

Spear is a sensational telling of an Arthurian story that does not resemble the usual Arthurian stories you see out there. I was instantly hooked by the book from the beginning. Throughout the book, there are many scenarios demonstrating that Peretur had a strong set of core values which led her onto the quest for her true self. Although many may argue that, later in the book, it was Nimue who gave Peretur guidance when Peretur was rejected by the king and dwelling on what the future held for her, it remains apparent that it was Peretur's inherent traits and values that carried her a long way to achieve the unimaginable.

At the beginning of the story, Peretur's personality stands in stark contrast with her mother's, though it could be attributed to the fact that her mother was hiding from outside threats built during her past. While her mother only roamed to the garden next to the cave they lived in, Peretur explored, hunted, fought, and tested her strength across Ystrad Tywi (the valley where she and her mother lived). Even though her mother tried to be overly protective by limiting Peretur's mobility, Peretur showed unstoppable inclinations to be independent and to find her true self through outside adventure. Peretur had intimate relationships with animals and discovered a whole new world when she spotted other humans. All of her early experiences exhibit her inherent traits and values such as autonomy, adventure, curiosity, and drive.

The first time in the book that Peretur exhibited bravery was when she fought a ram in the fall. The goat was charging at her; instead of dodging the attack, she grabbed the ram by its horns and submitted it.

During the winter, Peretur found a dead man who fell from his saddle. As a result, Peretur recovered two spears, a sword, and various other things, which she then brought back to the cave. Peretur spent the last month of winter working on restoring the weapons. As Griffith wrote: "...the girl kept working, scouring off the rust, honing the blade, greasing the metal with the last of their duck fat, relining the scabbard with sheepskin stolen from a farm, replacing the little leather ties and their broken enamelled cairns at the ends with copper blobs she learnt to melt in her homemade crucible" (Griffith, 2022, p. 19). Peretur then proceeded to hone her weaponry skill by practicing throwing spears at targets in the forest until it was perfect. The fact that she spent a whole month restoring weapons and dedicated herself to perfecting her weaponry skills showcased her determination and discipline. This is so relatable to every one of us. We live in a society replete with tempting instant gratifications and vices, be it scrolling short videos on the cell phone, drinking, smoking, not taking care of our bodies by eating junk food, and so forth. Many of us constantly seek pleasure but are unaware that it is being focused and disciplined and having a clear vision that leads us to long-term fulfillment.

In Peretur's case, her determination and discipline paid off when she faced hardships. Soon after she developed her weaponry skills, she encountered a situation where a wild dog (half-wolf), which had already killed a lamb, was going to attack another lamb. By penetrating the wild dog in the throat, Peretur saved the lamb's life and was able to sustain her and her mother's life on the lamb that was already killed by the wild dog. It reflects values like compassion and justice, which are essential for

every member of society. Notably, although fictional, Peretur saved an animal's life here. Compassion usually holds that we should acknowledge each person's dignity and worth, not including animals. It would be nice if we could also divert this compassionate attitude toward animals when they are in need of help and justice. Additionally, the incident showed Peretur's bravery.

Testing her strength by saving the lamb, Peretur went on to engage herself in human conflicts. When the knights were caught off guard and attacked by a group of bandits, Peretur stepped in, saving Cei (a knight) and horses from being attacked. The incident also exhibited a tremendous amount of bravery and the willingness to endanger one's own life to help others. Such values are not always promoted in modern society because we each have our responsibilities to fulfill and it is better not to take matters into our own hands. Whether we should involve ourselves in fights definitely depends on the situation and our own circumstances. For example, if overpowering and submitting a violent perpetrator is a long shot, it is perhaps wiser to call law enforcement agencies. However, altruism and the willingness to help others should always be cherished and instilled in our future generations. In the context of this novel, I believe this is where Peretur developed her goal to serve King Arturus by becoming a companion, a knight against evil.

The core values of compassion and justice are again demonstrated when Peretur defended Angharad in a village where Peretur worked. In the incident, Cei grabbed Angharad's waist and was slapped by Angharad. Then, Cei attempted to attack Angharad, only to be stopped by Peretur. Peretur expressed that a Lord, a knight is

not supposed to hit a citizen, showing her community-upholding and leadership values. The incident ended with Peretur disarming Cei, who then left. It is worth a moment's attention that Peretur is the one who saved Cei in the knights-bandits fight early on in the book, and the fact that Peretur did not try hard to bring up her heroic deed is yet another demonstration of humility.

As the incident ended, Peretur also came to a crossroads. She could no longer work for Modron in the village and had to leave. "And Peretur knew it was a goodbye-and-we-are-done, so there was sad mixed with the sweet, but not much, for now she followed a clear path: make her name; Arturus at Caer Leon; and the lake of light" (Griffith, 2022, p. 39). Having to part with Angharad, a girl she was deeply infatuated with, did not frustrate Peretur; instead, Peretur's vision was clearer than ever. She was fixated on achieving her goals. By the way, Bedwyr played the role of a guide here as he reminded Peretur that in order to become a companion, she had to have people vouching for her. Bedwyr's words greatly contributed to Peretur's development of her vision because otherwise, she would not have known where to start.

Striving to accumulate a reputation, Peretur first helped the farmer and his wife get their heifer and donkey back. Although the book did not explicitly depict whether Peretur did this for the sole purpose of gaining a reputation, it may be safe to say that Peretur was also motivated by compassion wanting to seek justice and. Peretur soon gained her reputation as a bandit slayer. However, her toughest fight was yet to come.

One day while riding, Peretur squared up with a bandit, who was unlike any other ill-equipped bandits she ever faced. The bandit was muscular, way bigger and more physically capable than Peretur, and dressed in red armor from his toe to throat.

Peretur got cut on her face and was forced into the lake at the start of the confrontation despite her fighting competency. The red-armored bandit also had an advantage over her due to him knowing the terrain better. “She could do nothing but watch him come. She felt the power of his muscle against the weight of water, saw the length and weight of his sword, knew the strength of his armour—armour on his throat and chest and arms and belly and thighs. Her sword could not stab through that armour; it had no point. She would die, hanging on his tree. Her legs trembled. She could not stand against him” (Griffith, 2022, p. 45).

Despite all the disadvantages, Peretur eventually came out on top by knifing the bandit in the knee where there was no armor. It shows both intellect and knowledge because Peretur utilized her knowledge of the way people wear armor and turned that to serve her in that critical moment. It showcases the true tenacity and poise that Peretur possesses given that she almost gave up psychologically. We can all get caught up in the heat of the moment, losing control, and giving in, but in order to overcome the obstacles, we need to take a step back and detach, not letting emotions get the better of us.

In summary, the book incorporated many core values that we should promote and embrace in modern society and the years to come, including achievement, adventure,

autonomy, bravery, challenge, compassion, competency, determination, discipline,
drive, humility, and justice.

Final Paper Assessment

Reference

Griffith, N. (2022). *Spear*. Tordotcom.