

Use of mirror and reflection imagery in "mulan" essay sample



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Use of Mirror and Reflection Imagery in “Mulan” Essay Sample

This story is about the adventures of a young woman in ancient China, named Mulan, inspired by a familiar Chinese folk tale.

Mulan is a lovable, spirited girl who doesn't fit in with Chinese tradition because she has a bad habit of speaking her mind and following her heart, which gets her into a lot of trouble. Mulan's parents sent her to the matchmaker hoping that she will find a suitable husband, but through several mishaps she fails miserably and is told she will never bring her family honor. She brought dishonor to her family due to her unlady-like behavior and went home crying. As she was walking and happened to look at the lake and shiny tombstone of her ancestors, serving as the mirror, she took time to look at herself at her reflection. She was asking herself when her reflection will show who she is inside. Her views on accepted marriage tradition are different. She is wondering why must she conceal what she thinks, how she feels, must it be a secret forced to hide who she really is. A woman, for her, should be able to speak up and act the way she wants. Not just a follower of her husband but an equal in all undertakings. She realizes that when she is true to herself she breaks her family's heart. She also realizes she can't hide who she is inside. She hopes for a recognition of her true self.

When the Huns, lead by the merciless Shan-Yu attacked China, her father, Fa Zhou, who is aged and crippled, is conscripted into the Imperial Army. Mulan tried to object by saying that he couldn't go because of his situation but was told that by her father that he knows his place and it's time that she should

learn hers. Mulan fears for her father's life, she secretly cuts her hair, disguises herself as a man, steals his sword, his armor, his conscription in order, and is ready for military camp, and takes her father's place.

Her ancestors concerned for her well-being sent a guardian dragon, Mushu and a lucky Cricket, Cri-Kee to travel with her. Mushu became the guardian by tricking the ancestors; he is considered the lowliest of dragon guardians because he failed to protect the ancestors of Mulan's family through the ages. He wants to redeem his status as a worthy guardian dragon he deems it is his duty to protect and guide Mulan and make her a war hero.

Mushu hidden in her clothing, she joins a group of raw recruits under the command of Captain Shang. Mushu with Cri-Kee teaches her how to impersonate a man at boot camp. She first appears as a weakling but by using her ingenuity she eventually proves herself to the men by climbing a pole the other men could not climb.

The captain of Mulan's military unit is Shang, who is the son of a General who is eventually killed by the Huns. Captain Shang leads his troops into battle and confronts the Huns, but they are outnumbered. Mulan through using her ingenuity again, saves the day by shooting the last canon to a precipice overhanging the Hun army and they are destroyed as an enormous avalanche wipes them all out. She managed to save Captain Shang from all dangers, close to death calls but Mulan is wounded on the side and thus her secret is revealed in the process. She was supposed to be beheaded but since she saved Captain Shang's life she was spared. Life for life, that's what Captain Shang told her. He is now free from his debt to her. She is disgraced

and ostracized by Captain Shang and left behind as the army heads back for the Imperial City to announce their victory.

However, some of the Huns survived the avalanche without their knowledge. Mulan races to tell Shang that the Huns are in the Imperial City but she has lost his trust. She didn't give up however. The Huns captured the emperor and drag him as a hostage into his own palace. Again, through her ingenuity, she shows the men how to climb columns to the roof of the palace in the same way she climbed the pole in the boot camp, much earlier in the story. She is eventually directly responsible for saving the Emperor's life as well as his kingdom. The Emperor gave her a great honor by being made a member of the emperor's council that shocked all the people. Furthermore, the emperor gave her the sword of Shan-Yu as a symbol of her victory against him, and the crest of the Emperor. She returns home to her father where he welcomes her with open arms. Her father is very proud and honored by her success and display of courage.

The Emperor tells Captain Shang " a flower that blooms in adversity is the most rare and beautiful of all." Shang knows the Emperor is referring to Mulan. He follows Mulan to her home. He was well welcomed by Mulan's family.

Being true to her heart she brought her family victory in the end and honor to her family.