

# A pair of tickets amy tan

Literature



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Amy Tan's *A Pair Of Tickets* is a story concerning family and roots. June May, like the author herself, was a Chinese born in USA and grew up with an American background culture, whereas her mother grew up in China and then immigrated to America. Looking at the repeated words, we discussed that one there are many words such as mother, sister, father and Aiyi. Most of the characters in this story belong to one family, June May's family. It suggests to us that the tale is about relations and where we stand in our family.

Even Aiyi brings practically her whole family to see her brother and niece. This is also one of the stronger traits of the Chinese cultures where there are many family occasions. The Story also constantly talks of " blood. " In the western culture, blood, which is usually connected with red, symbolizes a sacrifice, death and also a bloodline. As we look at the previous repeated words, the " blood" means a lineage of family and relations. Blood also signifies your identity. In the story, May June, does not understand her Chinese blood identity at the beginning.

She was embarrassed by her mother's behavior. She did not realize what it meant when her mother said " Once you are born Chinese, you cannot help but feel and think Chinese...It is in your blood, waiting to be let go. " She admits that even though she is 36 years old, " I've never known what it means to be Chinese. " It is not until she goes to China and finally meets her half sisters that she understands what it is to be Chinese. " And now I see what part of me is Chinese. It is so obvious. It is my family. It is in our blood.

After all these years, it can finally be let go. " Red color in the Chinese tradition is different from the west. It symbolizes joy, happiness and

celebration (weddings and new years especially). As June May discovers her heritage through her blood family, she gains a kind of joy and happiness through it. The imagery of the make-up coming off when June May reaches China due to the heat and humidity may also act as a symbol of her taking off her mask and revealing her true identity; her Chinese identity by blood.

There is a parallel in the story between the father and daughter. It is not only June May who discovers her Chinese roots but also her father rediscovers his childhood Chinese in him. Both the father and daughter are going to China for the same reason: to see their sisters. Her father is going to meet his older sister, Aiyi, and June May is going to see her half-sisters from her mother's first mirage. Their reaction when they see their sisters is the same; they are both emotionally moved.

Their response when June May helps her father take a picture of him and Aiyi is the same as when June May and her sisters eagerly wait for the film to develop. " The camera flashes and I hand them the snapshot. Aiyi and my father still stand close together, each of them holding the corner of the picture, watching as their images begin to form. They are almost reverentially quiet. " " The flash of the Polaroid goes off and my father hands me the snapshot. My sisters and I watch quietly together, eager to see what develops. "

One of the important elements of the story are the names of the characters. In Chinese all names have a special meaning. June May's mother's name was Suyuan. In Chinese, it meant " Long Cherished Wish. " Just like her name, Suyuan did have a wish that she spent her lifetime searching for. It was to look for her lost twin daughters from her first mirage that she lost during the

Second World War. And the first character of her name means “ Forever Never Forgotten,” also like she never forgot about her daughters even when she died.

The lost twin sister’s names are Chwun Yu and Chwun Hwa, meaning Spring Rain and Spring Flower “ because they were born in the spring, and of course rain comes before flower, same order these girls are born. ” Their names, derived from nature, where flower follows rain also indicate to us the indivisibility of the twin sisters. June May, s chinese name was “ Jing-me. i” “ Jing’ like excellent jing. Not just good, it’s something pure, essential, the best quality. Jing is good leftover stuff when you take impurities out of something like gold, or rice, or salt.

So what is left—just pure sence. And ‘ Mei,’ this is common mei, as in meimei, ‘ younger sister. ’” Although she is the only daughter to her father, in her mother’s eyes, she has two bigger sisters. The connection between the names of the mother and daughters is one of the essences that attach Jing-mei closer to her family and Chinese side. After Jing-mei gradually understands her mother more and about her sisters, she slowly realizes how important it is for herself to meet her half sisters. It is the cherished wish that her mother dreamed of.

Jing-mei understands, when she comprehends what her name means, that her mother had given her that specific name in hope that maybe one day, Jing-mei will be able to find her sisters and fulfill her mother’s long lost wish. “ And although we don’t speak, I know we all see it: Together we look like our mother. Her same eyes, her same mouth, open in surprise to see, at last,

her long-cherished wish. " Parallel to the names, is the names of the cities that have changed their spelling. For Example, " Chungking is Chongquin.

And Kweilin is Guilin. " And " Guangzhou, which my guidebook tells me is how on properly refers to Canton. " June May's name also changes as she accepts her Chinese culture and identity to Jing-mei. The title " A Pair of Tickets," is the story of a father and daughter on a journey from one place, America, to another, China. The action from moving from America to China, also symbolizes the movement of Jing-mei's recognition of her identity as she shifts from her American culture to her new Chinese Culture that was already in her blood.

Not only is this journey a physical action, but also a spiritual journey. Through this spiritual journey, Jing-mei, clarifies her identity, the struggles of trying to accept her Chinese roots, and the misunderstandings she had of her mother. She gains respect towards her mother as she learns the battle her mother has fought to get to America. In the course of this journey, Jing-mei has learned to understand and respect her family. " After all these years, it can finally be let go. "