

Female Supremacy in Rebecca Ross's *The Queen Rising*

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Abstract

This paper deals with the two main features, such as women's solidarity and empowerment, as portrayed in the novel *The Queen's Rising* by Rebecca Ross. The author has conveyed the powerful message that women are great warriors in all fields. This paper clearly shows that the assistance and ability of a woman can bring huge change to society and the world. This paper focuses on a woman's leadership traits, tenacity, and relief from the social limitations that make her choose her own destiny, where women are discriminated against and provided with fewer opportunities. It also aims to explore how the female characters fight for an equitable society against gender-based restrictions in the fields of power and authority. It gives an insight into how the author interweaves a tale of the ultimate self-discovery of a woman in the kingdom of intrigue, politics and power dynamics. This paper addresses the fact that the unity and collaboration of women in a society can make everything possible, which makes patriarchal dominance kneel before the power of women.

Keywords

Gender, Power, Patriarchal domination, Women Empowerment

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American Literature has been developing into a broad way of learning in terms of motives and purpose. It focuses on various themes based on the political, economic, and societal status of the people. Rebecca Ross is a contemporary American writer who is famous for young adult novels and adult fantasy. She is the author of remarkable duologies titled *Letters of Enchantment*, *Elements of Cadence* and *The Queen's Rising*. She has also written two stand-alone novels, *Dreams Lie Beneath* and *Sisters of Sword and Song*. This research paper analyses the female supremacy through the female characters portrayed by the author in this novel. Female supremacy means, "the notion that women are superior to men and that they should be the ruling gender so to speak and that men should take some kind of second place and answer to them" (HubPages). Brienna is the protagonist of the novel *The Queen's Rising*. She was a young girl at the beginning of the story and finally transformed into a rebellious leader. Her supremacy of acquiring knowledge as her passion has made her travel with unbound skills throughout the adventurous journey.

Brienna Colbert is on a quest to find her legitimate father at the age of ten. She lives with her maternal grandfather Rolf Parquet, after the death of her mother. At the age of ten, Brienna has joined the House of Magnalia, where passions such as art, drama, music, wit and knowledge are given more importance. It is the house for the wealthy girls to acquire their education in any one of the mentioned passions and earn their cloak for the same. The female characters in this novel are given roles symbolizing the education and empowerment of women. Brienna's self-disclosure of joining this prestigious

house as a student is expressed in the following lines: "Magnalia House was the sort of establishment where only wealthy, talented girls mastered their passion. It wasn't designed for girls who were lacking, for girls who were illegitimate daughters, and certainly not for girls who defied kings. I, of course, happen to be all three of those kings" (Ross 1).

Brienna has dual citizenship with her parents. Her mother is from Valenia and her unknown father is from Maevana. The Kingdom of Maevana is a country where the queen is on the throne and no kings are given opportunities to rule the kingdom. It is completely the realm of the queens. Brienna is taught the history of Maevana in the Magnalia House. Once, Brienna receives the history book of her master, and she sees the gorgeous illustration of the Maevan queen. The description of the queen is as follows:

This was Liadan Kavanagh, the first queen of Maevana. Which also meant she possessed magic. She stood tall and proud, a crown of woven silver and budding diamonds resting on her brow as a wreath of stars, her long brown hair flowing loose and wild about her, and blue dye that Maevana called "woad" streaked across her face—the legendary Stone of Eventide. She wore armor fashioned like dragon scales—they gleamed with gold and blood—and a long sword was sheathed at her side as she stood with one hand on her hip, the other holding a spear. (Ross 38)

The above lines portray how a woman is described as a powerful queen with bravery, courage and determination. The queen rules, fights, protects and cares for her people with much firmness in her. It is an example to prove how women are capable of holding multiple roles in the home and also in

the war field. The appearance itself gives the queen a vibrant look and makes her appear more confident in her life. The strength of a woman is expressed through this description.

Among the fourteen houses of Magnalia, only the Kavanagh clan possesses magic and it is possessed only by the queen and not by the king. When Brienna is made to answer by her master Cartier regarding the magic of the Kavanaghs, she says, "Because the Kavanaghs are the descendants of dragons, they hold magic in their blood" (Ross 56). Cartier says that there are kings in the realm, but the queen is provided with power and not the king. Here, Brienna's statement, "Because the Kavanagh women are naturally stronger in magic than their men" (Ross 57), explains how women are stronger by birth and they hold enormous blessings with their natural strength.

Ciri Montagne is an arden of knowledge who is under the Master of Knowledge Cartier Evariste. When Brienna is joined to acquire passion, she chooses art in the first year, music in the second year, dramatics in the third year, and wit in the fourth year; finally, she fixes knowledge as her passion. The Magnalia House has a rule that a master should possess only one arden but in case of Brienna this rule is changed which highlights the shift in her life. The author has expressed a fact that one can choose the passion to get educated and sometimes passion itself chooses a person. After seven years, Brienna is about to finish her education in the Magnalia House and is waiting to earn a cloak after the completion of her solstice. But the patrons, Brice Mathieu and Nicolas Babineux, are not ready to be the patron of Brienna. Brienna's words, "I look uneducated to Mathieu and inexperienced to Babineux" (Ross 118), show her dejection of not acquiring her cloak after working hard for the past seven years in the House of Magnalia. But Brienna, without losing hope, takes this as a second chance to polish herself and understand the true nature of her passion for knowledge.

After choosing knowledge as her passion, Brienna works confidently to acquire her education, which later becomes a tool to find her father and help another woman named Isolde Kavanagh, who is to be set on a throne to rule the Maevan Kingdom. Brienna is the key to find the two major tools, such as the "Stone of Eventide" (Ross 41) and "The Queen's Cannon" (Ross 85), to dethrone the most cruel king, who is ruling the Maevan kingdom in a brutal way.

Brienna is introduced to the new patron, Alderic Jourdain, a lawyer who adopts her as his daughter. Alderic Jourdain is a well-educated man in his early fifties. Brienna and her patron father converse together to learn about each other's needs, and finally they come to the conclusion that Brienna should help Jourdain find the stone of eventide, which will be given to Isolde, the rightful queen of Maevana, who is concealed for a purpose. As per the plan, one has to go to the king to seek permission to take part in the autumn hunt. Jourdain has set his son, Luc Jourdain, to finish this task. But Brienna is ready to take part in this plan instead of Luc. Her courage has made her travel to the kingdom all alone with firm determination.

She reaches the place of King Lannon, who is more cruel towards the people, and receives permission for her family to enter the Maevana after twenty-five years to seek pardon.

Everything happens in a proper way and another twist arises in the house of Allenach. Brienna comes to know that Brendan Allenach is her legitimate father, who belongs to the cruel house of Maevana, Allenach the shrewd. Being the daughter of Allenach, she feels more dejected about going with her plan. She is facing a dual conflict in her mind. Her conflict over whether to choose her patron father to help them revive their honor and prosperity or to choose her legitimate father to be the queen of Allenach makes her struggle with her sense of belongingness. After many years, Brienna finds her father to be the most cruel person who destroys his own people without mercy. On the other hand, Alderic Jourdain, the most humble and lovable father, plans to revenge Brendan Allenach and King Gilroy Lannon for the deaths of his wife and daughter. Isolde is in the same confusion as she says, "Will she still choose us, or will she join Allenach?" (Ross 387).

Brienna finally chooses Alderic Jourdain, and she stands against her father. Brienna is given a choice by his father, Brendan Allenach, to be by his side and become the queen of the Maevana and not to stand on the side of Alderic Jourdain. Brienna, with firm determination and courage, stands for righteousness. Dean says "If our ancestors could never have imagined the freedom and power, which the women of today enjoy, only the boldest visionaries among us can envision the brave new world of female supremacy that will dawn tomorrow" (21). Her supremacy is portrayed when she fights against her father to succeed in the path of justice and put injustice down. She stands with a sword, dressed in her armor, to fight with her father. Alderic Jourdain kills Brendan Allenach when he is about to kill Brienna. Even at this time, Brienna stands with a brave heart to be honest and be on the side of truth.

As the story uncovers many secrets, Brienna and Isolde, with the help of the Stone of Eventide and the queen's cannon, fight with King Lannon. Lannon, with his brutal attitude, says, "Ah, little Isolde Kavanagh. However, did you escape my blade twenty years ago? You know that I drove my sword into your sister's heart on this very field. . . . Kneel before me, deny this folly, and I will bring you and your disgraced house back into my fold" (Ross 396). Though these words kindle fear, Isolde, without expressing her emotions, says, "I do not kneel to a king" (Ross 397). This shows yet another female supremacy in this novel, and her words kindle the female power in the line, "I do not kneel to tyranny and cruelty" (Ross 397).

Isolde is a supreme character who symbolizes the power of woman. Finally, King Lannon's army surrenders to Isolde and the story comes to an end by dethroning King Lannon. Isolde with rightful nature, as a queen says, "Gilroy Lannon" . . . Maevana has weighed you and found you wanting. Come and kneel before us" (Ross 418). King Lannon kneels

before her and Isolde gives punishment for the cruelties done by him in the past twenty years. Isolde's final statement to King Lannon: "You will be bound and held in the keep, and the people of Maevana will decide your fate in trial, fourteen days from now. Do not expect mercy, O Cowardly One" proves that the power of women can change everything in the world.

This research paper concludes that women can save the world from negative and horrible scenarios with their power of resilience, determination and tenacity. Their leadership traits can bring about a drastic change in society, either in domestic life or on the war field. The patriarchal domination of the king is put down by the female supremacy with courage and bravery and it proves the fact that female supremacy leads to not only women empowerment, but also creates a better society for everyone in the country.

References

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