

Symbols in cast away essay sample

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Personal Response for “ Cast Away”

“ Cast Away” is a fantastic film that has many hidden meanings beneath the surface. Before being analysed, it seems like it’s simply about a man who experiences an adventurous journey after his plane crashes into the Pacific. After more thought was put into it, many symbolic meanings that demonstrated his human nature, mainly consisting his drive of survival, faith, hope, and morals, was revealed. I am able to arrive at the conclusion that yes, I do agree with the quote, “ Cast Away delivers a strong message of fear, survival, faith and hope.”

After Chuck Noland is “ chucked” onto an inhabited island, we as an audience immediately see various symbolisms of hope. As an example, in order to survive, he begins to open the FedEx boxes with high anticipations that they will consist of something useful. However, there is a certain package decorated with a pair of golden wings that he keeps sealed. It is inferable that by doing so, he is hoping to repossess his previous life in order to return the unopened box to its rightful owners. Striving to deliver one of the package kept him alive because it gave him a reason to live and a drive to survive, since doing so requires escaping the island which is his ultimate goal. Chuck also saves the locket containing the picture of his fiancée, which plays the same role as the undamaged package. It provides hope that there is a future waiting for him if he simply manages to escape.

The fire created plays an important role as well; after multiple tries and failures, he finally achieves a spark. Before this achievement, Chuck had a very negative attitude towards his situation which immediately changes after succeeding. He is exhilarant and begins to yell and dance in excitement. He

now has more hope since chance of survival is much greater with fire. He will likewise be able to be seen by passing ships, which provides a possibility of rescue. Soon after, for the first time in the entire movie, melancholy music is played soon after Chuck succeeds in rowing his raft away from the coast. Later on, after reconnecting with Kelly, the two comprehend that they cannot rekindle their past relationship even though they are evidently still in love, and thus begins the same melancholy music once more. The concept remains the same in both situations: a sense of nostalgic longing of the familiar life but hope for a new beginning at the same time.

Survival is also a very prominent element in the film. Before opening the FedEx boxes, Chuck was very hesitant because it was against his moral beliefs, since they were not his to take. After some time, he decided that his survival meant more to him than his morals. Another excellent example to prove this point is the process Chuck took in order to liberate himself from the island. The ocean itself is a barrier between Chuck and the outside world, and he desperately attempts to overcome it. During the first attempt at escape, he is impaled by a sharp rock. The blood that spills from his flesh hides a deeper meaning to it; it represents the hardships that hold him back from attaining his goals. When trying to overcome obstacles, unfortunate events such as becoming injured may cross one's path but it doesn't mean giving up should be an option.

Later on, he tries again to escape the island. A key line expressed by Chuck is, " I would rather take my chances and brave the ocean than spend the rest of my life on this goddamn island waiting to die, talking to a volleyball!" He is

explaining that he would take a huge risk if it means there's a chance of returning to civilization, instead of taking the easy way out and not trying but remaining stranded. This demonstrates a very good example of survival instinct: that he will do all that he is capable of in order to survive.

He loses faith in himself some time after arriving on the island, so he decides to commit suicide by hanging himself over a cliff. Luckily, the tree branch that supported the noose snapped which would mean him falling to his death instead. Chuck then realizes that it's a sign that he needs to live. Before the departure of the island, Chuck doesn't have much faith that he will survive the trip back to civilization since he writes, " Tell Kelly that Chuck Noland loves her" on a rock in case somebody comes across it later on. If he was certain that he'd succeed in the journey back, he would not be doing so since he could tell her himself in person.

Shortly after departing, he encounters a whale swimming close by. It is the first living thing that's seen throughout the movie after the crash, other than Chuck himself and his food sources. There are no sound of birds, either. This gives him more faith that he will arrive back to civilization where people are alive. Wilson is the only companion Chuck has on the entire island, and he frequently holds conversations as well as arguments with Wilson in order to stay sane. It becomes his closest and only companion; Chuck stores so many of his thoughts and emotions in the volleyball that it begins to appear alive. He puts all of his faith in the volleyball.

This can be shown when he nearly loses Wilson on the island at night and begins to panic, repeatedly calling its name like a parent who had just lost

his child. After it became detached from the raft, Chuck risks his life to save it by swimming away from his raft which meant safety. Even though he was in a rough position and by doing so meant risking his own life, he'd still save somebody even after four years of isolation. This also shows that his morals have not changed since the beginning of the movie.

In conclusion, after taking note the different symbolic meanings behind Chuck's actions and thoughts, I wholeheartedly agree with the critic's take on the movie. Before his plane crashed, Chuck was a typical human being residing in Tennessee. After being thrown into a situation where he had to do all that he could to survive, his survival skills and instincts, hope as well as faith became extremely prominent through the process. Cast Away is most definitely a fantastic film that skillfully portrays hope, survival and faith in a subtle manner.