, a critical stage during which adolescents make an attempt to discern their identity. She describes how she woke up one morning and suddenly decided to make radical changes in her appearance. While she had been previously conservative and reserved in both her style and demeanour, Mai adopted a punk like look. She achieved this by cutting her long black hair short and dyeing it red. She also pierced her eyebrow, the ultimate sign of teenage rebellion. Mai describes having encountered discriminatory glances; comments and treatment from people who deemed her delinquent simply from her new look. For instance, she recalls getting late to school and on requesting the vice principal for a pass, she got a stern warning. During a music performance, shortly after her radical change in appearance, the audience focus less on her ability to perform and more on her look. Even though she overhears parents warning their kids not to be like her, she gets a complement from her friend’s father. This makes her realize that is still the same person she was prior to the transformation. The incident also bolsters her self esteem and confidence, reaffirming her identity (Davies 335-336).

The other text to be compared with Mai Goda’s “ Still me Inside” is based on “ Zits”, a popular cartoon strip, which describes the life of a teenager named Jeremy Duncan. The comic strip under scrutiny, “ my folks never let up about my clothes” depicts Jeremy engaging in an argument with his mother over his mode of dressing. The mother is displeased that Jeremy does not tuck in his shirt, while he asserts that his way of dressing reflects his identity. He insists that he is an individual, and has to be autonomous. The irony in the

comic strip is that when his friends show up, they are all dressed the same way (Davies 333).

The principal message in both the cartoon and the narrative is that, adolescents tend to undergo numerous conflicting emotions about their appearance. Characters in both works, that is, Jeremy and Goda uphold the perception that their appearance defines their identity. For instance, Mai feels invisible by being conservatively dressed, an emotion that prompts her to change in an attempt to get recognized and fit in with the other teenagers. Likewise, Jeremy feels the urge to dress in a manner that does not set him apart from his friends, even though he claims otherwise. Both the narrative and the cartoon serve to show the large difference in perception between the youths and the older generation. For instance, in Mai's narrative, most parents tend to disapprove of her physical appearance and discourage their children from emulating her. This is unlike Mai's perception of her appearance, since she deems it stylish and acceptable. In Jeremy's case, his mother is not supportive of his mode of dressing. She is annoyed that her son fails to tuck in his shirt, because to her, this symbolizes indecency. Jeremy on the other hand does not see anything wrong with his mode of dressing. Both texts also tend to show that there are various societal stereotypes associated with physical appearance. For instance, Mai's red hair and pierced eyebrow is associated with delinquency, while, Jeremy's careless dressing mode depicts indecency. Even though both works draw comparison between teenage appearance and identity, Mai's narrative gives a superb conclusion that, a person's identity remains the same irrespective of their physical looks.

Work Cited

Davies, Richard. *Between the Lines 12*. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education Limited. 2002. Print.