

Student Essay on Jei Ming

Jei Ming

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Contents

Student Essay on Jei Ming.....	1
Contents.....	2
Essay.....	3

Essay

There are many challenges to parenting. Attempting to be firm, yet flexible; strong, but not intimidating; loving, but not over-sentimental, are only a few. Jing-mei's mother struggled with maintaining this balance, as do many parents. Jing-mei's mother's contrasting character traits, such as strictness, lovingness, and pride are evident in the story "Two Kinds" by Amy Tan.

Jing-mei's mother is quite strict. Her strictness is reflected in one night, she made Jing-mei, "look at a page in the Bible for three minutes and then report everything I [Jing-mei] could remember," (96). Since she wanted her child to become a prodigy, she was very strict and made Jing-mei perform outrageous tasks to take her to stardom such as making Jing-mei practice piano for two hours on a daily basis (98). This made Jing-mei feel overwhelmed at times, but she got through.

Jing-mei's mother was also very proud. During Jing-mei's piano recital, Jing-mei played horribly. "Pride and some strange sense of honor must have anchored my parents to their chairs," (101). Another example is when Jing-mei's mother said, "Our problem is worse than yours. If we ask Jing-mei wash dish, she hear nothing but music. It's like you can't stop this natural talent," (100). Her pride led her to brag about Jing-mei's non-existent talent, compared to her little cousin's exceptional talents.

Although she was strict and proud, she did love her daughter. On Jing-mei's thirtieth birthday, "... she offered to give me [Jing-mei] the piano.... I saw the offer as a sign of forgiveness, a tremendous burden removed," (103). Her love for her daughter overcame her self-pride, as she gave Jing-mei their piano. This is also evident in that growing up, she made Jing-mei practice piano, and go to modeling school so she wouldn't have to live in poverty like she did in China. Her Mother's love came through to her in many ways growing up.

In the story "Two Kinds," the author illustrates Jing-mei's mother as a loving, compassionate person. However, her other important traits helped her to raise Jing-mei to be a respectable person.