For The Power of Greyskull

By: Paige Platter

From the writer and artist of Lumberjanes, Noelle Stevenson presents *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power.* A reboot of the original 80s cartoon brings She-Ra and the rebellion back to children's imagination. As a Netflix original, *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* are breaking gender stereotypes and the boundaries of sexual orientation while teaching the magic of friendship.

As a queer author and cartoonist, Stevenson pushed to have as much representation as she could in the show, which means we're getting a lot of gays. Two of the princesses in the Princess Alliance, Spinnerella and Netossa, are married. The main character, Bow, has two dads, George and Lance. In the newest season, season four, we're introduced to a new villain. Double Trouble, a non-binary person. Even a main character is gay, Scorpia, a Horde Force Leader, who is obviously in love with Catra, the main villain, and has even attempted to ask her on a date. There's even representation with different body types and skin colors. One of the main characters, Glimmer, is a chubby short girl and Spinnerella is chubby. Netossa is black as is the main character Bow and his two dads. Mermista, a princess in the Princess Alliance, is also black or mixed. Frosta, the youngest princess in the Princess Alliance, has some Asian characteristics to her. Even neurodiversity! Entrapta, a princess and former member of the Princess Alliance who now works with Hordak, is heavily autistic coded with a heavy special interest in robotics. Adora also has some ADHD undertones to her.

But the story is the focus here, with the powerful She-Ra and her band of merry people. With all good stories, we start with the beginning. A new She-Ra is born, this time as a young woman who knows not what she is or who she is. She fights for the side of evil and corruption, but it is not her fault because she was raised by a being of evil and cruelty, brainwashed to believe she was doing what was right. They raised her with a sister, a woman with eyes like a cat, a mane of a lion, and a fiery spirit befitting those traits. The young woman goes by the name Adora, and her sister is the fiendish Catra. So the naming kind of sucks, but it's fine. Adora is promoted to Force Captain, and Catra feels betrayed. To cheer her sister up, Adora steals a ship, heading towards the Whispering Woods. They crash and get separated. That's when Adora finds The Sword of Protection.

Princess Glimmer of Brightmoon and her companion Bow, leaders of the rebellion against the Horde, have been friends since childhood, but that's about to change. The two find Adora, wielding the sword. They attack and a battle ensues. They fight over the sword, Glimmer fearing

Adora would use it for evil, Adora fearing Glimmer would use it the same. A monster breaks the fight up, attacking the three. Adora lifts the sword towards the sky and charges at the monster. Weekend, Adora cannot fully use the sword. Until she hears a female voice coming from the sword. It asks her if she will fight for the honor of Grayskull. Adora agrees and with her battle cry, she transforms into the warrior princess She-Ra. This moment sparked Adora joining Glimmer and Bow in their fight against the Horde.

Throughout this journey, Adora is broadening her understanding of the world and making friends. Friends that include, Princess Mermista of Salineas, Princess Perfuma of Plumeria, Princess Entrapta of Dryl, Princess Netossa and her wife Princess Spinnerella, Swift Wind the talking alicorn, and the singing sea captain Sea Hawk. Before meeting Swift Wind, Adora didn't know what a horse was. Each of these friends has brought their own unique perspective of the world to Adora's eyes. Mermista showed her she can be strong and soft, Perfuma showed her to respect the world around her and to reflect on herself, Entrapta taught her that not everyone will stay loyal, Swift Wind taught her what a horse was, and Sea Hawk taught her how to sail. Without these friends, she would still be the closed-minded horde girl she was before.

Adora has learned on her own too. She's taught herself how to wield the Sword of Protection and ride Swift Wind. She taught herself how to trust those around her and to respect people. She's learned that she can't be there all the time for people and that sometimes those people don't want her around. In turn, she's teaching the viewers about these things while showing them they can be strong without a magic sword.

The characters are fun and exciting while breathing new life into today's children's entertainment. These characters bring to life once forgotten childhood memories, making them new and for today's audience. *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* deserve their overall 96% on Rotten Tomatoes and another season.