

The white umbrella literature reviews example

[Family](#), [Father](#)



In the short story *The White Umbrella* which is written by Gish Jen readers come across a young Chinese girl and her sister Mona who are not happy about the idea of their mother going out to work. Their family relocated to the United States from China and as it is their father's income cannot meet all the needs of the family. It turns out that it is improper for their mother to go out to seek employment because this goes against their tradition and beliefs. The young girl and her sister Mona cannot get everything that they desire to have and at the prospect of possessing an umbrella for even one night is enough to make the narrator happy. When she gets the chance to own it, she becomes very happy and excited but the excitement lasts just a short while because circumstances force her to throw her umbrella down the sewer. Their race, culture and family beliefs shape the thoughts and identity of the narrator and her sister as immigrants.

At the prospect of owning the umbrella, the narrator gets so excited to such an extent that she jumped up and down in the rain thanking Miss Crosman. Suddenly she thought of how exciting her walk to school would be the following day. She wanted to dangle it from her wrist just like the other girls did, while walking to school the following day. The dreams of a young immigrant girl were suddenly coming true because now she could compare herself to the likes of Eugenie Roberts. In as much as she is not the type that is ready to receive pity and sympathy, she accepts the umbrella and for a moment she puts her pride aside. Perhaps it is her identity crisis that forces her to reject the different offers given to her but at last she accepts the gift of an umbrella because it could make her look better and fit in the category of other girls.

The narrator does not want to see her mother working and if she does she should do a really nice and trendy job. But she could not bring herself to imagine the kind of job she could do. Together with her sister they kept guessing her job but finally get to learn that she is a check-out clerk in the A & P. they are very disappointed and “ for a moment no one said anything”. Perhaps they were too embarrassed to comment. At least heir mother should let their father provide for the family just like the father of Eugenie Roberts. But their mom is not ready to let the girls compare their family to that of the Roberts.

The girls wanted to discourage their mother from working because they were disappointed with her. Turns out that as immigrants, they have a very hard time to adjust and earn a descent living but the girls are not ready to hear none of that. Their family could not afford little luxuries that the girls wanted and the little white umbrella almost cost them their lives because were it not for it then the accident may have never occurred. But all the same, the narrator had to throw it away perhaps she could not stand scolding from her parents. But as immigrants, they find a hard time, adjusting and having everything they wanted but the situation is made worse by the conflicting ideals of America and those of China from where they came.