

The Red Queen's Color Scheme



In Victoria Aveyard's *Red Queen*, status is determined by blood--silver or red, powerful or powerless. Mare was born and raised with red blood, but one fateful day her world changes. She discovers she has the supernatural abilities of a silver, paired with the blood of a red, through an accident caught on live national television. She is rushed into the palace to live the life of a royal, and most challenging of all, act as if she has silver blood. Not long after, she is coerced into an engagement with Maven Calore, the second prince of Norta.

Aveyard likes to use dialogue to contrast the characters. Mare is straight to the point and her speech is snipped to match. She speaks like she doesn't have the time to say a complete thought. Silver royalty, like Cal or Maven have feathery, slurred speech that carries out an idea until it snaps like a rubber band that was stretched too thin. The language contrast makes official conversations between the two blood types awkward and stilted, which builds on the idea that both reds and silvers are afraid. Silvers simply overcompensate to cling on to their sense of authority.

The visuals are also used as a median to compare the cultures. Aveyard shows readers the horrors of the war reds fight, and the pain of the families left behind through a striking visual of a flag that hangs outside of each red bloods' home. The fabric has a white star for each child they lost in the war. She also highlights the lack of emotion in silvers adorned with gold and embroidered silk. She desensitizes them to pave the way for their rude awakening later in the four book series.

Both sides of the schism change throughout the book. Mare, a loyal and kind-hearted girl, changes into a calculating weapon. In the beginning of the novel, she allows herself to trust and build relationships with the people around her. Later, when a rebellion begins, that Mare realizes trust is vulnerability, but vulnerability leads to corruption. Her emotion betrays what her mind knows to be true over and over again. She learns that love is given, not earned. Cal, the future king of Norta, longed for love and freedom, but he later grows into a sense of loyalty to fate over his own wants.

Aveyard acknowledges that society will always suffer from a degree of segregation. She uses a huge turn near the end to show how a societal or cultural decision can destroy the lifestyles of specific people. Although the majority of the book is based on war and action, the twist focuses on spoken language. Words are a weapon that every human yields in one form or another. Perhaps, *The Red Queen* can use words to bring people together and lessen the gaps between people in modern day society.

-Sarah