

Theme Essay Outline

This month I read *Powerless* by Lauran Robbarts. This book is about a girl named Payden where she lived in peace until an accident occurred killing many. Most of the survivors claimed special abilities such as the ability to wield fire, telekinesis, shape shifting, healing and so on while others stayed ordinary. Payden was one of the rare ones who didn't get any powers. In the kingdom of Ilya, ordinaries are despised and killed because they are believed to weaken elites' abilities. Payden has survived stealing money, food, and clothes until she is selected to go to the perging trials gaining much attention risking her status as an ordinary. Payden must survive throughout the trials and keep her secret as an ordinary to keep her life. The book *Powerless*, by Lauran Robbarts demonstrates the theme: people who are powerless can become powerful.

When Payden Grey is selected for the perging trials, she believes she will win even though she is powerless. The people who were selected for the trials are getting interviewed in front of thousands of people including the king and queen. During Payden's interview, the last question she is asked is what she expects to get out of these trials. All of the other contestants said things to please the crowd such as: my goal is to honor my kingdom and my family. Paedyn's answer however is not like anybody else's. "Okay, one last question, what do you expect to get out of the trials?" "Survive, I expect to survive." (pg, 123 Roberts) After saying this, the crowd and especially the king, were surprised about her confidence. The king wasn't pleased with her answer because of Kai being in the trials. Kai is the future enforcer and has the job of ridding the kingdom of ordinaries. He goes out on missions wherever there are rumors of ordinaries hiding. If ordinaries are caught, they are killed and their families are banished to the scorches where they have little to no chance at surviving the looming desert. Kai is supposed to be the most powerful person in Ilia and people need to fear him. If there is a chance that he will lose in the trials, he will not let that happen. Before the trials, the contestants are interviewed in front of thousands of people before each trial. They talk about what they want from these trials, what they think will happen, and what their ability is. This proves that even though she is powerless, she can fool everyone and protect herself.

Next, when Payden is living on the streets of Ilya with her best friend Adina, even when times get tough, they still survive even being powerless. Paedyn's father was murdered when she was very young, forcing Paedyn to live and survive in the slums. While she is in the slums, she meets her best friend Adina and they work together to make it. "This is not a goodbye, only a good way to say bye until I see you next" (292 Robbarts) When Adina says this she doesn't like to say goodbye to Paedyn without saying the second part because Paedyn is the only friend she has ever had. While Adina was stealing a sticky bun, an enforcer saw her and started chasing after her down a street. Paedyn happened to be there and she stuck out her foot and tripped the enforcer. She then ran after Adina and that is how they met. Ever since, Paedyn has stolen money, food, and fabric for her and Adina. Paedyn's father died when she was young and she has had nobody other than Adina by her side throughout the years. They have been able to work together and hide from the enforcers time and time again, never getting caught.

During the trials Payden defeats and defends against elites even being powerless. Before and after getting selected for the trials, Paedyn has been assembled to defend herself from elites. "A right hook flies at my face and I duck under it, landing a quick blow to her stomach. She stumbles back and I use the opportunity to land a kick to her side." (254 Roberts) Paedyn is fighting Blair who is a telekinesis and she is holding her ground just fine. Before the trials begin, the king holds fights between specific contestants to try to create drama and hate for each other. He puts Paedyn and Blair together because he knows that they don't like each other. Blair ends up winning the fight but Paedyn has left her mark on Blair's face which was her goal. They both then begin the trials fighting ruthlessly until one winner is crowned. This demonstrates the theme that even being powerless, you still are powerful.

Being viewed or discriminated against can sometimes be motivating or a good challenge to overcome. Paedyn did not let the fact that she is an ordinary get in her way. She still continued to carry on and beat everyone who got in her way. You would like to read this book if you like fantasy and the hunger games. I rate this book an 8/10 because it has a very big plot twist at the end and the middle is kind of slow.

Works Cited

(add your book here using MLA in Google Tools)

Work Cited

Roberts, Lauren. *Powerless*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2023.