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The strong determination

All people face crisis in their lives. The reason of crisis isn’t important; how they accept the crisis and overcome it is what matters the most. Those who give up will face consequences, but those who rise again will taste the fruit of success. Maya Angelou’s poem “Still I Rise” talks about how people should face and overcome crisis. The poem’s main theme, overcoming anything through confidence, is best represented by some organisms in nature, especially the cactus. Cactus best represents the topic of “Still I Rise” by Angelou with its strong will of survival in the desert.

The environment that most cacti live in effectively shows the hardships that Angelou mentions in her poem “Still I Rise”. She talks about the how she will rise again even if “You may shoot me with your words, / You may cut me with your eyes, / You may kill me with your hatefulness,” (21-23). The harsh trials written in the poem show that she can overcome anything. Most cacti live in habitats that are very harsh, with long droughts, extreme temperature and more. However, no matter how extreme the conditions become, they thrive, showing how they can survive regardless of the dangers they may face. The living conditions of cacti symbolizes the crisis that the author talks about in her poem, which effectively shows the main theme of the poem.

Her confidence in herself can also be referred to the special feature of a cactus. In her poem, she talks about how people become envious of her. They want to see her “broken” (13) and “weakened” (16), so they keep attacking her with their “bitter, twisted lies” (2). Their acts of jealousy, however, does not change the fact that she is better than them. Similarly, cacti are exposed to constant threats of predators of their superior survival ability. In a desert, conserving water is the most important key to survival as long droughts and hot weather makes it hard to find an unlimited water source. However, cacti are free from this problem. They store water in their body and can save it for as long as they want to. This unique feature exposes them to constant attacks of predators looking for water, but they protect themselves with thorns. Both the author and cacti get attacks from those who envy their superiority, but they endure it and thrive, illustrating their supremacy among others.

The author and cacti both hold on to hope when going through hardships, enabling them to prosper afterwards. Although she may go through a lot of criticism and aggression from others, she uses hopeful images such as “daybreak that’s wondrously clear” (37) and “dream and the hope” (40) to show that she won’t lose hope. That hope enables her to overcome crisis and flourish afterwards. Likewise, cacti also go through a lot of through threats and dangers. But in the end, they bloom a beautiful flower. No matter what they may have to go through, they stand still and endure whatever comes as a threat to their life, just to bloom that flower. The author and cacti have desires to get a happy ending, giving them the bravery and power to overcome difficulties they may face.

The cacti best portray the main theme of the poem “Still I Rise” by Angelou as it symbolizes the hardships the author must go through, the jealousy she gets from others as a result of her superiority and the hope she holds on to. Life is all about overcoming personal burden. People cannot avoid it, regardless of their preference. The poem and cacti tell us how to face it: have confidence in yourself and just move on.

Works Cited

Angelou, Maya. “Still I Rise.” *Literature: an Introduction to Reading and Writing, Compact Edition. sixth ed.* Crawfordsville: Roberts and Edgar V., 2001. 885-886. Print