***Extended Metaphor***

***from “Scar” (pp.47-48)****:*

In two years’ time, my scar became pale and shiny and I had no memory of my mother. That is the way it is with a wound. The wound begins to close in on itself, to protect what is hurting so much. And once it is closed, you no longer see what is underneath, what started the pain. [. . .]

That is how a daughter honors her mother. It is *shou* so deep it is in your bones. The pain of the flesh is nothing. The pain you must forget. Because sometimes that is the only way to remember what is in your bones. You must peel off your skin, and that of your mother, and her mother before her. Until there is nothing. No scar, no skin, no flesh.

***Imagery, archetypes, contrasting ideas***

***From “Half and Half” (p.122)***

The wind was whipping the cotton trousers around my legs and I looked for some place where the sand wouldn't kick into my eyes. I saw we were standing in the hollow of a cove. It was like a giant bowl, cracked in half, the other half washed out to sea. My mother walked toward the right, where the beach was clean, and we all followed. On this side, the wall of the cove curved around and protected the beach from both the rough surf and the wind. And along this wall, in its shadow, was a reef ledge that started at the edge of the beach and continued out past the cove where the waters became rough. It seemed as though a person could walk out to sea on this reef, although it looked very rocky and slippery. On the other side of the cove, the wall was more jagged, eaten away by the water. It was pitted with crevices, so when the waves crashed against the wall, the water spewed out of these holes like white gulleys.

Thinking back, I remember that this beach cove was a terrible place, full of wet shadows that chilled us and invisible specks that flew into our eyes and made it hard for us to see the dangers. We were all blind with the newness of this experience: a Chinese family trying to act like a typical American family at the beach.

***Archetypes and Symbolism***

***from “Without Wood ” (p.196)***

That night I dreamt I was wandering through the garden. The trees and bushes were covered with mist. And then I spotted Old Mr. Chou and my mother off in the distance, their busy movements swirling the fog around them. They were bending over one of the planters boxes.

“There she is!” cried my mother. Old Mr. Chou smiled at me and waved. I walked up to my mother and saw that she was hovering over something, as if she were tending a baby.

“See,” she said, beaming. “I have just planted them this morning, some for you, some for me.”

And below the *heimongmong*, all along the ground, were weeds already spilling out over the edges, running wild in every direction.

Answer:The dream sequence at the chapter's close reinforces this symbol of Rose's newfound identity and strength. In the dream, Rose's mother is walking with Old Mr. Chou through the foggy garden. Notice that Rose is no longer afraid of Old Mr. Chou, her longtime enemy. She now welcomes sleep because she is in touch with her inner self. She is at peace. And her mother is planting weeds! This is an inversion of our expectations. People plant flowers; they pluck weeds. But Rose's mother realizes the strength of weeds. They aren't fragile roses that wither in the glaring sun or driving rain; they are hearty survivors. In the garden, they are already "spilling out over the edges and running wild in every direction." Like them, Rose has taken root. Like the tough weeds, she can now survive life's blows.

***Foreshadowing and imagery***

***From “Magpies” (p. 220)***

And in the wintertime I would see snow, she said. My mother said, In just a few months, the period of the Cold Dew would come, then it would start to rain, and then the rain would fall more softly, more slowly until it became white and dry as the petals of quince blossoms in the spring. She would wrap me up in fur-lined coats and pants, so if it was bitter cold, no matter!

She told me many stories until my face was turned forward, looking toward my new home in Tientsin. But when the fifth day came, as we sailed closer toward the Tientsin gulf, the waters changed from muddy yellow to black and the boat began to rock and groan. I became fearful and sick. And at night I dreamed of the eastward-flowing stream my aunt had warned me about, the dark waters that changed a person forever. And watching those dark waters from my sickbed on the boat, I was scared that my aunt's words had come true. I saw how my mother was already beginning to change, how dark and angry her face had become, looking out over the sea, thinking her own thoughts. And my thoughts, too, became cloudy and confused.

***Symbolism***

***From “Magpies” (p. 239)***

I fainted with all this grief and they carried me back to Yan Chang's bed. So that morning, while my mother was dying, I was dreaming.

I was falling from the sky down to the ground, into a pond. And I became a little turtle lying at the bottom of this watery place. Above me I could see the beaks of a thousand magpies drinking from the pond, drinking and singing happily and filling their snow-white bellies. I was crying hard, so many tears, but they drank and drank, so many of them, until I had no more tears left and the pond was empty, everything as dry as sand.

***Rhetorical question and theme***

***From “Magpies” (p. 239)***

My mother, she suffered. She lost her face and tried to hide it. She found only greater misery and finally could not hide that. There is nothing more to understand. That was China. That was what people did back then. They had no choice. They could not speak up. They could not run away. That was their fate.

But now they can do something else. Now they no longer have to swallow their own tears or suffer the taunts of magpies. I know this because I read this news in a magazine from China.

It said that for thousands of years birds had been tormenting the peasants. They flocked to watch peasants bent over in the fields, digging the hard dirt, crying into the furrows to water the seeds. And when the people stood up, the birds would fly down and drink the tears and eat the seeds. So children starved.

But one day, all these tired peasants-from all over China -they gathered in fields everywhere. They watched the birds eating and drinking. And they said, "Enough of this suffering and silence!" They began to clap their hands, and bang sticks on pots and pans and shout, "*Sz! Sz! Sz!*"-Die! Die! Die!

And all these birds rose in the air, alarmed and confused by this new anger, beating their black wings, flying just above, waiting for the noise to stop. But the people's shouts only grew stronger, angrier. The birds became more exhausted, unable to land, unable to eat. And this continued for many hours, for many days, until all those birds-hundreds, thousands, and then millions!-fluttered to the ground, dead and still, until not one bird remained in the sky.

What would your psychiatrist say if I told him that I shouted for joy when I read that this had happened?

The dream sequence at the chapter's close reinforces this symbol of Rose's newfound identity and strength. In the dream, Rose's mother is walking with Old Mr. Chou through the foggy garden. Notice that Rose is no longer afraid of Old Mr. Chou, her longtime enemy. She now welcomes sleep because she is in touch with her inner self. She is at peace. And her mother is planting weeds! This is an inversion of our expectations. People plant flowers; they pluck weeds. But Rose's mother realizes the strength of weeds. They aren't fragile roses that wither in the glaring sun or driving rain; they are hearty survivors. In the garden, they are already "spilling out over the edges and running wild in every direction." Like them, Rose has taken root. Like the tough weeds, she can now survive life's blows.