

Ceremony

Family



There are many characters in the novel Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko that have their each personal and unique story behind them. Rocky, Tayo, Robert, Josiah, and Grandma are some characters who have different stories. One character who has a very interesting and unique story is Auntie. Auntie's story is about her sacrifice for others and the burden she takes from her sister, Laura's mistakes. Auntie had lived a rough life from her childhood and adolescent stage. Growing up she had a sister named Laura who was a young teenager that was a prostitute. Like any other sibling, Auntie was very ashamed of that. Auntie would constantly hear trash-talking among the villagers about Laura's lifestyle and Auntie took it offensively since it was her sister. To make matters worse, Laura got pregnant from a white man. Laura eventually gave birth to young mixed-blood boy named Tayo. Auntie immediately took control of the boy to hide him from the shame of having a mother that is a whore. This large cloud of shame that Laura brought upon her family would last long enough for Tayo to realize who his mother was. Taking in Tayo would be this reminder to Auntie of who her sister was. Every time she would look at Tayo she would think of what a disgusting and careless person Laura was. Auntie would always hang her head in shame knowing that even though her sister is gone, with having Tayo live with her, there is still something that will always make Auntie feel ashamed until the day she dies. In essence Auntie gave up her whole adulthood and future to pay for all the sins that her family had committed. Knowing all that Auntie had given up she feels like someone owes her something in return. There is nothing that anybody can give her that can be equivalent to all the years she sacrificed to raise Tayo. Auntie was always trapped inside a little bubble which she hasn't been able to escape from yet. She has been suffering this

<https://assignbuster.com/ceremony/>

whole time. She never had the privileges of freedom like her siblings Laura and Josiah had. This suffrage has negatively affected her life. Things get worse for Auntie. Rocky is Auntie's beloved son. He is a man who believes he is above the Native American lifestyle and that he belongs to more of a white man's lifestyle. Auntie raised Rocky to not believe in Native American traditions because they are stupid. Auntie made sure he didn't believe them but he was aware of them. This gave Rocky the mentality that he should be above the Native American culture in which he truly belongs to. He believed this because he was offered a scholarship to play football with the white men. This was an extremely rare opportunity because he was the only Native American to play football with the whites. Rocky was like a savior to Auntie's misery because nobody would talk bad things to Auntie since Rocky was her son and this gave Auntie a sense of happiness knowing that she has something good in her life for once. Things quickly went from bad to worse for Auntie when Rocky was killed. As if losing her son wasn't hard enough, she lost the one and only good thing in her life. Auntie immediately turned to Tayo as a scapegoat for her pain by saying that he should've been the one to die in the war. Saying this showed that she never really fully cared about Tayo as much as she cared about Rocky simply because Rocky was there to hide the shame of what Tayo still carried from his mother's actions. Auntie would constantly act like she treated Tayo and Rocky equal in front of Grandma and Josiah when in fact they were not equal. It's a sad story for Tayo because none of this was his fault because he couldn't control his mother's actions and Auntie for the most part took it all out on him. Auntie was becoming miserable from all of these terrible things that have come before her and she knew that the only thing left that she can turn to for help was

<https://assignbuster.com/ceremony/>

God. Auntie became a Christian; this was the white man's religion. Through teachings Auntie believed that suffering will get God to forgive her for her sins and reward her with peace and tranquility. This is like the story of Jesus Christ who gave his own life to pay for the sins of the human race and he was rewarded eternal life. With Auntie, she believes that religion can help her in becoming a happier person. Throughout out the novel, Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko it was pretty self evident that Auntie was put through a life of suffrage, pain, and rejection. Whether it was her being rejected, her rejecting Laura for her actions, her rejecting the fact that her son is dead, or even her rejecting Tayo for the shame that she is reminded of everyday, there was always rejection. She would feel that nothing would ever go her way. She gave up a lot for others and therefore I believe she deserved a lot. If I were in Tayo's shoes and it were in today's time period, I would send Auntie on a weeks' vacation to Punta Cana so that she can finally have a smile on her face.