

FRIENDSHIP THROUGH FANTASY: AMITY IN THE NOVELS OF TAMORA
PIERCE

by

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ABSTRACT

CHARLOTTE JOHNSON. *Friendship Through Fantasy: Amity in the Novels of Tamora Pierce*

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Friendship is a strangely absent topic in the criticism of children's and young adult (YA) literature. While ancient philosophers have tried to define this unique relationship, a more contemporary analysis that can account for changes in culture and ideology is needed, especially in books for young people, for whom protagonists often serve as role models. Three of Tamora Pierce's YA fantasy quartets, *Song of the Lioness*, *The Immortals*, and *The Circle of Magic*, examine kinds of friendship that do not easily fit into the classical definitions: friendships between animals and humans, mentors and mentees, groups, and lovers. Her ability to broaden the definition of friendship makes Pierce's work a significant contribution to the young adult fantasy canon, providing diverse exemplars for young readers. Exploring these four underappreciated types of friendships and utilizing classical and modern philosophers to understand the intersections between friendship, virtue, and the self, this thesis will show how Pierce's investigation of this relationship provides a basis for scholars to do further work.

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Introduction

The study of children's and young adult literature has flourished in the last fifty years and has become so popular that various institutions now have programs dedicated to the field. While much has been explored in the last fifty years, there are some areas that remain unexamined. One of these deficits is the investigation of the theme of friendship. Obviously while friendships appear in many works, few scholars have examined the relationship itself and the significance it has. One helpful way to look at friendship academically is through the lens of young adult fantasy. This genre is special because it provides the opportunity to explore relationships that may not be entirely possible in real life but can still reflect the experience of the reader. One author who does an excellent job exploring friendship philosophically in her young adult fantasy novels is Tamora Pierce. While friendship is important in all her works, three quartets in particular, the *Song of the Lioness*, the *Immortals* and the *Circle of Magic*, examine unconventional or unexpected friendships that broaden and deepen how we understand this hugely significant yet under examined relationship.

Since the ancient Greeks, philosophers, academics and lay people have tried to define friendship. The definition of a friend is a little less nebulous; a friend is someone with whom one has something in common, either shared experiences or have similar outlooks on life. What is less tangible is the relationship itself. Philosophers generally agree that a person must be virtuous to be a friend but each philosopher has a different definition of virtuous. This lack of consistency makes the relationship hard to pin down.

Almost everybody who has examined friendship has built on Aristotle's exploration of it in his *Nichomachean Ethics*. Aristotle has strong ideas about the concept and attempts to narrow it into smaller sections. One of his bigger assertions is that there are three types of friendship,

those of utility, those of pleasure, and those of “complete friendship [which] is the friendship of those who are good and alike in point of virtue” (Aristotle 168). Friendships of utility rely on what one person can do for the other and friendships of pleasure are based in what is enjoyable to both parties. It is the definition of his third type of friendship that requires exploration. He attempts to define it but he gives characteristics of it rather than a true definition.

A key element of Aristotle’s work is the idea of the friend as the “other self”. This is a complex concept because it suggests that a friend is a continuation of oneself and that this is what allows two people to be so close. Contemporary philosopher A.C. Grayling argues that this definition is complicated because it may appear that friendship is therefore in a sense selfish. However, many people agree with Aristotle that the friend is an extension of oneself and because they are of such same mind, direction and virtue, they’re so close that they overlap. Aristotle recognizes the conundrum when he writes that “he is most a friend to himself, and so one ought to love oneself the most” (200). He admits that this poses a problem but he still believes that friendship can only be authentic when each friend views the other person as part of themselves.

Many who have examined authentic friendship, like Aristotle’s third type, see it as something that is between two “good” people. The definition of that good is nebulous and yet many philosophers have relied on it. Aristotle boldly states that “complete friendship is the friendship of those who are good and alike in point of virtue” (168). He goes so far as to say that base people cannot be friends because they do everything for their own sake. Cicero is of the same mind; he believes that “friendship can only exist between good men” and good men are those who possess “perfect wisdom” (Pakaluk 86). Clearly then one needs to be virtuous in order to be a friend and one needs to be a friend in order to be virtuous.

Thus for many philosophers who have addressed it, friendship is the opposite of immorality and inconsistent with leading a bad life. Grayling states that “what friendship is, then, is the reverse of these things, sincerity, co-operation, trust, concern for the other’s interest, tolerance, mutual admiration and respect (102). Without friendship, philosophers have argued that people cannot be good. Likewise, to be a friend must be virtuous. Cicero states that it is possible for “everyday folk, or...ordinary people” to be friends but it is only as a “source of pleasure and profit” (Pakaluk 88). According to Cicero, regular people can only have friendships of utility and pleasure.

Friendship is the only relationship that is entirely optional. Because it is voluntary, C.S. Lewis asserts that it is “The least *natural* of loves; the least instinctive, organic, biological, gregarious and necessary” (58, emphasis in original). The idea that friendship is something that is not inherent suggests that it is more challenging than other relationships. On the other hand, Cicero urges people to “put friendship ahead of all other concerns, for there is nothing so suited to man’s nature, nothing that can mean so much to him, whether in good times or bad” (Pakaluk 86). While Cicero and Aristotle disagree about whether friendship is natural, they both agree it is voluntary. In fact, friendship is perhaps more important because it is something that must be fostered. Without the intention required for friendship, it would be a very different relationship and perhaps not as valuable.

One important thing to note is that despite the fact that friendship is voluntary, both Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas agree that it is required for a virtuous life. Thomas Aquinas claims, “friends are indeed necessary” and that people need them in order to “engage in virtuous activities” (Grayling 70). Cicero believes that “there is nothing greater in the world than friendship, for it fits human nature, and is exactly what people need and desire in all experiences

of life” (Grayling 46). Although he approaches it differently, C.S. Lewis seems to believe the same thing and states that friendship “has no survival value; rather it is one of those things which give value to survival” (71). Although not meant to help people survive, it provides an essential service to a person’s life. Grayling, like Aristotle, believes that friendship is one of the best things a person can have in life and is therefore “without it the rest of the edifice of good in life would crash down, then it is a duty to ourselves and others that we are friends, that we have friends, that we promote friendship, that we reflect on it, choose it, look after it and foster it” (186).

One of the clear flaws in all of these arguments is the absence of women. Several of the philosophers mention that women cannot be authentic friends because of an inherent lack of intellect or virtue. Montaigne states that “the ordinary capacity of women is inadequate for that communion and fellowship which is the nurse of this sacred bond and therefore is...by the common agreement of the ancient school excluded from it” (Pakaluk 190-91). While obviously this perspective has changed a lot in recent years, there is still an astonishing lack of awareness of female friendship. There is the idea that female friendship is based on shared experience, particularly that of childbirth and child rearing. While this may be true for some, not everyone has those experiences nor are women always in the age where those things are possible or happening. The understanding of gender has also developed in modernity and that changes ideas about it. The friendship among women, and perhaps among younger girls must be investigated.

Few have commented on the friendship between men and women as well. Grayling writes that “there are two assumptions embedded here. One is that if a relationship is sexual, it is not a friendship. This is an assumption denied in passing often enough in the foregoing. The other is that if a relationship is a friendship, it cannot be sexual” (193). Many classical

philosophers believe that there cannot be friendship among women and men because there is always something sexual between them and it reduces people to sexual animals which undermines their humanity. While sex is a part of human nature, it is not necessarily the driving force. Modern ideas attempt to rectify some of these assumptions but they often remain underneath.

In contemporary speech is the common term of a “true friend”. Because so many people have defined friendship differently, there is no way to determine what a true friend is. Because the word “true” is so subjective, I think it is better to use the term “authentic” which relies on a more consistent definition. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as something “genuine, not feigned or faked” and something that “truly reflects one’s inner feelings. Because of this, perhaps it is better to use the term authentic instead of true. It is something that can be explained more clearly, rather than truth which is subjective.

Immanuel Kant is one of the few people who acknowledge that the nature of friendship cannot be completely defined in relationships. He states that “it is an *Idea*, because it is not derived from experience. Empirical examples of friendship are extremely defective” (Pakaluk 211, my emphasis). How many friends people have or how much they have in common might be quantifiable but there is no way, without bias or emotion, to define a friend since it relies so much on experience and affect. Perhaps the ancients are not the best place to start studying friendship, because as I have stated, some of their ideas are very limited. Friendship must be looked at from all aspects, from age, gender, shared experiences and values and other defining factors. Fiction is one of the ways this examination is possible.

Grayling believes strongly in the idea of fiction positively representing friendship and how it can be reflected in real life. When he examines friendship, he gives a background based

on the philosophers but part of his work focuses on fictitious relationships. Grayling recognizes that many of the philosophers mention certain relationships and the “assumption made in the references to them was that if you wish to know what a friend is, what friendship is, how friends behave towards one another, you go to the classical examples and learn from them” (Grayling 123). Modern people are lucky because those examples have changed over time. While Patroclus and Achilles are important, so are E.B. White’s Charlotte and Wilbur, George Orwell’s Winston and Julia, Phillip Pullman’s Will and Lyra, Arnold Lobel’s Frog and Toad, and J.K. Rowling’s Harry, Ron and Hermione. In examining some of these books, it is important to note that quite a few of them are fantasy fiction.

Fantasy is a genre that has become increasingly popular perhaps due to the intensity of contemporary life and current events because it provides an important escape from reality. Some fantasy novels are so far-fetched that it can be hard to relate to. However, others are more realistic. This is one of the powerful things about fantasy which is that it can reflect real life while still being fantastical. By looking at friendship in fantasy, people can explore friendships that range from those that are temporary, those that move from friends to enemies, friends who become lovers and so much more. Because fantasy is slightly removed from reality, it allows for things to be examined without being overwhelming.

Friendship among the young is not often commented upon, perhaps because people think it is more unstable. For those that believe that friendship is meant to be among the moral or virtuous, many would argue that children have not developed enough in these areas to be authentic friends. Aristotle is one of the few who addresses friendship among the young. He argues that “friendship is a help to the young, in saving them from error” (Aristotle 163). This

may be true, but could work the other way just as well. There is much evidence that children have a significant influence on one another, be that in a positive or negative way.

Despite the fact that Aristotle thinks friendship among the young can be helpful in keeping them from acting in error, overall he sees little merit in it. There is no consistency, he states that “the young swiftly become friends and cease being so: the friendship changes together with what they find pleasant, and change in this sort of pleasure is swift. The young are given to erotic love as well” (Aristotle 167). Children are malleable, more so than adults in some ways but it does not mean they are entirely inconsistent. Children can in fact be more loyal than adults because they fail to see the entirety of another’s faults. This allows them to foster strong relationships. Although there is always the possibility of erotic love between children, it does not mean they are predisposed toward it.

Young people are not inherently good or bad friends, rather they have an understanding of friendship that is more straightforward than adults. You do something for me, I do something for you. We have similar interests, let’s play together. There seem to be fewer limitations. Perhaps this allows for childhood friendships to be more powerful and valuable. There is little judgement and often arguments are easily remedied. While this may seem unstable, children are strong in their emotions and know what they want. While some friendships come and go, there are also some that stand the test of time.

What people often underestimate is children’s emotional capacity. Perhaps because of a lack of understanding or simply awareness, children know what they want and go after it without fear of repercussion. This allows them to seek friendships that they truly enjoy. What Tamora Pierce presents in her novels is the idea that childhood friendships are just as powerful as those among adults. She also addresses the complex relationships of people across generations being

friends. In two of her quartets, *The Song of the Lioness* and *the Immortals*, the protagonist goes through significant age advancement but it does not change the fact that many of their friendships were begun in their adolescence. In the *Circle of Magic* series, the characters grow more slowly, but their friendship is no less significant. It shows the great consistency of friendship among people who some would consider not old enough to be authentic friends.

Children's and young adult fantasy is a genre that has great significance because it allows children to be represented in ways that child readers can understand while offering them fictional heights to which they can aspire. They can relate to the characters while still being wrapped up in the story. This is different than realistic fiction because fantasy allows for children to do more than they might necessarily do in real life. C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* series shows how children can be brave, become rulers and have significant agency, something that most children don't experience. Because of this, children can look at fantasy and see something they desire. These narratives may encourage them to do something greater in real life. It may just open them up to other ideas about what it means to be a child and what they can accomplish.

With all it has to offer, young adult fantasy is an excellent place to investigate friendship among younger people. As readers relate to the characters, they may see what they can find and foster in their own friendships. Because children and young adults are in such a formative place in their life, relationships are very important. Fantasy allows for these relationships to become something very important with the intention of encouraging such relationships in real life. Without the presence of the fantastical, some of these relationships may not be present. The importance of these stories to young adults then is the possibility that these relationships may be achievable in their everyday experiences.

Tamora Pierce is a prolific novelist from the 1980s and 1990s who has continued to write until today. Unfortunately, not all of her novels remain in print which is an occurrence that takes away from the young adult fantasy genre. The novels that remain in print are primarily about young women. All her novels are filled with adolescents who experience great growth, friendship, love and experiences. They each have much to offer and this is why her writing is so important. Because of the significance of her work, it is valuable to investigate it from all aspects. However, this thesis will narrow it to the theme of friendship, which as noted has been lacking in current scholarship. Three of her various quartets that provide excellent examples of the theme of friendship will be examined.

While the chapters are not divided according to the quartets, it is important to provide some background on the books themselves. The first of the quartets stands apart from the other two because it takes place in a different fantastical world. The Circle of Magic quartet is made up of four books: *Sandry's Book*, *Tris's Book*, *Daja's Book* and *Briar's Book*. Each of these books are named for the four main characters. *Sandry's Book*, the first of the four brings together four friends who have each discovered that they have magical powers. They are brought to the Winding Circle community to train, help and explore their powers. Each are very different, Daja works with metal, Briar interacts with plants, Tris has a special relationship with weather and Sandry is a magical weaver. Each of these children are able to investigate their power while it brings them together.

Sandry's Book focuses on the development of the children's friendship and how they come together as a group. The novel finishes with Sandry physically weaving the four and their powers together to make them a cohesive unit. *Tris's Book* addresses a new threat that has come to Winding Circle and how the four friends can work together and deal with it. *Daja's Book* is an

adventure because the four move outside of their community in an effort to help other people. It forces the four to examine their relationship with one another when the possibility of Daja leaving the group appears. *Briar's Book* brings the quartet to a conclusion with the choice of each child to commit to one another no matter what. They risk themselves to save a friend and their powers are inextricably combined.

The first quartet that takes place in the Tortall universe is the Song of the Lioness which focuses on a young girl named Alanna who disguises herself as Alan, a young boy in order to accomplish her dream of becoming a knight.¹ For a long time, she must hide her identity while proving to herself that she can be as good as the boys. The novels span a lengthy amount of time, taking Alanna from age eleven to twenty-one. She experiences great battles, first and lasting love and faces what it means to be a woman. Throughout the quartet Alanna finds confidence in herself and her abilities while forming strong relationships with other people.

The first novel, *Alanna* sees the beginning of Alanna's journey and her original decision to disguise herself as a boy. She must admit to herself her shortcomings while working to improve her skills. The next novel is *In the Hand of the Goddess*, which depicts Alanna's experience as a squire of the realm and her continual conflict with the great sorcerer Roger who is revered by much of court. *The Woman Who Rides Like a Man* sees Alanna as a full knight and her exploration of what that means. She travels to the community of the Bazhir where she must prove herself by combat and is adopted into the Bloody Hawk tribe. There she must confront her relationship with magic and the role it plays in her life. The final novel, *Lioness Rampant* is the culmination of her story and development when she becomes who she is meant to be. She proves

¹ While she goes by Alan for the first two novels, this thesis will always identify her as Alanna with the exemption being direct quotes from the book

herself to her court by finding the Dominion Jewel and she accepts her place in the world, as a woman and as a knight.

The third and final quartet that I will examine is the one which chronologically follows the Song of the Lioness and also takes place in the Tortall universe. The Immortals quartet is about young Daine, a child who has a power with animals that is originally unknown to herself and is highly suspect by others. She meets people who encourage her magic show her how much more she can do with it. The four books about her, *Wild Magic*, *Wolf-Speaker*, *Emperor Mage* and *The Realm of the Gods* cover less time than Alanna's quartet but nevertheless see the development of her character and her magic. She meets many people and creatures along the way, both good and bad and has to figure out where she belongs.

Wild Magic focuses on Daine and her exploration of her magic. She begins by going along as an assistant to the horse mistress of a group called the Queen's Riders who are a group supplemental to Tortall's army. She discovers all about her magic and everything she can do with it. The second novel, *Wolf-Speaker*, sees her addressing her past and the relationship she has with a certain wolf pack. While working on behalf of the animals she speaks to, she ends up discovering great treachery in her new home. *Emperor Mage* explores Daine's ability as it relates to other communities as well as the threat it poses. Her abilities are special and coveted by some which puts her at risk. The fourth novel, *The Realm of the Gods* brings together her past and her future when she journey's through the divine lands and must rely on her smarts and her friends to get her through and finish the battles that started in previous books.

This thesis will be divided into four chapters, each addressing a different type of friendship. While philosophers and academics have tried to define friendship using limited groupings, there are a variety of friendships and many that need to be explored. The first chapter

investigates friendships between humans and animals. Because of the magic in the Tortall universe, certain people are able to converse with animals. Daine from the Immortals quartet is the prime example of this because of her powers. She is able to understand and talk to all animals, including immortals. While she is connected to them all, Daine is closer with some than others, particularly her pony Cloud. They have been through much together and have each changed one another. Daine displays how powerful the connection to animals is and the role they can play in someone's life. From the Song of the Lioness quartet, Alanna has a magical cat Faithful who is a great friend to her. He provides wisdom, warns her of danger and helps her grow. Without this relationship, Alanna's life would have been very different. Friendship with animals is complicated because of the vast differences between animals and humans but it is a type of relationship that needs to be explored further. It is a relationship prevalent in real life, not just fiction and therefore has a lot to offer scholars.

The second chapter will explore the relationship between mentors and their mentees. While some people have argued that the inequality between a mentor and mentee means that a friendship is not possible, Pierce proves otherwise. Many relationships she depicts indicate how power dynamics can be overcome by friendship. Each of the three quartets display this. The Circle of Magic quartet is particularly fitting for this exploration because each child has a specific mentor. Each child grows along with that mentor and when it comes to pass that the four must band together to save one of the mentors, it becomes clear that they are their magical equals and this only furthers their ability to be friends. Although the Circle of Magic quartet has several outward examples of mentor and mentee friendships, the Immortals quartet and the Song of the Lioness quartet also show this type of friendship in subtler ways. Alanna has a variety of mentors who become friends and several who appear as parental figures. Because of their age and her

journey, some of Alanna's relationships begin as both mentor and friend. Meanwhile, Daine has a specific mentor who also turns into a lover. The different ways that friendship can exist between people of different levels and ages are often overlooked. These friendships are often overlooked because of the assumption that they are not truly possible.

Chapter three will focus on group friendships. Several philosophers have argued that people can only have a limited number of authentic friendships and that they often occur one on one. Tamora Pierce shows how this is not true. This chapter will be primarily focused on the Circle of Magic quartet as it is the most outwardly focused on group friendships. Tris, Briar, Sandry and Daja are uniquely linked and their relationship shows how friends exist in a group without competition. The other quartet that has an exemplary group of friend is the Song of the Lioness quartet. Alanna begins as a page at the palace and has to navigate her identity as a girl while posing as a boy. Despite her disguise, she builds strong relationships with the other young men who are training to be knights and it shows how despite roadblocks, groups of friends have power. While the members of her friend group change, Pierce still emphasizes the good that even transient relationships can have.

The final chapter will examine romantic relationships and the complications they pose to friendship. The quartet that best emphasizes this is the Song of the Lioness. Alanna goes through three significant relationships, all of which are based in friendship. Pierce presents how romances can grow out of friendship and often for this reason are more powerful and significant. Pierce also shows how these relationships can move back and forth between people being friends and lovers. Each of the relationships that Alanna has relies on friendship as the foundation and one ends in a stronger friendship than the two had before. One of her relationships does not end as well but the commitment they have to each other as friends afterwards still allows them to

sacrifice for one another. The final relationship that Alanna has ends in romance but it moves back and forth throughout the books. The significance of their relationship relies on friendship as the base and allows them to know and care for one another at a different level than if they were purely romantic partners.

Although an excellent and popular author, not much scholastic research has been done on Tamora Pierce. While some of her books are out of print, she continues to write today and therefore her writing has relevance. When doing research, I was disappointed to find that very little has been done to look at her writing. The few people who have examined her writing focus on the feminine characters and the power they present and others focus on the medieval setting. Sarah Sahn explores decolonization in Pierce's fantastic empire in the *Song of the Lioness* quartet. For her PhD, Kathryn Dawn Day investigates Pierce's work as an adolescent feminist fantasy. While these are interesting topics, they are limited and scholarship has not explored much more beyond the role of gender in Pierce's works. For this reason, this thesis has no secondary sources besides the classical philosophers because not enough has been done to indicate how valuable Tamora Pierce and her fiction is.

There are many interpretations of friendship and it has been a topic greatly explored in the past but not so much today. Friendship in modernity is more complicated likely do to the additions of concepts such as social media which label people as "friends" and yet the definition is not very clear. It is a contested topic and perhaps this is why contemporary critics take this relationship for granted and thus there are types of friendships that are underrated and have not been properly explored. All of these become clear in Tamora Pierce's work. She explores friendship through her fantastical novels and it allows her to show how the various types, especially those that are underappreciated, and how important they are. Her novels show the

types of friendship depicted by ancient philosophers and also shows how they are wrong. The power of Pierce's writing allows for the conclusion that there are all kinds of friendship and that one is not better than the other.

Chapter 1: Friendships with Animals

Introduction

Thomas Aquinas wrote that “that which is loved with the love of friendship is loved simply and for itself” (Pakaluk 155). This is one of the pure things about friendships: the ability to care for something for no reason other than the presence of the thing itself. Because humans and animals don’t share a common language, friendships between them reflect this purity. Humans recognize the joy and companionship that an animal brings them just by virtue of sharing spaces with one another.

Animals and humans have the ability to coexist with one another without clear means of communication. This does not prevent them from having a relationship, rather it encourages it. Aristotle believes that “For nothing so much belongs to friends as living together” (171). By cohabitating, two individuals have an extremely intimate view into one another’s life. This fosters a level of understanding that not everyone can have. This understanding can supersede things like communication barriers because it relies on the basic experience of being in one another’s company and learning all about them without words.

The friendship between animals and humans is unexpected but does not diminish the nature or depth of the relationships. The idea that “love arises between opposites or between incomplete halves” suggests that animals and humans have a proclivity for friendship (Grayling 28). They each provide something vastly different and are opposites in many ways. The balance that they may provide to each other as opposites encourages a strong relationship and one that requires both parties to be fully invested.

Grayling acknowledges one way in which the relationship can be formed which is the fact that “Cicero sees the impulse to friendship as natural, a necessitating feature of human

nature just as it is of animal nature in general” (56). Friendship as a part of nature means that all sentient beings can take part in it. Cicero may not have meant that the natural relationship can exist between humans and animals but if both have a tendency toward it, it is possible and perhaps likely that it would take place.

Part of the challenge of this relationship between human and animals is that there is a level of inequality, largely due to the fact that they are different species. There is a disconnect in reality because of the fact that humans care for animals in a more material way than animals do for humans. This is an appeal of human and animal friendships. For humans, a friendship with an animal is safe in some sense. The lack of communication means a human can project their feelings onto their animal companions. There is no fear of rejection and the human appear to be more interested in the animal than the animal is in the human. What humans underestimate, and what people fail to see is that the relationship between animals and humans is can be more reciprocal than humans give them credit for.

The question becomes whether or not friendships have to mean equality. Aristotle argues that authentic friendship can only exist between two people who share the same goodness. However, others argue that friendship can exist between those who are unequal but that the friendship looks different. Grayling says that “...there is equality in friendship...there is to be equality between friends who are of unequal rank to each other or to oneself, whether in office or the social hierarchy” (Grayling 53). While differences may exist, equality must exist at some level. For animals and humans, it means that they must share something significant despite their differences.

Fantasy is a particularly important genre used to explore this kind of friendship because it allows for the communication barrier that is so often present between animals and humans to be

removed. The two can encounter one another in a way that allows them to know each other at a deeper level because there is more of a give and take in the relationship, as we can see in Pierce's novels.

Song of the Lioness Quartet

Sheltered under a tree on a rainy night, Alanna is struck by sneezes which she often attributes to the presence of the supernatural and yet out from the bushes comes a small black cat, with violet eyes much like her own. Alanna has no idea of how this cat will play a role in her life but she admits from the very beginning that "*It'll be nice to have a pet to talk to*" (Pierce 7, emphasis in original).¹ With so many secrets, Alanna has few people she can confide in and she realizes that a pet can be a support for her. Their relationship is close from the very beginning and "True to his name, Faithful followed Alanna everywhere" (*Goddess* 22). The relationship between them begins rapidly but nothing more than a pet and a human until Alanna recognizes that he shares in some of her thoughts. Soon after Faithful becomes a part of Alanna's life, "She had made the discovery that her pet's meowing actually sounded like talk to her" (*Goddess* 34-35). This is a significant turning point in their relationship because it makes true interaction and friendship possible.

Although Faithful follows Alanna everywhere, she refuses to allow him to come to Duke Roger's class with the fear that Roger will have something against the cat. It turns out that Faithful has something against Roger. When he first meets Roger, Faithful digs his claws into Alanna and "His fur bristled; his back was arched; and he was growling deep in his throat as he stared at the Duke" (*Goddess* 25). Alanna is shocked by Faithful's reaction but also recognizes

¹ Because so many of the books referenced are by Pierce, her books will be cited using a short version of the title. This quote is from the novel *In The Hand of the Goddess*, which will further be cited as "Goddess"

that something is not right. Although she questions the origins of her pet, she is more interested in his reaction to Roger. Knowing her brother is a sorcerer, she sends him a message trying to get answers.

It is never clear to Alanna why Faithful has such a vehement reaction to meeting Roger but it eventually comes out that Faithful shares Alanna's feelings about him. This is one of the many things that makes them friends, they share strong convictions and are not afraid to voice them. During the time they spend in the Drell Valley, Roger approaches Alanna to see if they can be friends and although she is very diplomatic, she makes it clear that this will never happen. Faithful reminds Alanna that "Style or not, he's as treacherous as a snake" (Pierce, *Goddess* 132).² By being of the same mind about many things, particularly Roger, Faithful and Alanna are friends in a way that not everyone can be, whether they are human or not.

Another man who Alanna and Faithful share the same feelings for is Akhnan Ibn Nazzir, the original shaman of the Bloody Hawk Tribe. Alanna is unsettled by him from the beginning which only gets worse with his continued antagonism of her. At one point "Faithful suddenly leaped out, seemingly from nowhere, to land spitting in the sand before the shaman" (Pierce, *The Woman Who Rides Like a Man* 42).³ Much like Alanna knows, Faithful is an excellent judge of character and Alanna must take his thoughts into consideration. Although she already dislikes Nazzir, Faithful's reaction only emphasizes her own feelings.

One of the special parts about Alanna and Faithful's friendship is that Faithful provides a lot of wisdom for Alanna. While he always has something to say, either wise or sassy, he is always there for Alanna. She comes to rely on his wisdom, even from the very beginning. When

² In the novels, Faithful's speech is always printed in italics but will be in plain script here for ease of reading and to reduce the necessity to say that the emphasis was in the original

³ This novel will be further cited as "Woman"

she is about to duel a Tusaine knight, she wants to know what he has to say and he tells her, “Let the foreigner act stupid, he advised. It shouldn’t be hard. And don’t get yourself killed!” (*Goddess* 35). Although Faithful is true to his name, this is also the first time it becomes clear that Faithful cares for Alanna’s survival.

Part of the balance that Faithful provides Alanna is he is often more logical than her. When she comes to the Bloody Hawk tribe, she is still disturbed by her killing of Duke Roger. She is loath to use her magic because she believes it only leads to pain and death. However, Faithful reminds her of the truth, despite her emotions. She questions whether she moved too fast and Faithful responds that that is precisely what Roger wanted her to think (*Woman* 47). Although Faithful is sometimes curt, he only desires to save Alanna from her own self-denial or despair. He has the distance to look at things logically while Alanna is often wrapped up in the emotions of things. This may seem one sided in a friendship, but it shows one of the many ways that animals can be friends to humans, because they see things in a different way while still being on the same side.

C.S. Lewis believes that friendship has no survival value and yet Faithful saves Alanna’s life several times. Sometimes he does it on his own but he also relies on others to help him. When her ex friend Alex challenges Alanna to a duel, it almost ends in her death until their teacher Myles comes to intervene. He tells her that “Faithful brought me. He was very forceful!” (*Goddess* 74). Faithful has a knowledge of when Alanna is in danger, even if she is unaware. While it is not always clear why this is, it is significant that he does what he has to in order to keep her alive and well. Faithful is true to his name up to the end of his time with Alanna. After her brother Thom dies and his teacher Si-Cham gives her magic to her friend Jon, Alanna is wiped out, emotionally and physically. Princess Josaine comes to attack her and like many of

Alanna's other opponents and enemies, she forgets about Faithful who orders Alanna to stop Roger. When the princess steps on him and Faithful dies with his "agonized cry, strength poured into his mistress" (Pierce, *Lioness Rampant* 349).⁴ Although he does not willingly die, Faithful knows what he is giving up when he attacks Josaine and out of friendly love cares for Alanna in the only way he can. The fact that Alanna gains strength from Faithful shows all that he had to give and because of their friendship is going to give it to her.

Faithful is a very important friend to Alanna because he keeps her accountable. When she struggles he encourages her, and when she succeeds, he keeps her humble. He also has no qualms about his sharing his feelings. When Alanna nearly passes out helping in the healing tent, Faithful seeks help to come get her and then informs her that "Healing is all very well, but not if you kill yourself in the process. And do you enjoy snuggling up to Jonathan like a lovesick girl?" (*Goddess* 107). Alanna has much to lose with her gender being revealed and Faithful reminds her that she must maintain her secret. He also reminds her of what she should already know, which is not to push herself too far. This fulfills the idea that a friend desires what is best for their friend and is willing to share their thoughts with said friend and do what it takes to help them thrive.

Not only does Faithful keep Alanna accountable but he reminds her of truths she is not always happy to hear. The affection he has for her means that he wants to keep her honest and have a good knowledge of what she can and cannot accomplish. While she is teaching the young shamans in the Bloody Hawk tribe, she worries greatly about her apprentice Ishak because he seems so eager. Faithful has to remind Alanna that she "won't always be able to stand between another person and his fate... you mustn't think you can look after the world" (*Woman* 114). Alanna has a tendency to think that she can do anything and Faithful is a good reminder of her

⁴ This novel will be further cited as "Lioness"

limits. He does this because he cares about her and because he sees in her the willingness to help others but he also has to make her see that she cannot do it at an expense to herself.

One of the seeming road blocks to Alanna and Faithful's friendship is sometimes that they are brutally honest with one another. This leads to conflict such as when Faithful reminds Alanna "without sympathy" that she is "feeling sorry for herself" when she is doubting George's feelings for her based on her fight with Jonathan (*Woman* 217). Alanna, as someone with a big temper, responds by throwing a pillow at him. However, they have a mutual understanding that they push one another. This is especially true for Alanna because few question and challenge her like Faithful does and it makes them closer because he makes her think deeply about things and then discusses things with her. There are times when they disagree but the respect they have for one another supersedes any anger they may have.

Faithful slowly reveals himself to Alanna's friends as well and it fosters her other relationships. The first of these revelations occurs when Alanna is sassing her cat about his criticism of her and Jonathon asks if the two are talking (*Goddess* 108). Jon is shocked but also takes it in stride, for he understands that Alanna and Faithful have always had a close bond. Jon is one of the first of Alanna's friends to understand Faithful, if not always through dialogue. After Faithful finds Alanna passed out at the edge of a river, he seeks out Jon and Jon has to admit to Alanna that "that cat's more intelligent than most people" (*Goddess* 125). Faithful has no qualms about saying that he is superior.

The level of care that Alanna and Faithful have for one another is seen in all kinds of ways. Rarely does Alanna show too much outward affection toward Faithful, not because she is not fond of him but because much like herself, he does not care much for coddling. However, when it really comes down to it, Alanna is just as protective of Faithful as he is of her. When

fighting begins along the River Drell, Faithful yowls at Alanna's feet and she tells him "“No... You remain here. I won't have you hacked in two by someone. You can go up by the falls and watch for more trouble there; but stay away from the fighting!”" and "“evidently the cat realized she mean it.”" (*Goddess* 113). Alanna cares deeply for Faithful's well-being and is able to be forceful toward her friend when she thinks it is necessary.

Although Alanna and Faithful care for one another, rarely does one influence the other so heavily in a way that it seems to be outside of friendship. They do ask one another for advice but it is not always because they need advice but they want their own convictions to be confirmed. One of the special things about this give and take is that it allows them both to be themselves. Even when Alanna asks for advice, Faithful knows what she is thinking and tells her, "“It doesn't matter what I think. You always do what you want – you always have”" (*Lioness* 86). Because of the ability of the two to give their authentic selves to one another, they are able to be friends in a way that no one else can.

One of the lighter things that Alanna and Faithful share as friends is a sense of humor. They are very playful with one another but also have similar feelings when it comes to what is funny. Several times Alanna admits to her friends that she believes she has insanity in her family because of some of the things she has done and choices she has made. When Alanna decides to uncover Roger's true treachery, Faithful does not stop her and makes Alanna grin when he says; "“There must be insanity in my family, too”" (*Goddess* 239). Alanna and Faithful often go back and forth, sometimes sassing one another but knowing that it all comes from true companionship.

Alanna and Faithful share a comradeship that Alanna does not have with all her friends because with her cat she is without boundaries. After Faithful came into her life, Alanna has had no secrets from him, even if he keeps some from her. Every interaction is authentic and tinged

with affection. One of the best examples of that is this passage where Alanna and Faithful are talking about Alanna's new friend Buri:

“She is very much like you at that age.

‘Surely I didn’t think I could beat an army single-handed!’

You still do.

‘The trouble with arguing with a cat is that cats don’t hesitate to say anything about you, no matter how crazy it is,’ she complained. ‘You can’t win an argument that way!’

Nor should you try. (Pierce, *Lioness* 97).

Faithful and Alanna are so close to one another that they can argue, laugh and disagree at the same time. Without this presence in her life, Alanna's journey would have been much different. Although always a bit mysterious, Faithful is a closer friend to Alanna than anyone else can be, particularly because he is an animal.

The Immortals Quartet

The main character of the quartet is a young girl named Daine who finds that she has a magical connection with animals. One of the most significant things about Daine is that she calls all animals her friends. While she is clearly closer to some than others, she does not discount those she does not know or has not met. This says a lot about her understanding of friendship.

Perhaps the strongest way that Daine has a friendship with animals is because she is considered one of them. Although different animals are not always friends with each other, Daine does not meet any animals who entirely reject her. Because they see her as someone with an animal identity. Cloud points it out to her when her human friends are doing something that surrounds them with light:

“The light’s only for humans. You may look human, but you aren’t. You’re of the People: the folk of claw, wing and scale.

‘Impossible,’ the girl said flatly. ‘Look at me. I’m pink, my fur’s patchy, I walk on two legs. I’m human, human all over.’

On the outside, the pony insisted. Not inside. Inside your People” (Pierce, *Wild Magic* 86).⁵

Daine is confused by this, as she sees herself clearly as a human but it shows her how the animals see her, and that is one of the ways she can be friends with them. Daine does not know it yet at this point but she will eventually know almost all there is to know about animals because of her experiences with and ability to transform into them.

From the very beginning of the quartet, Daine’s powers make it possible for her to have a significant relationship with *all* animals (my emphasis). She tells herself that “She was so lucky to have friends wherever she went” (Pierce, *Emperor Mage* 16).⁶ Daine really enjoys this but it can also be a struggle for her because she feels for them so deeply. She is loath to involve them in human battles, even when they want to participate. Daine is speaking to Onua when she tells her that she sees them as Aristotle views friends, ““Once I meet them or talk to them, I *know* them. They’re my friends; they’re part of me. When they get hurt and die, it hurts *me*”” (*Wild* 322, emphasis in original). They friend is another part of oneself. This is what really stands out as a defining factor of Daine’s friendship with animals. As an authentic friend does, she knows them on a deep level and it allows her to share their pain.

⁵ This novel will be further cited as “Wild”

⁶ This novel will be further cited as “Emperor”

It is important to note that Daine's friendship with animals sometimes gets in the way of her relationships with people. Her animal friends come to her rescue after her village was invaded by raiders and she has been closer to animals than humans ever since. When meeting Onua and moving to Corus, she has to learn that despite how her "friends don't organize their minds," she still has to do so (*Wild* 170). She also has to grapple with the fact that some people do not understand her relationship with animals. It is the people who know her best though that see her deep relationship with animals and appreciate it about her. It is those people who are not only her good friends but also allow her to be even better friends to animals.

Daine's first, and closest relationship with an animal, is with her pony Cloud. She says from the very beginning, "I can't sell Cloud. She's family – all the family I got" (*Wild* 4). What the two have experienced together means that they are family according to Daine but it does not mean that they cannot be friends as well. Daine continues to foster their relationship and although it is close to begin with, it is only strengthened by Daine's growing awareness of her Wild Magic.

Cloud has always told Daine that she is different from most humans but Daine does not want to admit it. Instead she just acknowledges that she has a strong affinity for animals. When Daine first begins to accept her magic, her teacher Numair wants to test it and yet Daine is often reluctant to do so. Cloud agrees to help because she wants Daine to know more about her magic and herself. Cloud tells Daine, "I will tell the stork-man when I can no longer hear *you*" (*Wild* 153, emphasis in original). It may be that Cloud wants Daine to understand more so that she can talk to her more but it is possible that Cloud is also curious. Their shared curiosity is one of the things that Cloud and Daine have in common.

Much like Faithful is to Alanna, Cloud is a source of wisdom for Daine and a good confidant. When Daine doubts herself, Cloud is there to bring her back to herself and when Daine is struggling, Cloud is supportive of her. The discernment of Cloud is an important influence on Daine. When they encounter Stormwings, who Daine views as evil, Cloud tells her that “There’s no such thing as a being who’s pure evil...Just as no creature is all good. They live according to their natures, just like you” (Pierce, *Wolf Speaker* 141).⁷ This is something Daine often struggles with but it takes someone who understands her as well as Cloud does to be able to teach her this lesson. She provides a sort of moral compass that is an important grounding for Daine.

Cloud and Daine also share a cutting sense of humor and this gives depth to their friendship as well. After the final battle of the quartet, Daine is thrilled to see Cloud and Cloud responds “I’m glad you came back...I don’t have the patience to train a new rider anymore. Daine laughed, and straightened. ‘You *never* had patience with any rider, *including me!*’” (Pierce, *The Realm of the Gods* 332, emphasis in original).⁸

Daine’s relationship with animals, and particularly with Cloud give her such comfort and familiarity that she sometimes struggles with humans. Visiting the country of Carthak, Daine realizes that she is a little bit out of her element and “longed for Cloud’s horse sense and tart opinions” (*Emperor* 51). She finds so much of herself in animals that she is able to be her authentic self with them, something she is not always able to do with humans. Daine knows herself in regards to animals to a certain extent and it is why her relationships with them are so significant.

⁷ This novel will be further cited as “Wolf”

⁸ This novel will be further cited as “Realm”

Because Daine's relationship with animals is magical, it could be argued that these relationships are less significant or authentic because the two are naturally drawn to each other. Although her magic allows her to speak to, heal, and transform into an animal it does not presuppose or force a relationship between them. Her abilities are magical but the understanding she gains is not and she actively chooses to invest in relationships with animals. This is seen throughout the novels as Daine makes more friends among the animal world. She has always been very close to her pony Cloud but she develops a close friendship with the marmot Quickmunch who allows Daine to ride along with her as she explores various things. She also is extremely close to Brokefang, the wolf leader of the pack who saved her life after raiders killed her mother. Daine chooses to foster close relationships with each of these animals. Some animals also do not want to be friends with her. The whales are vehemently opposed to involvement in human affairs and while Daine is shocked, she realizes that she will not always understand or truly know all animals despite her magic.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that humans and animals have a complex relationship. However, that relationship can take different forms and friendship is one of them. Grayling believes that in the right relationships, friendships can be made in spite of issues such as differences in natural endowment (132). Just because humans can talk and animals cannot, does not mean they can't be friends. The relationship does not rely on verbal communication.

As a strange form of friendship, the relationship between humans and animals is something that is prevalent in young people's real lives and is therefore important to explore. Pierce does an excellent job of examining this relationship in her *Song of the Lioness* and *The Immortals* quartets. She shows how strong the relationship can be and the value that it provides,

especially to the human. Her ability to display such significant and authentic relationships indicates how friendship between humans and animals may be seen as unusual but ought to be more valued.

Chapter 2: Mentors as Friends

Introduction

Mentors have a role in a young person's life that allows them to lead, encourage and teach the younger person. Often this guidance is related to something the elder person has knowledge about, not always book learning, but also life experience. Mentees are meant to build a relationship with their mentor and learn all that they can from them while simultaneously discovering things for themselves. A mentor hopes that one day their mentee will flourish without them while mentees ought to appreciate all their mentors have done for them. This kind of relationship is a good basis for friendship because it relies on two people sharing something significant. In Pierce's three quartets, she explores how mentors and their mentees can become friends through a process of shared knowledge and experiences. Despite the possible roadblocks, she proves that mentors and their mentees can be authentic friends, with a few caveats.

It is important to note that no philosophers are inherently against mentors and mentees being friends, rather they only focus on the equality, often of goodness, that friendship necessitates. They do argue that equality is hard to attain if people do not come together from the same perspective of morality or the world. This can be complicated with mentors and their mentees because of mentors are guiding the younger people in regards to their morals and view of the world. However, the younger people also ought to develop these things on their own otherwise the mentor would have absolute power and that implies something bad rather than good.

Some philosophers do argue that friendship between supposed unequal people is possible but it requires specific things. For Aristotle, that means that friendship comes with certain expectations:

And in all friendships based on superiority, the feelings of friendly affection too ought to be proportional – for example, the better person ought to be loved more than he loves, and so also with the more beneficial person, and similarly with each of the other. For whatever friendly affection accords with merit, at that point equality somehow arises, which of course is held to belong to friendships (Aristotle 174).

It is curious that Aristotle believes that friendship can end with equality but it relies on unequal investment by both parties. If mentors and mentees do become friends, they must respect each other and their feelings ought to be proportional to their status, but can then develop into something more equal.

Cicero is another philosopher who believes that friendship between two vastly different people in station is possible. He states that “those who are superiors in a relation of friendship must avoid all invidious distinctions and similarly that those who are the inferiors must, in a way, rise above themselves” (Pakaluk 105). There has to be work on both sides for such a relationship to be possible. It is important to note that Cicero believes the inferiors must rise above themselves, which they may not always be capable of doing.

There is an obvious problem with mentors and mentees as friends and that is the power dynamic between them. Especially in all of the quartets explored in this chapter, the mentors start as teachers which endows them with a specific level of authority beyond age. The implication is that the mentor knows more than the mentee and therefore is tasked with educating them. While this is true, once knowledge is shared, mentees gain parity with their mentors. Without this shared knowledge, friendship may not be possible.

Regardless, there are several challenges to mentors and mentees being friends and one of them is a difference in age. Older people are often considered superior because they have more knowledge, rather in life experience or things like education. However, this is possible as people get older or have more in common with their elders and the gap between them grows a little bit smaller. As the younger people get more life experience, they have the capacity to share more things with their elders get to know each other in a different way.

Another significant problem with the relationship between a mentee and their mentor arises when romantic feelings become involved. Sexual intimacy changes everything and it is especially impactful when it exists between two seemingly unequal people. Sex can emphasize a power difference between mentors and mentees that results in an even more unequal relationship. The power difference between the two people makes it clear that a romantic relationship between a mentor and their mentee is unhealthy and unethical.

Cicero's works show that friendship between mentors and mentees is possible especially when each party actively participates. It is not a passive relationship and requires emotional labor. Doing this work means they are each invested in the relationship. Without that, the relationship would not flourish and may not even exist.

The development of mentees is very important for two people to be friends. While the mentors may have a certain belief in themselves and that allows them to be authoritative, Grayling believes

that if the highest form of friendships is mutuality between people of excellent character, then the self-cultivation and self-mastery required for excellence of character require, just as they lead to, self-respect. When both parties to a friendship have this attitude to themselves, and regard the other as entitled to the

same consideration as they give themselves, then the relationship is, as it should be, complete (Grayling 35).

By allowing young people to progress in their self-love, an extension of which is self-confidence and knowledge of their own value, friendship with a mentor becomes more possible. It provides a new kind of equality, one that has been worked on by the mentees and allows for the unexpected friendship with their mentors.

One way that two apparently unequal people can become friends is that the younger person develops more into an equal over time. This is especially true in these quartets as the various mentees become more comfortable with their abilities and power, allowing them to be more equal with their mentors. The ability for two people to understand one another, relying on their shared interests or possibilities, means that the two can be friends.

There is the argument that mentees have to do more work in order to become equal with their mentors. In some ways this is true. A mentee will have fewer mentors in their life than a mentor will have mentees. The relationship differs from both perspectives but the mentor has to do work in the relationship as well, just perhaps in a different way. Because the often younger people come from a different place, the mentors have to work to understand them and see them as equals without the normal expectations keeping them in place. This is only possible with respect, something that is very important in friendship. By both parties working to achieve parity, they can create a friendship.

Song of the Lioness Quartet

Alanna is in a unique position because very few people know her secret and this is a roadblock to having a mentor. There is a limited understanding that the mentor can have of the mentee if they do not know something so important as the fact that Alanna is masquerading as a

boy. However, this does not mean that she does not have mentors. One of Alanna's significant mentors is her man servant Coram. He acts as both a mentor and father figure, one who has taught her how to fight from a very early age. Coram is essentially Alanna's most important teacher but he cannot be a true mentor because he is in her service rather than being an authority. Although he travels with her and teaches her everything he knows, he is still subservient to Alanna.

The most important authentic mentor Alanna has is one of her teachers, Sir Myles of Olau. He is a scholar who deeply values Tortall's Laws of Chivalry and tends to drink too much. He becomes one of Alanna's greatest supporters and is able to do this without knowing her gender at the outset of their relationship. The beginning of Myles and Alanna's relationship is one where Alanna is unsure of it and what it means. Myles is very astute and so he sees things that Alanna would rather he did not. However, she is not threatened by him.

One of the important parts of Alanna and Myles' relationship is that Myles helps Alanna to believe in herself. Especially in the first book when Alanna is struggling in her first years as a page, Myles is able to see her ability beyond how she sees herself. This is especially clear in their discussions about Ralon of Malven, someone who has been bullying Alanna. Myles confronts her about it one night and Alanna says that she has to deal with this problem on her own. When she does end up fighting and inflicting serious injury on Ralon, Myles comes to check on her. She feels bad because she feels as though she took advantage and won. Myles reminds her that "there will come a time when you, as a knight, will have to fight someone less well trained than you. It can't be helped, and it doesn't make you a bully. It just means you learned your skills

wisely” (Pierce, *Alanna: The First Adventure* 98).¹ Although Alanna still feels this is not true, Myles is an important advocate for her when she cannot be one for herself.

Another interesting thing about Alanna and Myles’ relationship is that he supports her even when he does not always understand. A very important instance is when Alanna is trying to save Jonathan from the Sweating Sickness that befalls him in the first novel. Alanna is shocked to discover his sick room and is determined to care for him but needs the help of Myles to get in. Although he does not fully understand how Alanna can help, he goes along with her to make the room more peaceful and believes so fully in Alanna that he stands up for her, including to the king and queen. This also gives Myles a unique look into Alanna because he sees her as something more than just a knight in training. He reminds Alanna to use her magic in every way she can and this results in her saving Jonathan. Myles is impressed by her power and after she saves Jonathan “Myles finally dared to come close to her. He had watched the two boys burn with a steadily brighter purple light. He had heard a man’s voice and a woman’s voice coming from Jonathan and Alan. It was something he would never forget” (*Alanna* 131). This episode shows Myles that he does not truly understand Alanna but it leads him to certain suspicions about her. This is one of the rare times Pierce uses a point of view that is not Alanna’s. Written in the third person omniscient, Peirce usually focuses only on the main character, in this case Alanna. However, in the Song of the Lioness quartet, Myles is someone whose deeper feelings are sometimes addressed, especially in regards to his curiosity about Alanna. This switch in perspective emphasizes Myles’ importance.

People can be close friends without knowing everything about one another but Alanna is hiding a rather large secret. When Alanna is visiting Myles at Olau, she tells the servants about

¹ This novel will be further cited as “Alanna”

her love of privacy and “She did not know the man went immediately to Myles and relayed her wishes, or that Myles sat up very late thinking” (*Alanna* 187). Myles does not discuss Alanna’s secret with anyone except Jonathan. After Alanna is kidnapped at the River Drell, Jon tries to tell Myles why she cannot be kept there:

‘Myles, I *can’t* leave him over there,’ he whispered. ‘He –

Myles shook his head. ‘Don’t’

‘Sir?’

‘You’re about to tell me why Alan of all people should not be left among enemies for very long. I would rather hear it from Alan, when he’s ready to tell me.’

‘You already know,’ Jonathan accused.

The older man smiled. ‘Let’s say I’ve formed an educated guess. I can’t wait to have it confirmed’ (*Goddess* 138, emphasis in original).

It is an intriguing idea that Myles is the only one who guesses Alanna’s secret. It is likely because he is very observant but it is also due to their close relationship that becomes friendship. Without it, Myles would not have the information needed to figure out her secret. He admits this to her when she tells him before her duel with Roger, saying he has “known for years” (*Goddess* 252). His power as a mentor allows him to see her as she truly is. Without his long experience as a teacher, Myles would not likely have the information to figure out her secret. Even though she does not know it, it is Myles’ ability to understand her that allows them to become friends.

The two play chess together and Alanna helps Myles to his room when he has had too much to drink. Alanna is shocked when Myles invites her to visit Olau and its ruins but Myles has no doubts. When they are visiting, Alanna is curious why she was invited and he tells her that he had been having a reoccurring dream about it. When they do explore the ruins, Alanna is

met with magic and a crystal sword that responds to her. Myles tells her that the sword is meant to be hers: “I was compelled to bring you here. You opened the passage when I’ve tried to do it for years, and failed. Something happened down there, and the sword protected you. And don’t forget the storm. I can take a hint Alan” (*Alanna* 198). This brings the two together but it also shows how Myles is a mentor for Alanna, he wants the best for her and realizes that she sometimes does not know what that is.

As with Faithful, one thing that brings Myles and Alanna together as friends is their shared view of Duke Roger. Alanna suspects him for a long time but Myles is the only one who understands her concern and this gives them an important connection. Alanna is loath to talk to anyone about her concerns, especially after Jonathan dismisses them. She asks Myles pointed questions and he says to her; “‘Think carefully before you make any accusations, please... The enemy you will make is too powerful for you to accuse without evidence – and plenty of it.’ Alanna looked Myles in the eye. ‘You suspect him, too.’” (*Goddess* 183). This is an important moment for their friendship because it is the sharing of thoughts and ideas that friends have, especially because it is out of concern for their other friends as well.

One very significant thing about Myles and Alanna’s friendship is that it develops before Alanna is fully honest with him. This is important because it indicates that they have enough in common not just to overcome the obstacle of dishonesty but to care for one another without knowing everything about one another. When Alanna is preparing for the Ordeal of Knighthood, she is leaving after talking to Myles and “She got up and hugged her shaggy friend impulsively. ‘I love you, Myles,’ she whispered, blinking back tears. ‘I’ll come often, I promise.’” Myles patted her back gently and offered her his handkerchief. “I know you will. I may not know much, but that I *do* know” (*Goddess* 220, emphasis in original). The fact that the two can be friends

with such a big secret between them means that it is a truly authentic friendship. They share knowledge, affection, and the certainty that they are there for one another.

The relationship between Myles and Alanna is so solid that even when they spend time apart, they still believe in and care for one another. When Alanna goes exploring in *The Woman Who Rides Like a Man* and *Lioness Rampant*, Myles still supports her. They communicate regularly and when he does see her, he is very proud. She can leave and they can be apart and yet nothing has changed. Myles wants what's best for Alanna, even if that means she goes above and beyond what he has done. As a mentor, his goal is to see Alanna become greater than he because it means he has taught her well and she has accomplished all that he had hoped for her.

Although Myles adopts a more parental role towards the end of the quartet, it does not take away from his and Alanna's friendship. When he and Jonathan are visiting her at the Bloody Hawk tribe, he tells Alanna, "'I believe you know I have always been very fond of you.' She smiled. 'You're the only one I know who's forgiven me for lying about what I really am.'" and he reminds her that he knew for a long time (*Woman* 147). He offers to make Alanna his heir and it cements their relationship as friends because the trust that he has in her to take care of his people and his barony is very important. He sees her as an equal and someone who can handle anything he can.

Alanna goes to Myles as a father figure for advice but it does not mean she does not see him as a friend. She trusts his judgment, something that is very important between friends. While Myles has the wisdom to mentor her on life more than maybe someone her own age does. This does not stop the two of them from being friends. The fact that they share so many ideas, concerns and passions is what makes them so close.

Circle of Magic Quartet

The Circle of Magic quartet is an especially good example of mentors as friends. Although some people are mentors to all four children, each child ends up with their own specific mentor and each mentor and child grow into good friends, especially when they become equals in their magical abilities. Each of the books focus on a different child's story while incorporating their journey together and so each child's book often focuses' on their relationship with their mentor.

The first book is about Sandry and in it she meets her mentor Lark. They share the exceptional power of working with thread and weaving. Although Sandry has had glimpses of her power before she met Lark, Lark is the first person who encourages her and tells Sandry that she is not wrong for having these abilities. Sandry has always been drawn to weaving and Lark tells her, ““You won’t be scolded for asking questions here”” (Pierce, *Sandry’s Book* 94).² This is one of the first moments that Sandry feels comfortable with Lark and the magic they share.

Sandry and Lark’s relationship grows as the books go along. Sandry slowly grows in her power and Lark is able to help foster it. She trusts Sandry, partially because Sandry understands important parts of her power. As a mentor, Lark is tasked with teaching Sandry what she needs to know. However, she also expresses characteristics of friendship because of her belief in Sandry and the respect she has for her. Sandry feels the same way as she “looked at her teacher and friend, her blue eyes deeply troubled ‘Are you *sure* I can do it?’ Lark smiled, ‘It would surprise you, the things I know you can do’” (Pierce, *Tris’s Book* 41, emphasis in original).³

² This novel will be further cited as “Sandry”

³ This novel will be further cited as “Tris”

Lark's knowledge of Sandry's power bring the, together and helps Lark to see Sandry differently.

The power dynamic between Sandry and Lark changes as they become better friends. Sandry has always respected and looked up to her teacher but Lark begins to see her more as an equal. She listens to Sandry more and is able to admit that she is not always the one with the best ideas. At one point she mocks herself for being a "master" because Sandry thinks of something first. Sandry cheekily responds, "'Maybe *I'm* interwoven with *you*'" (Pierce, *Daja's Book* 153, emphasis in original).⁴ The two are able to share more in ways that a mentor and mentee might not be able to. Although Lark will always be a mentor to Sandry, the fact that she can see their relationship in a different light and admit that she is not always the superior allows them to be friends.

All the children meet their mentors in the first book and their relationships grow along with the books. Daja meets her mentor Frostpine, quite accidentally in the first book when she is drawn to the forge. Frostpine automatically sees her abilities but has to convince Daja of them;

'You have a talent for this,' Frostpine told her. 'And any fool can see you love metalwork. Would you like to learn smithcraft?' ... 'Can I?' She whispered. 'No one will beat me, or lock me in my room, or make me do extra chores for being *lugsha*? You'll *let* me learn?' 'It's more than just *letting* you, Daja,' Frostpine said, tweaking one of her braids. 'I waited for years for someone who loves it as I do to come along' (*Sandry* 137-38, emphasis in original)

⁴ This novel will be further cited as "Daja"

The fact that Frostopine can see her power makes him an excellent mentor, as does his encouragement of her. It is a good example of how a mentor ought to care for their student, as someone who encourages and watches out for that person.

Frostopine and Daja's relationship continues to develop as they work together. He is good mentor as he keeps Daja in check, much like a friend ought to. When Daja confronts him about knowing she has magic, he responds that "‘Learning to work metal is more important’... ‘The magic is only as strong as your fire or metal. It’s only as pure as the ore you melt down. Before you become a mage, you must be a smith. You must work metal and magic together.’" (*Sandry* 197-98). Frostopine sees Daja's abilities but he reminds her that knowing how to work with metal without magic first is what makes the metal stronger when she does use magic.

The trust that Daja and Frostopine have for each other is a strong foundation for their friendship. When pirates threaten the safe haven where they live, Daja and Frostopine have to reinforce the magic metal that protects them. While Frostopine is loath to let anything happen to Daja, he has faith in her and her abilities. He tells her that "‘If thing go wrong, I may need you to draw on your power,’ he added. ‘It may take both of us to finish the job.’" (*Serious* magic,' breathed Daja. 'As serious as anything you *or* I have ever done'" (*Tris* 89). The two must have trust and understanding of one another to accomplish their goal, much like friends often have to do.

Trust also means being vulnerable with one another. Frostopine has a visceral reaction to hearing that Daja gave up her magic so that she and her friends could safely separate their magic. Daja goes to try to comfort him and Frostopine tells her the story of how his family sold his magic to a family friend when he was a child without his knowledge. Daja is touched by his sharing and "‘She wanted to cry for the boy he had been'" (*Daja* 129). This is the first time that Daja truly

understands and knows Frostpine at a deeper level and it allows their friendship to develop significantly.

Tris and Niko have a complicated relationship from the very beginning because Tris is loath to let anyone get close to her. When Niko begins to work with Tris, after he has tried to mentor her a little bit, he tells that “‘I wish that by now you could trust me.’ She looked out through the cave entrance, at the clouds. ‘Everyone I ever trusted sent me away,’ she said flatly. For a while he said nothing...At last he reached over, squeezed her fingers, and let go. ‘Then I will just have to hope that you change your mind someday’” (*Sandry* 85). While Tris does not want a mentor, this is the first moment that Niko really understands where Tris is coming from her and her reticence to be close to people.

Slowly, Tris starts to get to know Niko, especially when he sees the affection that he has for her. She is always scared to use her magic because she has so little control over it but Niko sees that and comforts her. Tris admits that “‘It was as if he knew all the dark places in her heart” (*Sandry* 131). This is one of the first moments that Tris feels close to Niko and it is the beginning of their friendship. Tris acknowledges that he knows her very well, despite her unwillingness to be open and it allows her to understand him as well.

It takes Tris a long time to trust Niko, but when she does, she does it completely. When the two have to perform a very important and significant spell, he tells her that

‘I’ll call it forth, as long as you agree to let me do it. Not just in words, Trisana. You must agree from within. You have to trust me.’ She looked up into his eyes, set in their heavy fringe of black lashes. Trust him? He was her teacher. He has seen inside her and told her she wasn’t crazy... (*Tris* 24).

This moment of trust is likely the first time their friendship is fostered. Niko has worked hard to get to know Tris and guide her and the fact that Tris can trust Niko is the first sign that they can even be friends. Without trust, that relationship is not possible.

An important part of friendship is honesty and despite Niko's attempts to protect her, he begins to be more honest with Tris, especially when they are in danger. When the community is being attacked by pirates, Tris questions whether or not the wall will hold and Niko whispers in response, "'We don't know'" (*Tris* 131). Although it is a harsh answer, the fact that Niko is willing to admit his fear to Tris means that he feels she can handle it. This level of sharing allows them to become closer, as they are more willing to admit their weaknesses and be honest with one another.

When Tris and Niko see themselves as equals in their power is when their friendship really flourishes. Although Niko is always trying to guide Tris, he knows that she has significant power and he realizes that he has to trust in her and her abilities. When a great storm is dangerous Niko asks Tris to see if she can do anything about it. She responds doubtfully because Niko "'...threatened dire things if I used my power like that. I'm not allowed to muck with nature'" (Pierce, *Briar's Book* 80).⁵ Although he has warned her off in the past, he realizes that certain things must be done. Niko sees Tris as a peer. Although Niko does not share her weather abilities, he sees their merit and trusts her to do what she can. He has to admit his own weakness because he lacks the ability she does and by seeing her as an equal, they can more easily be friend.

Briar and Rosethorn have the most complicated relationship because Rosethorn does not like to be close to anyone. She begrudgingly brings Briar into her gardening because she sees his

⁵ This novel will be further cited as "Briar"

power with plants but she does not like to share. She is a reluctant mentor and it is hard for Briar because he is so desperate to learn from her. Rosethorn goes so far as to say that she does not like children. Despite that, she sees Briar's power. She tells him that he is a mage and that Niko "“had a premonition of a boy with the green magic in him. I knew he was right when I heard my bean plants welcome you. You got them all excited, my buck”" (*Sandry* 186). Briar is so interested to hear this information but also doubts it. He does not want to believe that he is special and Rosethorn has to encourage him and reassure him that he is powerful even if it does not manifest itself like other people's power.

Despite her attitude toward him, Briar comes to care for Rosethorn and see her for who she truly is. He is talking to his friends and he says that "“She's not so bad, is she...I mean, she not sweet, like Lark, but she has her good side”" (*Tris* 60). His friends are skeptical but Briar is able to see Rosethorn and understand her in a way that not everyone can and this is one of the ways that the two can be friends. Although Rosethorn is fittingly named something prickly, Briar still sees something else in her.

Briar cares greatly for Rosethorn but he tries to hide it because he understands that she is not always receptive to care or concern. When they are hiking through a forest that is often besieged by fire, she starts coughing and Briar says to her, "“Are you all right?” Briar asked his teacher gruffly. He didn't want to seem mushy or anything, but sometimes at night he woke up cold and sweating from dreams that something had happened to Rosethorn" (*Daja* 35). It is clear that Briar sees her for more than what she appears to be. The deep concern he has for her is also what allows them to eventually become friends. Although he looks up to her as a mentor, he cares more for her than that relationships suggest.

Although she is loath to admit her affection, Rosethorn cares greatly for Briar. She shows it in odd ways, particularly by reprimanding him but she does it out of protection. When she endeavors to save some of the plants during a forest fire, Briar desperately asks to help her, “‘No,’ she said flatly. ‘I’m going to save some of the trees, and I *forbid* you to help’” (*Daja* 208, emphasis in original). Briar grabs on her, desperate to help and yet he has to acquiesce to her wishes, indicating that he respects her even when she is doing something he does not like. It is important to see that Rosethorn has slowly grown to care for Briar and wants to protect him, much like a friend does.

Briar has a deep understanding of Rosethorn and this is one of the reasons they can be friends. He sees that she is reluctant to get close to people and reveal her affection for them but he somehow “‘had always known his teacher was uncomfortable with others” (*Briar* 35). The fact that Briar understands this about Rosethorn indicates that he knows the truth of who Rosethorn is without her having to explain things to him. This is something often important in friendship because it allows for people to be in a relationship without always having outward communication.

One of the key ways that the relationship between Briar and Rosethorn is presented is Briar’s deep concern for Rosethorn and his willingness to protect her. When they have returned from quarantine and Dedicate Crane comes to ask for Rosethorn’s help, Briar responds vehemently;

‘No!’ Briar said hotly, glaring at Crane. ‘Let her be! Find somebody more important. She did her bit and she needs rest!’ When Rosethorn put a hand on his arm, he shook her off. ‘I know you swore to serve folk when you got dedicated,’

he told her, ‘but you got to be sensible, and if you won’t speak up, I will’ (*Briar* 127-28).

It is clear that Briar is willing to stand up to his elders in an attempt to care for Rosethorn, even with the threat of being reprimanded or put down. This is a willingness to care for one another at the expense of oneself that is a hallmark of authentic friendship.

Rosethorn slowly has to admit to some of her weaknesses and it allows she and Briar to grow closer. When they are busy trying to find a cure for the sickness that threatens their community, Rosethorn approaches him and admits that she needs a favor, “*My own magical reserves are low – I must be tired because I’m not replenishing overnight as I should. You need some of mine*, Briar replied silently. *Sure. You look tired.*” (*Briar* 198, emphasis in original). This is the first time that Rosethorn acknowledges that she needs help and sees Briar as someone who can do that. She sees him as an equal in power and it gives him the ability to help her.

Rosethorn finally admits her affection for Briar when she is on her deathbed and it shows how much she has come to care for him. She is talking to the girls and she says ““My boy. You three girls – look after Briar. When I’m gone... And tell him to mind my garden”” (*Briar* 220-21). As a mentor, Rosethorn care deeply for Briar but as a friend, she worries about leaving him behind. She knows how close the two of them are and that her death will deeply affect him. Not only that, but Rosethorn trusts Briar with her garden as well, something she does not have with anyone else. When Briar comes to find her, he and his friends gather together to save her life. He does not want to let her go because “Rosethorn was his teacher. His sister, his friend...” (*Briar* 239). Their relationship is solidified when he finds her in death and refuses to let her go. They have so much care for one another that Briar is willing to die with her and she is willing to come

back to the living for him. Their friendship allows them to sacrifice for one another and care for one another at a very deep level.

Wild Magic Quartet

Daine has several mentors throughout her journey but none are as important or significant as Numair Salmalín. He is the first person to really recognize her magic for what it is and this ability helps their relationship flourish. There are several problems with their relationship however, particularly the fact that they end up in a romantic relationship. All this is developed through their identities as mentor and mentee and how those roles can change over time.

Numair first approaches Daine about being her mentor when he is convincing her that she has what is called wild magic. In a meeting with the king, Numair and Daine's boss Onua, Numair tells Daine that she has wild magic and King Jonathan tells her that Numair is "perhaps the only living expert on wild magic." Daine scowled at Numair. 'You never mentioned this on the road.' He smiled. 'If you were trying to get a deer to come to you, would you make any sudden noise?' Her scowl deepened. 'That's different. I'm no deer'" (*Wild* 140-41). Daine is nervous about letting people into her life due to her history but she is also interested in what Numair has to teach her. Although they have interactions before this encounter, this is the moment when Daine must accept Numair as her mentor if she wants to learn all she can about animals.

As the only expert on wild magic, Numair is the only one who can be Daine's mentor and this is somewhat of a flaw in their relationship because they do not actively choose one another as most mentors and mentees do. Rather, they are pushed together due to circumstance. They grow together but Daine really struggles to trust Numair in the beginning and fails to look up to him. She only becomes invested in their relationship when it becomes clear that he can help her

with the only significant relationship in her life at the time, her closeness with animals. Although Numair and Daine to grow closer in mentorship and then in friendship, it will never be as strong as other mentor and mentee relationships.

It is interesting that other sentient beings, particularly animals, become part of the mentorship Numair has with Daine. When they are trying to determine how far away Daine has to be from her pony Cloud to still be in contact with her, Cloud offers to help with the communication while Daine is busy. When Numair is showing Daine her power, she encounters an owl and when she tries to explain to Numair that she wants to take her learning slow “The owl ruffled his feathers in disapproval. It is not for the nestling to decide the proper time for lessons, he said, and flew off” (*Wild* 163). Animals and other people are able to become involved in Numair’s mentorship of Daine and it can sometimes be a problem.

The relationship that Daine has with animals is impacted by her relationship with Numair because she cannot have it without his involvement. Because he has taught her everything, he has a big role to play. Although Daine has always had a “fair hand with animals, all kinds,” it is Numair who shows her all that she can do with animals, particularly the fact that she can heal them (*Wild* 2). Unfortunately, this takes something away from Daine and her relationship with animals. She knows a lot about animals from all her experiences but she does not wholly understand them. Although Daine is able to move past Numair’s knowledge, she would never have known how special animals are without his help.

A significant roadblock to Numair’s relationship with Daine is that because of her past, she is loath to get close anyone. After her mother and grandfather were killed by bandits, she has very little faith in people. Numair has to push her when he asks questions and she does not want to answer them; “Her voice rose. She knew she was about to cry. ‘Would you *please* go away?’

I'm tired and my head hurts! Can't you leave me alone for once?' 'Very well.' His face was grave and sad. 'But I wish you would trust me'" (*Wild* 180). The fact that Numair has to encourage her to trust him, as well as others, shows how he cares for her and wants to become her mentor and subsequently her friend.

When Daine does begin to trust Numair, he is able to show more affection for her and yet he does this in strange ways. Because he is one of the best mages in the Tortall world, he is often single-minded and is not always well aware of people. He resorts to threats to show he cares for other people like when Daine stays behind with her wolf pack and he tells her to not get involved in what is going on with the humans "'Otherwise I will chain you in the worst dungeon I can find when I get my hands on you again'" (*Wolf* 99). He obviously cares for her but he is not good at expressing himself. Daine responds positively, as she is used to this treatment, but it also shows that she understands him and how he thinks. There is also a level of trust established, that Numair is willing to leave Daine behind and take care of herself, despite his warnings.

Slowly, Daine and Numair begin to show their affection for one another, although briefly and usually in dire circumstances. After Daine passes out breaking a magical object, Numair finds her and, "Without warning she was caught up in an extremely tight hug. 'You have no idea how glad I am to see you, magelet,' Numair said, and put her down. Daine wiped suddenly leaky eyes on a sleeve. 'Maye a little,' she replied, and grinned at him. 'It's mutual, you know'" (*Wolf* 311). They are not often affectionate with each other, but when it does happen, it reveals how significant their relationship is. The mutual feelings they have for one another allows them to make progress toward becoming friends.

The development of Daine and Numair's friendship continues as they experience more together and it allows them to grow closer. Especially when visiting Carthak, Daine and Numair

have to rely on one another because they are in a rather hostile environment and have few they can trust. Unfortunately, that environment ends up with the execution of Numair and Daine is very upset about it, “‘I didn’t get to say good-bye or anything.’ She swallowed hard. Her friend, her teacher...” (*Emperor* 295-96). Although it turns out that Numair is not in fact dead, Daine struggles to deal with the idea that he is and has to process how she feels about him, clearly seeing him as a friend. When she does find out he is alive, she is so shocked that she does not believe it and starts crying when she discovers it is the truth.

In *The Realm of the Gods*, the prologue describes how Daine is “Numair’s teenage friend and ally” but it also reveals that they can communicate across certain boundaries such as distance (*Realm* xiii). This is a sign of their friendship because of the closeness they share. Although this is assisted by the fantastical nature of their world, it does not take away from their relationship. The friendship between Daine and Numair develops slowly but when it does solidify, it is very strong. They rely heavily on one another, especially because they encounter so many dangerous situations.

Numair is very protective toward Daine, a trait not uncommon for friends but it is also something he struggles with because his relationship with her is sometimes a weakness. In *Emperor Mage*, Numair is conferring with Emperor Ozorne and Ozorne criticizes him, saying, “‘Human bonds... I am certain you and your lovely *student* have a most profound bond. Must you share a bed with her animals as well as with her?’” (*Emperor* 138, emphasis in original). Numair reacts vehemently and attempts to strike Ozorne, revealing his anger. This is an important moment displaying his care for Daine but it also displays how that relationship can be used against someone. If two people are authentic friends, this is especially possible because they care so much about the wellbeing of the other.

The encounter with Ozorne is also the first suggestion that something more than mentorship or friendship may exist between Daine and Numair and it makes their relationship much more complicated. Their friendship has developed over the time and experiences they have shared together, as well as Daine becoming a sort of equal in her magical abilities. However, this is seemingly in conflict with the romantic possibilities between them. As will be explored in a later chapter of this thesis, friendship between lovers is possible, but Daine and Numair's mentor-mentee relationship makes their romance somewhat troubling.

The age gap between Daine and Numair is one the reasons that their relationship is complicated and takes a while to develop into friendship. After they have kissed for the first time and are talking about their relationship, Numair is very concerned about their age difference, telling her, “‘I was ‘canoodling,’ as you so charmingly put it, when *you* were four. You’re so young, Daine... ‘One day you’d turn to me and see an old man. You’d want a young one’” (*Realm* 208-9, emphasis in original). He is afraid to admit he cares for her because he does not want her feelings to change eventually. However, this moment also makes it clear how much he cares about their friendship. He has deep concerns for her feelings and what they mean and so he understands her at a deep level.

Although age does not have to inhibit mentors as friends, it does present a problem when it comes to romantic relationships. Vast differences in age mean that the two people are likely to see the world differently and have less in common. In the case of Daine and Numair this is especially true. Daine is only thirteen when she and Numair meet and she ages very slowly over the course of the quartet. Although Numair's age is not explicitly stated, as he tells her, he was having sex when she was four. Speculation suggests (and hopes) that this means he is at least fifteen years older than she is. Some will argue that this is not particularly a roadblock but it is

when it is part of a mentor relationship that becomes friendship. The relationship between them becomes creepy. Numair has had a significant impact and influence on Daine and it results in her loving him, something not positive in mentorship.

Although Pierce attempts to make Daine and Numair friends as a result of their mentee and mentor relationship, she fails in some way when she makes them romantically involved. Their relationship ends up being very unhealthy because of the vast differences between them. Although they are rather successful in being friends, when romance is involved their differences are made obvious. Numair has experienced much more in life and has a tendency to impose his ideas and beliefs on Daine. In addition, as Numair tells Daine, their age difference is significant. While this does not inhibit their friendship, it is a roadblock to their romance. Daine is innocent in a lot of ways and has no experience with sexual intimacy. She has always looked up to Numair and so her feelings are skewed. She admires and respects him so much that she sometimes overlooks his flaws. Daine admits that she knows she loves Numair, and perhaps always has (*Realm* 210). This poses a problem because she is confusing admiration with romantic love. Daine cannot separate the two and so she is unlikely to know her true feelings.

Numair's influence on Daine means that his feelings are complicated. As is revealed in the final book of the quartet, Numair is in love with Daine and has been for a while. The question becomes whether or not he encourages Daine to reciprocate the feelings, even if it is not intentional. By having a level of power due to his mentor status, Numair has the ability to manipulate Daine and although she does have agency, she is not always aware of how he is impacting her. Their relationship has always been one of closeness but there is not a clear trajectory in the novels about Daine's romantic feelings for Numair, rather they seem to appear without cause while it becomes obvious that his have been building for a long time.

Unlike some situations where romance ruins friendship, Numair and Daine are successful in maintaining their friendship, perhaps because they end as romantic partners. None of it would have been possible though had their relationship not first been based in a mentor/mentee relationship and then in a friendship. It displays that their relationship has continued to develop but it is rooted in deep friendship and that is what allows them to know each other so well. Although it is true that their mentor/mentee, friendship and romantic entanglement is what brings Numair and Daine together and allows them to have a deep knowledge of one another, it does not mean that it is a good thing. They reveal that friendships between mentors and mentees are positive while romantic relationships between them are not.

Conclusion

Friendship requires trust, something that is particularly important in good relationships between mentors and their students. Because mentors and their students are not on the same level, it requires belief without proof. The ability to trust another person means that those two people can be very close without knowing everything about each other. Without this trust, the relationship would not flourish and may not exist in the first place. While it seems that the student must trust the teacher more, the teacher has to be equally trusting by guiding their student while still giving them the freedom to explore.

Many of the hallmarks of friendship are present in the relationship between a mentor and their mentee, including investment into the relationship. The relationship also encompasses mutual affection, protection, and shared knowledge and encounters.

Each of the relationships explored in this chapter make it clear that despite the challenges they face, mentors and their mentees can be friends. Although it takes work from both parties, and the passage of time, two seemingly unequal people can be friends because that inequality is

not solid. There is room for change to take place. As a mentor, people are tasked with guiding their mentees but the relationship and experiences also gives their students the unique opportunity to get to know them at a deeper level.

Chapter 3: Group Friendships

Introduction

Groups of friends are one of the most common but underappreciated types of friendship. Young adults often form friendships in groups, but there is often conflict within the group due to a variety of reasons. Despite this challenge, groups of friends can have great power. They can bring people together from various backgrounds or with different personalities and give those people the common ground to form intimate relationships.

Most philosophers and scholars believe that groups of friends are not truly possible. Montaigne argues that “each [friend] gives himself so wholly to his friend that he has nothing to distribute elsewhere...the friendship that possesses the soul and rules it with absolute sovereignty cannot possibly be double” (Pakaluk 195). This is a confusing point because not only does it rule out group friendships but it seems to make the assertion that people can only have one deep friendship in their life. This is not necessarily true but is in line with the thinking that friends ought to be so deeply alike that they are unlikely to find that relationship with anyone else.

Aristotle believes the same as Montaigne, stating that “It is also not possible to be a friend to many, at least not when it comes to complete friendship” (172). However, he also believes that it is possible to have more than one friend. The idea that one can have multiple friends but not a group of friends seems counterintuitive then. If one can share so much with each friend, the question arises of why the various friends cannot be friends with one another.

Grayling quotes Themistius who advises ““Do not be friends with someone who has too many friends. It is not possible for large numbers to share sympathies, interests and tastes in the way that friendship requires”” (143). It is important to note that he does not limit friendship to a pair.

The suggestion that friendship can only exist between two people is a valid argument. The actions of groups of friends can alienate other people by becoming cliques. If that is the case, then not all group friendships are good. There is also the problem of when various friends meet one another. People are easily judged by a friend's other friends. This poses a big problem because it makes people doubt their own connection with their friend. Individual friendships are even preferred over groups because at some level they are simpler. They pose less risks. They are, at some level, a risk to group friendships because there is the possibility that two people in a group friendship are closer to one another than any other two. If friendship is as limited as so many people assert, it seems unlikely that authentic friendship can exist amongst groups.

There is also the possibility of great division in group friendships. There can be a problematic power dynamic if one or two friends are more influential or imposing than others. This creates a problem because they are imposing their beliefs or ideas on the other people in the group. In that case, group friendship is not authentic, especially if the definition relies on shared feelings and experiences. The question also arises whether or not division occurs because there are too many people included, as Themistius claims.

Too many people in a friendship suggests that a person has a limited capacity for affection or love. This is not something that is easily addressed but it has significant impact, especially in modern times. With things like social media, there becomes a division between someone a person knows and someone a person is friends with. Friendship relies on truly knowing a person and if having too many people in a group lessens the level of knowing, it may not always be a good thing. At some level, devaluation can come from excess but it is unclear if this is always true in friendship.

Another problem that arises with group friendships is whether or not “bad” people can be friends. While it is unclear what being bad means, groups of friends who are rude or mean can embody some bad characteristics. However, it does not necessarily preclude them from being friends. They share ideas and morals and although they are not always positive, the group functions according to the basic definition of group friendships. With commonalities such as who likes what and how they treat other people, friendships are not necessarily limited to people who portray something positive.

There are things that pose challenges but enough commonality amongst people can overcome those problems and enable authentic friendships. It is also true that there are dangers to all friendships but group friendships are often the ones found suspect. What philosophers don’t seem to understand is that shared experiences can make people friends in a way that no shared beliefs can. Survival under pressure can overcome differences that get in the way of friendship in groups.

Tamora Pierce presents groups of friends that become closer under fire. Not only do they share the experience of danger, they also achieve a sense of belonging because of their unusual situation. Several philosophers argue that friendship happens in community and there is no reason that community cannot involve more than two people. As a type of friendship that is so often criticized, the ability for people, especially young people, to participate in a group of friends gives them power and is one of the reasons it is so important.

Song of the Lioness Quartet

When Alanna comes to the palace for the first time, she is for good reason, very anxious. She is hiding a big secret about herself since she is masquerading as a boy and at any time could be found out. She is also nervous because she has limited exposure to other young boys her age

outside of her experience with her brother Thom. She quickly finds however, that there are other boys willing to bring her into their group and give her help along her journey.

When Alanna first meets the other pages (knights in training), she first encounters a young man named Ralon of Malven who is quick to insult her and although she quickly retorts, it is clear that he has the upper hand. She is saved however when Prince Jonathan and his group of friends come and find out what happened. Jon tells Alanna that she ““has good taste in enemies, even if you do make them your first day here”” (*Alanna* 37-38). Jon makes it clear that he shares that enemy and it automatically gives he and Alanna a bond.

Although Jonathan has power because of his position as a prince but the other boys are also strong friends. The older page Gary is directed to be Alanna’s sponsor and he does an excellent job of including her in their dinner but also giving her direction when it comes to serving in the great dining hall. What makes Gary an excellent, and unexpected friend for Alanna is the encouragement he gives her. He brings her to her room and says cheerfully ““Welcome to the palace, young Trebond”” (*Alanna* 40). He automatically makes her feel welcome and despite her uncertainty, she begins to feel like she belongs.

One of the things that shows how much Alanna comes to mean to her group of friends is the loyalty they show to one another. Alanna has an ongoing feud with the young squire Ralon and her friends are quick to defend her. The first time Alanna refuses to do Ralon’s bidding, her friends ask her about it and she lies, saying that she was not involved. All her friends react strongly, Raoul of Goldenlake asserts firmly that ““I’d like to see him mess with *our* Alan. I’d pound him to a pulp”” (*Alanna* 71, my emphasis). Alanna has been adopted by this group of friends and it does not occur to them not to care for and defend her. Her friends even go so far as

to attack Ralon at the swimming hole the next day. Ralon is rude to Alanna, saying that she cannot fight for herself and yet she feels glad that she has the defense of her friends.

Although they are deeply protective of Alanna and dislike her quarrel with Ralon, her friends are also well aware of her own perseverance and pride. In a rare scene where Tamora Pierce does not include Alanna in the action, her friends discuss the problem Alanna is facing. They are all quick to come to her aide and willing to physically defend her but it is the wisdom of the prince that “we have to do it his way. He’d be ashamed if he thought we were fighting his battles” (*Alanna* 81). Alanna’s friends know her very well, another special way that groups of friends can be significant. While they all come from various perspectives, they can agree that loyalty and understanding of one another is very important.

One of the interesting things about Alanna’s relationship with her group of friends is that she is often unsure of her place among them. She does not have confidence that she belongs, perhaps because of her identity as a girl. However, she still desires to be a part of them. After a particularly harsh moment when she reprimands them for mocking her about not swimming, she goes to apologize and is shocked to find her friends respect her for it. Raoul tells her, ““Alan, you seem to think we won’t like you unless you do things just like everyone else. Have you ever thought we might like you because you’re different? ...We’re your friends, Alan. Stop thinking we’re going to jump on you for the least little thing”” (*Alanna* 138). Alanna is so shocked but she also appreciates the reassurance. She is an important part of this group of friends and they do a good job of reminding her that she does, and deserves to, belong.

Alanna’s concern about her place among her friends is largely due to the fact that she is keeping a very significant secret from them. When she begins to menstruate, she goes with her friend George to see his mother who is a healer and says that she is loath to tell her friends the

truth because she fears their response. She has to tell George at the same time which makes her very nervous. George has to remind her that her friends will support her and that he “‘hasn’t heard such foolishness in all my life. Are you tellin’ us Jon will hate you? Gary? Raoul?” (*Alanna* 177). Alanna is constantly underestimating not only herself among her friends but also her friends in some ways as well. She has to come to terms with herself as a girl amongst a group of male friends but when her friends do find out, they are very supportive.

Unfortunately for Alanna, she does not get the chance to choose when Jon finds out her true identity but his support is not unfounded. He is obviously surprised but when she asks him what he will do about it, he responds; “‘Do? I’m not doing anything. As far as I’m concerned, you earned the right to try for your shield a long time ago”” (*Alanna* 266). Alanna is so shocked because she has feared such a moment for so long. The same is true when she tells Gary about her gender. He laughs and is excited to find that everything he wondered about her as all added up. He tells her the same thing that George did, that people may hate her for it “‘But your friends? I think you’re being too harsh on them”” (*Goddess* 218). This is yet another important reminder to Alanna that she belongs.

Although Alanna spends a lot of time exploring on her own and with Coram after she wins her shield, when she finds herself back with her friends, nothing has changed. This strength of a group is what makes it so valuable. Despite all the things they have experienced separately, when they come together, they are all a cohesive unit. This comes to a significant conclusion in the final book of the quartet when Alanna is part of King Jonathan’s council. She realizes that all of her friends have changed and yet they still belong to one another. It is also the final moment where she is encouraged by her friends about her place in the world. She is selected as the King’s Champion and despite her protests, she realizes that “she *had* earned this honor” (*Lioness* 289,

emphasis in original). Alanna has finally found her place in the world and among her group of friends, all of whom have supported her from the very beginning.

Circle of Magic Quartet

Focusing on children a little bit younger than Alanna and her comrades, the Circle of Magic quartet allows readers to see groups of friendship in different ways. It is a strong statement about what it means for multiple children to be friends and how that is not only possible but their friendship can thrive. The connection between Sandry, Briar, Tris and Daja is one that is rarely seen elsewhere but one that can serve as an excellent example.

One important thing to note is that the children are tied together by magic but what really matters is that this magical connection is superseded by their relationship with one another. The combination of their magic would not be significant if they did not care so deeply for one another in the first place. Although it takes time for them to come together, by the end of the quartet they are so intertwined that they are willing to risk their lives for one another.

The beginning of their relationship is by no means easy. Each child comes from a vastly different background and it is challenging for them to relate to one another. The first thing they learn is that they have been brought to Winding Circle Temple and the Discipline house (not known for its disciplinary measures despite the name), because they have something special about them that must be fostered.

The children quickly realize that despite their differences, they are all going to have to get used to being together. As Sandry so bluntly points out, “‘If we’re going to share the same house, shouldn’t we try to get along?’” (*Sandry* 64). Both Briar and Daja brush her off, as they seem to have found major issues with one another. Although they fight, this is the first sign of the

children attempting to get used to one another. It is significant that Sandry is the first one to do this because the actions she takes at the end of the first novel bind them together forever.

Sandry is the one to continue to foster community among the four in the first book, perhaps why it is named for her. After Briar steals a precious *shakkan* tree from Dedicate Crane, all the girls, but particularly Sandry stand up for him. Because of her noble status, she even attempts to pull rank on Crane. Later she tells Tris and Daja that “‘I had to help,’ Sandry replied flatly. ‘He’s one of us.’ Daja blinked. ‘Is there an ‘us’?’ Sandry looked surprised. ‘Certainly! Didn’t that thing this morning convince you?’” (*Sandry* 158, emphasis is original). The other three children are resistant to their connection but slowly they are realizing that they some sort of relationship. It is interesting to note that Sandry, the highest ranking of the four is the first one to foster their relationship, suggesting that she is invested in friendships and seeks them out.

Unfortunately, it takes a long time for this group of children to become friends. They come to each other’s aid in a tussle in town and yet afterwards Briar responds harshly saying, “‘Enough of this *we*,’ snapped Briar. ‘Just because we had a tumble, it don’t turn us into mates. What happened back there don’t mean a thing!’” (*Sandry* 188, emphasis in original). Part of the problem is that the children have all been hurt in one way or another by other people. They have always had trouble trusting so to be able to find trust and eventually comfort in one another is quite a process. While people may argue that this means group friendships are unattainable, it is when the children need to rely on one another that their relationship cements.

The children truly come together when their lives depend on it. Although they spend more time together and seem to grow in relationship, it is when they are stuck underground after an earthquake that they come together in a way that few can without a shared experience as such. Surprisingly, it is Sandry who cannot get her wits about her but when she does, she brings the

four together in such a way that they cannot be separated. She tells the others to harness their power and grab onto her so she can “spin our magic” (*Sandry* 238). She binds the magic of the four together and it saves their lives because they are all able to rely on one another. While this is the binding of their magic, their friendship only grows afterwards, regardless of the magic they share.

After the four children bind their magic they find that they can share some of their power. When it happens the first time, Sandry murmurs ““We’re one now”” (*Tris* 12). They do not share all of their experiences, as Tris points out that they don’t feel each other’s pain or hunger and yet they have bonded in a way that few can. They still argue and find fault with one another but they begin to realize how much they mean to one another. This is especially true when something happens to one of them. When Tris’ cousin Asymetry betrays them, the other three surround her and support her, indicating that they care for one another outside of their combined magic.

Although they care for one another, the four are still somewhat hesitant about their relationship. When pirates threaten their home, they must once again combine their power;

Closing their eyes, the four joined as they had once done in the middle of an earthquake, to become one. Daja was not sure that she liked such closeness. Briar felt the same way. Sandy brushed them with soothing warmth, remind them that it was just for the moment (*Tris* 226).

Unfortunately, the four have not found complete trust in one another and yet they recognize that their shared power can save the home they love so much. The four seem to think that their combined magic is the only thing that binds them but as the story continues, they find that they truly care for one another.

Part of the children's reticence to grow together is that they have each struggled with relationships in the past. Daja is still haunted by her status as a cast out from the Traders she grew up with so when one comes to see the smith and finds her instead, she is entirely ignored. Her friends have to remind her that she still has people surrounding her, "We're *your people now*, Sandry told her in their mind-talk. *They threw you out*, added Briar. Or *were you forgetting?*" (*Daja* 32-33, emphasis in original). The other children are quick to remind Daja that she matters to them, despite her status among the Traders and that she is valued for who she is. Daja knows this, even when she doubts her own status among them. When the trader Polyam questions their relationship, Daja responds about Sandy that "'She is my *saati*.' The word meant a non-Trader friend who was as dear as family. 'So are Briar and Tris – and our teachers'" (*Daja* 70, emphasis in original). Daja knows that she has a good community surrounding her and she values it despite her doubts.

Something significant is that the children easily defend their relationship with one another to others and yet they are not always willing to admit it to themselves. Once again, Daja calls her friends *saati* and says to Polyam "'What else am I supposed to call them?'" Daja asked, surprised. 'Tris, Briar, Sandry – they're as close to me as my own blood. It's been a long summer,' she said, wishing that explained their friendship and knowing it didn't even come close. 'We've been through a lot together'" (*Daja* 133). The four are very close, for good reason as they have had many shared experiences and in that, have a particular bond. While their bond may rely on shared experiences, it continues to develop into something more akin to authentic friendship.

Although they have bound their magic, it becomes clear that the four must separate it at some level in order to maintain control. Lark points out that when Sandry wove their powers

together, she did it without a particular pattern so their magic leaks into and affects the others people's magic. When Sandry's weaving map of the four of them reacts so strongly to protective spells, Lark says that "The difference is you four. You were strong to begin with. Then you were spun together, and made stronger. Now you are all tangled, so the effect is – expanded." (*Daja* 151). It is clear that it is their magic that brought the four children together, but as they experimented with it, and spent time together, they have grown in other ways. This is also true because when Sandry reweaves their magic, although still connected, they share some of the things that they had to begin with, such as the mind speak they use.

In the final book of the quartet, the relationship between Sandry, Briar, Daja and Tris shows how groups of people can be authentic friends. Although they are connected by magic, it has been separated enough that it is no longer what holds them together the most. Rather, it is the care that they have for one another that allows their friendship to flourish and maintain. The uncertainty about whether or not they are friends, or can be friends is made certain when the four come together to fight one of the biggest threats, proving that they are connected as real friends.

All four of the children are very distressed when they are separated due to Briar's exposure to a new illness and Lark has to remind the girls that "You four have not spent a night apart since you came to us, and the spinning of your magics has made you closer than siblings." (*Briar* 39-40). Their connection is strong and so their concern is very valid. However, Lark also has to remind the girls that their connection does not overpower concern for others. The four are so bound together by their friendship that they sometimes suffer from elitism, a common concern about group friendships.

Briar, Tris, Sandry and Daja are quick to prove that they are not lacking in compassion for others as the deadly illness spreads. They all do everything they can, including harnessing

their power and working with others to find an answer to all the questions the disease presents. While they do this, they continue to connect with and care for one another. They all have to find comfort in one another and they cling to it. When Daja also leaves the house, Sandry draws out the thread circle she keeps with her at all times and looks at it.

It had become as circle when, trapped underground in an earthquake, she had spun the four young people's magics together to made all of them stronger. As far as Sandrilene fa Toren was concerned, the thread *was* the four of them. As long as *this* is together, *we're* she told herself (*Briar* 51, emphasis in original).

Despite the distance between them, their connection is strong. Their strength relies on all four of them and their friendship is based on their little group, proving that groups of friends are very important and valuable.

When Rosethorn and Briar come home from quarantine, there is a lot of excitement. Briar tells their guard escort to leave because the girls will embarrass him and Lark cries seeing Rosethorn. The children are especially glad to be together because they recognize how important it is. Lark warns them that there is still the threat of the epidemic but Sandry responds, ““But we’re where we should be. That’s the important thing... We’re all *home*.”” (*Briar* 123, emphasis in original). Everyone is so glad to be home because it is being together that makes them stronger. The bond between the children is so strong that they feel they cannot be complete without one another.

Part of their connection brings them together when one of them is concerned, even if it is not for themselves. When Briar has a bad dream about letting his friend Flick die, Sandry comes to comfort him. He questions whether he did enough to save her and Sandry tells him that “no one who’s truly your friend would want you to feel bad for knowing them” (*Briar* 136). Sandry

tells him this partially because this is how she feels and this is how the four came together. They were not close but as they have grown together, they only want the best for one another. This makes Briar feel better but it is not until after Tris and Daja show up in his room that he is able to calm down. They each come together to care for one another and Rosethorn is not surprised to find them together.

The devotion the children have to one another is evident in so many ways, despite the challenges they face. When the threat of the death of comes to one of them, they come together as a group of friends that refuses to be broken up. When Briar goes into Rosethorn as she dies in order to bring her back, the girls follow him and draw on all of their power. They link themselves together and Sandry catches and holds on to Briar's power, telling herself that "He was not going to die. They would not *let* him die" (*Briar* 242, emphasis in original). The four are willing to risk everything for one another, a sign of authentic friendship. The girls also recognize Briar's connection to Rosethorn when he states that he is not coming back without her. They do not agree with him but they are aware of why he feels that way. The depth of understanding that they have of one another means that they can be friends in ways that not everybody can.

Conclusion

The connections between people, especially groups of people, are complicated but the friendships that they allow for are so important and worthwhile. Each person in a group has something unique to offer and something that no one else can provide. Without each person, the friendship would not be the same. It may in fact suffer because there is a piece missing that would make the friendship even stronger.

Friendship relies on the admission of another person's value and a deep understanding of one another, a certain kind of intimacy. This is possible in groups if there are enough people who

are willing to relate to one another in such ways. It comes about due to who each person is and their ability to see something positive in one another. They must share something, whether it be experiences or ideas or morals. These shared characteristics allow people to be friends. Their ability to see one another for who that person truly is provides the level of intimacy required for authentic friendship.

As a type of friendship, the friendship amongst groups is something often dismissed or overlooked. People critique it, and sometimes for good reason, but there is failure in not seeing all it has to offer. In the Hand of the Goddess quartet, Pierce presents how a group of friends can exist in community with one another while still being individuals and even keeping big secrets from one another. In the Circle of Magic quartet, Pierce shows that group friendship is possible when multiple people become a cohesive unit, cannot be separated and see one another for who they truly are.

Chapter 4: Friend Romances

Introduction

The friendship between a man and a woman shows how people can be friends across certain boundaries such as gender and how a sexual relationship does not have to inhibit friendship but can rather enhance it. By examining the power of romances between friends, people can begin to understand why they are so important and also how one relationship so significantly affects the other.

An issue that many philosophers present about friend romances is their belief that women themselves do not have the capacity for friendship. This means that a heterosexual friend romance in itself is not possible because women are not able to be friends. Montaigne states that “the ordinary capacity of women is inadequate for that communion and fellowship which is the nurse of this sacred bond; nor does their soul seem firm enough to endure the strain of so tight and durable a knot” (Pakaluk 190). Part of this belief is because these philosophers are from a very different age. They firmly assert that women cannot be friends due to an inherent lack of virtue, morality, and strength. Modernity has mostly cured this belief but it nevertheless underlies our understanding of friend romances and perhaps this is why some people see it as impossible.

What ancient philosophers clearly fail to do is recognize the power of women. Much of this is due to the ideas about women at the time they are writing but the easy dismissal of women as friends shows their lack of understanding. There is no strict reason why women cannot be friends and in some ways, modernity suggests that women can be better friends than men, likely due to their willingness to be more affectionate. Pierce especially emphasizes that women can be friends (to men). Alanna thrives amongst her friends, despite being a woman.

The fact that Alanna can be a good friend as a girl and yet be acting as a boy shows how well women can be friends. She does not let the difference in gender presentation inhibit her from being friends with other people. She is perhaps a better friend because of this due to the fact that she has to relate to people of another gender while still being true to her own. She does struggle with her own gender identity but she eventually overcomes that and is able to recognize her power as a woman and this impacts her friendships positively.

One of the questions that philosophers ask is whether or not friendship is gendered. They seem to believe that friendship can only exist between men and therefore women cannot, and perhaps should not, be friends. While it is true that gender affects friendship, it does not mean that friendship as a concept is gendered. People across genders can be friends just as much as two people of the same gender can be. If what the philosophers say is true, that people who have shared values and goodness can be friends, there is no reason that it cannot exist for one of the genders nor can it get in the way of friendship between two people of different genders.

Regardless of whether or not women can be friends, there are some who believe that romance between the sexes is not possible. Because of differing interests, lack of true understanding or the allegedly inevitable attraction that will supposedly arise. Much like he feels about women and friendship, “Montaigne does not think there can be friendship between men and women. Relationships between the sexes are ‘carnal and subject to satiety’” (Grayling 89). This suggests that women and men cannot be friends because there is always an underlying sexual dynamic due to the difference in gender. However, this may not always be the case.

Something important to note is that a same sex friendship does not preclude romance but it is not something that Pierce addresses. The fact that Alanna is dressed up as a boy means that the inherent male friendship is not entirely present. In friend romance, the suggestion is that

sexual feelings exist because of the difference in gender. While Pierce fails to explore the possibility of same sex friend romances, she does not explicitly dismiss them, rather she overlooks them entirely. The fact still remains that same sex and opposite sex friendships can result in romance.

Grayling has strong feelings about this in which he differs from older works. He admits that there are complications with friendship between the sexes because

When sexual elements enter heterosexual friendship, socially constructed attitudes to sex disrupt the classification we are inclined to give the previous relationship, so that at very least we move it to a different place psychologically, to make it conform to the place it now occupies physiologically – even if the friendship remains and the sexual activity stops (Grayling 173).

Socially constructed ideas about friendship and romance make it complicated to understand men and women as friends. People feel the need to place relationships in one space or the other but sometimes fail to see that they can fulfill both sides. Aristotle and others argue that friendship must exist between like-minded people and there is no reason this cannot occur between the sexes and that can encourage romance because of shared mentalities.

Being like-minded with another person is a complicated concept but one that philosophers emphasize. It means looking at things in a similar fashion and seeing the world how the other person sees it. This may mean shared knowledge, shared religion or shared morals. In friendship, this allows for a deeper understanding of the other person because a person can see some of themselves in their friend. With like-mindedness, friendships can flourish because it provides a kinship and a way to relate to one another. Like-mindedness also allows for positive romantic relationships because friendship is a strong foundation for romance.

Friendship as a concept means truly knowing someone and that means having a strong intimacy with one another. Because a romance involves sexual intimacy, this is another reason that two people in a romantic relationship can be friends. Sexual intimacy is yet another level of knowing, something that not all relationships have. This deep knowledge of one another, both physically and emotionally is what enables friends to be romantically involved.

While it is clear that there is doubt about women and men as friends and as lovers, Tamora Pierce presents several relationships where it is not only possible but necessary to be both. In the *Song of the Lioness* quartet, the main character Alanna has three major romantic relationships, each of which end or begin in friendship. Pierce encourages the idea that women and men can be friends with romance as well. She subscribes to Grayling's statement that "Some friendships can be ruined by becoming sexual; some can be enhanced by it, whether as 'friendships with benefits'...or by turning into a romantic or spousal relationship" (179). She does not detail friendships that suffer due to becoming sexual, but rather emphasizes the idea that romance enhances friendship. Pierce provides examples of friendship and romance that rely on one another, each of which would not be as strong without the other.

Alanna and Jonathan

Alanna and Prince Jonathan, also known as Jon, have a special relationship because it has a strong foundation of friendship. It takes time before it develops into something romantic. Part of this is because of Alanna's disguise as a boy but that is already revealed to Jon at the end of the first novel. They have a bond that Alanna does not have with anyone else, despite all of her close relationships. From the very beginning, Jon is both a mentor and a friend. He defends her against Ralon of Malven who begins picking on Alanna from the moment she arrives and he seeks her out to support her when she needs it. One of the first moments of such support is after

Alanna defeats Ralon all on her own. Jon comes to check on her and she admits that she felt bad after her fight with Ralon. He reminds her that Ralon is a bully and thinks it is fun to pick on younger and smaller people. Alanna is grateful and it cements their relationship. Jon says to Alanna, ““You may have noticed that my friends call me Jonathan, or Jon.’ Alanna looked up at him, not sure what was going on. ‘And am *I* your friend, Highness?’ ‘I do believe you are,’ he told her quietly. ‘I’d like you to be.’ He offered her his hand. She took it. ‘Then I am – Jonathan’” (*Alanna* 100, emphasis in original). Alanna is shocked to see the prince considers her a friend but it also is the beginning of a very close relationship.

One of the things that really brings Alanna and Jon together is their willingness to care for one another in times of extreme danger. These situations happen several times but is especially clear in the first novel of the quartet. Alanna saves Jon’s life when he has the Sweating Sickness, even though she is loath to use her magical power. She realizes that she must in order to save her friend. Their ability to protect one another is recognized by them both. When Duke Gareth asks Jon why he wishes to bring Alanna on their trip to Persopolis with the other squires, Jon tells his uncle he wishes to have Alanna along ““Because he’s my friend. Because I always know where he stands, and where I stand with him. Because I think he’d die for me, and – and I think I’d die for him” (A 225). This bold statement shows how much Jon values Alanna’s friendship and what it provides for him. Alanna feels the same way and they acknowledge it after they defeat the Ysandir, also called the Old Ones, in the Black City. In a rare moment, Alanna calls Jon by his name and he responds, ““You called me ‘Jon.’” “You saved my life, back there [Alanna responds] ‘You saved mine. We wouldn’t have made it without each other” (*Alanna* 266). Alanna and Jon rely on each other a lot and the end of the first novel solidifies their friendship because they have defeated the Old Ones together and helped each other survive.

Alanna is nervous about becoming a woman but she also tries to embrace the two sides of herself, knight and woman. Although she begins to have romantic feelings for Jon after she becomes his squire, she is loath to admit it lest it come between them. However, when she approaches Mistress Cooper in the city to help her learn to dress and act like a girl, she quite enjoys it. However, when she is faced with the prospect of letting George and Jon see her that way, she becomes very nervous. Although he blushes profusely, Jon is not surprised. He tells Alanna “I knew you were up to something, though. You’ve been awful mysterious lately. And remember I caught you two days piling your hair on top of your head looking at yourself in the mirror” (*Goddess* 162). When Jon first addresses their romantic relationship, Alanna is dressed like a girl and she worries that is the only reason he realizes he has feelings for. He is kissing her in the garden and she becomes overwhelmed and leaves. She worries to herself that “This is what came of wearing a dress! Men got ideas when a person wore skirts” (*Goddess* 177). She soon learns though that “she *wanted* Jonathan’s love. To be honest, she had wanted that love for a long time” (*Goddess* 178, emphasis in original). This is a turning point in she and Jon’s relationship but also in her identity as a woman.

Because of Alanna’s fear of love, she struggles to admit her feelings for Jon because she sees them as a weakness. On cold nights when she considers climbing into bed with Jon, she has to talk herself out of it because she is uncomfortable with those thoughts. She is even more uncomfortable admitting her more intimate feelings, including jealousy of other women. While she enjoys the physical closeness that their relationship provides, Alanna is not good at recognizing her emotional investment. She struggles with this when Jon admits his own feelings for her. When Alanna is preparing for the Ordeal that will make her a knight she worries about it and questions Jon’s feelings for her. He responds passionately;

Jonathan made her look at him. ‘I *am* serious, in my way,’ he said quietly. ‘But if I talked of love to you, you’d run off.’ ‘Don’t, Jonathan, please,’ she whispered. ‘See what I mean?’ He yawned again. ‘Relax. I certainly can’t talk about marriage in any case - ’ ‘I don’t want to talk about marriage!’ she cried. ‘I don’t want to talk about love, ei- ’ Jonathan silenced her with a hand over her mouth. ‘I love you, Alanna,’ he said firmly. ‘Ignore it if you want to, but I do love you’ (*Goddess* 213).

Although this brings up a lot of emotions and thoughts for Alanna, she cannot ignore them. After ruminating on it and believing him to be asleep, Alanna tells Jonathan, ‘I love you Jonathan,’ she whispered. A long arm snaked around her, and he pulled her against his side. ‘I know,’ he said. ‘I just wanted to be sure you knew if, too’” (*Goddess* 214). Alanna is not good at admitting her feelings and part of that is because she struggles to see herself as both a friend and lover to Jonathan.

One thing that poses a significant problem to Alanna and Jon’s relationship is her femininity. Jon is surprised to learn she is a girl at the end of the first book but their relationship does not become sexual until later and therefore her feminine side becomes a problem. Part of this is because they began as friends so Jon does not always see her as a woman. Once he does however, he sometimes overlooks it. At times, it becomes an issue because he does not always respect her in other ways. The struggle with Jon seeing Alanna as a woman comes to a head when he comes to her at her Bloody Hawk tribe. He comes and they rekindle their sexual relationships, as it had never truly ended in the first place. She admits to him that they Bazhir “respect me as a shaman and a warrior, but they don’t even remember I’m a woman most of the time” and Jon responds by saying “Silly of them...I can’t forget it – not that I haven’t tried, these

past months” (*Woman* 142). It seems that he appreciates her identity as a woman. However, once he proposes marriage to her, he makes assumptions about her being a woman and the emotions that come with that identity.

Due to his experience with women at court, Jonathan has specific ideas about what it means to be and act like a lady. While he has always accepted Alanna for who she is, he is uncomfortable when he is confronted by the fact that she is not like everyone else he knows. While visiting Alanna at the Bloody Hawk tribe, Jon proposes marriage to Alanna and she says she needs time to think. He seems to accept this but eventually pushes her on the subject and is surprised by her reaction. Jon orders her things to be packed and assumes her answer because he knows her feelings for him. However, when she requests even more time he gets frustrated with her; ““Stop it, Alanna. I’ve made enough allowance for maidenly shyness from you - ’ *Maidenly shyness!*’ she yelled. ‘Since *when* have I shown maidenly shyness!’” (*Woman* 201, emphasis in original). Jonathan is very put out but assumes with “masculine superiority” that she will accept (*Woman* 202). When Alanna continues to persist in saying she needs time to think, Jon has a new method of approach when he questions who would be romantically interested in her instead. She reminds him of all his exploits and he responds vehemently, ““At least they’re *women*, Lady Alanna!’ he said. ‘And they know how to *act* like women!’” (*Woman* 203, emphasis in original). This is a real turning point because not only does it end their romantic relationship but it deeply impacts their friendship. They both believe the other has said irreconcilable statements and it puts a big rift between Jon and Alanna.

Luckily for Alanna and Jonathan, their friendship is not beyond repair. With the help of time and distance, both are able to recognize what they mean to one another and why it is so significant. When Alanna returns from the Roof of the World with the Dominion Jewel to give to

Jon, it is the first time they have seen each other since their fight. Right away, their friendly intimacy returns although their romantic intimacy does not. It is an important turning point because it solidifies their friendship despite their romantic past. Alanna has returned to the palace and been named the King's Champion when she and Jon are having a private discussion and he tells her that his offer of marriage still stands if she is still interested. However, both realize that it is not for the best. Alanna tells Jon, 'I'm still me... [and] if we were married, we'd make a mess of things. You know it as well as I do'" (*Lioness* 293). Jon feels bad but he also knows it is for the best and struggles to conceal his feelings; "His obvious relief hurt, but it didn't keep her from knowing she did the right thing. 'And I said no. Thank you, but no. I love you, Jon. We've been through and lot'" and yet what Alanna and Jon want from life is very different. Jon admits his feelings as well, telling Alanna, "'I love you, too, Alanna. You're a part of me – my sword arm'" (*Lioness* 294). The ability that Jon and Alanna have to recognize their feelings for one another while being honest about where they stand is very important.

As their relationship progresses, it is clear that there is an interesting power dynamic between Jon and Alanna. Although he is a prince, and eventually king, he does not hold all the power in the relationship. He inherently has power due to his standing and the fact that he has authority over Alanna due to his monarchical duties but Alanna has equal influence over him as well. She is an extremely good friend to him and he takes that into consideration, especially when it comes to some of the choices he makes. Alanna also has power because Jon is vulnerable with very few people and she is one of them. Especially when they are first romantically involved and Jon presumes things about their relationship, Alanna is quick to remind him that he does not hold all the power. Although this sometimes makes things complicated, it also shows

how strong their relationship is. The power between them shifts back and forth but it does not get in the way of their friendship or their romantic relationship.

Although close friends from the very beginning, Alanna and Jon's relationships is only strengthened by their romantic relationship. They learn so much from another and are able to see each other in entirely different lights. Alanna sees Jon's strengths and flaws as he sees hers. Had they not been romantically involved, their relationship would not be as valuable. Because of their experience as lovers, Jon and Alanna know each other at a level that not everyone does. It gives them great respect for one another while recognizing their differences. They want the best for one another. Alanna even encourages her new friend Thayer to marry Jon. She admits they will always be close but their romantic relationship is firmly in the past. Without the friendship from the beginning, their romantic relationship would not have been as strong but it is the combination of both that provides for their deep and abiding friendship.

Alanna and George

From the very beginning, Alanna and the Rogue, George Cooper, have an interesting relationship. King of the Thieves, George is an enigma to Alanna and someone who she is intrigued by. George feels the same about Alanna, seeking her out almost as soon as she comes to the capital city of Corus. The two see each other in the city the very first time Alanna enters to begin her time at the palace. When Alanna is granted time to visit the city, George finds her and befriends her. Despite Alanna's friend Gary's doubts, George states, "I trust my instincts, young master" and one of his instincts is to find a friend in Alanna. George is also one of the first people that Alanna trusts as well. When she is struggling to defeat Ralon of Malven, she seeks out George for his help in defeating Ralon. Alanna is offended when he tells her she is a noble taking advantage of him but he soon realizes that "Now I see you're here as a friend, askin' a

friend's help" (A 92). George helps Alanna find the strength, not just physically, but mentally to defeat Ralon. George always supports Alanna, even when she does not understand it.

One of the ways that George cares for Alanna is in providing her help when she needs it and sometimes even when she does not. When George finds a horse that he believes will suit Alanna, he reaches out to her and offers her a good price. Jonathan is shocked but also recognizes George's purpose. Despite her appreciation, Alanna is very confused;

‘George,’ Alanna said. The other two looked at her. Her face was bewildered. ‘I-I don’t understand,’ she stammered. ‘Why do this for me? You went to a lot of trouble. Why?’ George looked at her for a long moment. Finally he replied, ‘And why do you find it so hard to think someone might lie you and want to do things for you? That’s the way of friendship, lad.’ Alanna shook her head. ‘But I haven’t done anything for you.’ ‘That’s not how it works,’ the thief said dryly’ (*Alanna* 158).

George teaches Alanna what it means to be a friend despite her confusion. This is one of the reasons their friendship is so strong, Alanna has to come to understand that George likes her for who she is as a person, even despite the secrets she is keeping. Even when George does find out her secret of masquerading as a boy, he supports her. He tells her “‘I’ll enjoy watchin’ you grow up, lass. Count on me to help.’” And Alanna responds, “‘I never thought for a second that I couldn’t”” (*Alanna* 178). Although this solidifies Alanna and George’s friendship, it is also a turning point because George begins to see her as a woman.

Once George sees Alanna as a woman, his feelings for her begin to grow and she is scared of them. She goes to visit George to collect birthday presents for Jonathan when he starts

talking of love and marriage and she is overwhelmed. She does not quite realize his intentions until he walks her towards the castle. He surprises her and turns to her;

‘Alanna,’ he whispered, ‘I’m takin’ advantage of you now, because I may never catch you with your hands full again.’ He kissed her softly and carefully. Alanna trembled, too shocked to do anything but let it happen. ‘There.’ George released her. ‘Think over what I said about love.’ ‘Pigs might fly,’ she snapped, her voice shaking. ‘I should have stabbed you!’ He chuckled infuriatingly. ‘No. I won’t let you stab me and ruin our friendship.’ (*Goddess* 57).

Despite his feelings for her, George recognizes how important their friendship is to him, as well as to Alanna. She is shocked because she has never had romantic feelings for him but this also allows her to see him in a different way. While their romantic relationship does not develop for some time, she always knows from this point on that he cares for her.

Although they remain friends, George always makes his feelings for Alanna clear. When she is about to leave for a battle far from the city, George sneaks into the palace to say goodbye. They talk about the risks of the battle and the concerns about Alanna’s nemesis Duke Roger. However, when it comes down to leaving, George makes sure that Alanna knows how he feels. He ruminates on taking a wife and tells Alanna that he knows who he wants it to be. Alanna is uncomfortable and George tells her “I’m a patient man, lass. If need be, I’ll wait years. I only wanted you to know I’m yours to command.”” (*Goddess* 90) Alanna is shaken because she does not know how to feel. She questions whether or not they can be friends like before and he responds “Friends, and good ones, I trust” and Alanna reiterates to George, “I-I won’t let it ruin our friendship, George”” (*Goddess* 90). While she understands him as a friend, she is confused

by these new feelings, not just from George but also her own feelings. Alanna is desperate to maintain their friendship because it has always and does mean so much to her.

Alanna has always cared for George as a friend but she does not always admit it to herself for fear that she sees him as something more than a friend. However, when George is at risk she never doubts her feelings for him. After he is shot with an arrow while protecting her, Alanna is worried for him and tell him, “‘Don’t die on me’” and George’s “eyes flicker open and he smiled. ‘I didn’t know you cared’...Alanna wiped her wet cheeks. ‘Of course I care you unprincipled pickpocket!’ she whispered. ‘Of course I care.’” (*Goddess* 208-209). While it is unclear whether this is a turning point in her romantic feelings for George, it is an important reminder that Alanna cares deeply for George.

One interesting thing about Alanna and George’s friendship is that it is a close relationship from the very beginning but it takes Alanna some time to realize her own feelings for him. She rarely admits it, even to herself. When she does, she always brushes it aside for something. Although he flusters her, the first sign readers get of Alanna’s romantic feelings for George is when she gets a letter from her and she is reminded that “her old friend loved her, and she loved him in a more-than-friendly way” (*Woman* 121). Despite this acknowledgment, Alanna wants to keep him as a friend above all else, believing that a romantic relationship would get in the way. What she does not realize is that her friendship would make their romance even more significant and it would also emphasize and encourage their friendship.

Alanna and George’s relationship becomes romantic when she visits him after her time in the Bazhir and he again tells her of his feelings for her after hearing about her fight with Jonathan. He reminds her that he has always loved her for who she is. Alanna is overwhelmed but she also recognizes something in herself when George is caring for her, “He kissed her,

pulling her close. Alanna struggled for a second, surprised, then relaxed, enjoying the kiss and the feeling of being held tightly and protectively” (*Woman* 222). This brings up the question of whether or not she simply enjoys being cared for or she truly values her feelings for George. However, they begin an intimate relationship and it is only encouraged by their previous closeness.

When George and Alanna are reunited after her quest to retrieve the Dominion Jewel, the romantic undertones of their relationship are there, as George kisses her while they are greeting each other but he also recognizes that Alanna has had other experiences. When he tells her that “Now your dragon can kill me – I’ll die happy” Alanna is shocked that he knows about her relationship with Liam the Dragon and yet George does not begrudge her for it. He cares much more for their friendship than the fact that she has had an intimate relationship with another man. While it is obvious he still cares for her, he does not push the issue, instead enjoying her company and safe return home. This does not mean his feelings have disappeared. As they continue on to Corus, George recognizes how long of a journey she has had and she looks at him and “In their hazel depths she saw a degree of love that frightened her as it warmed her” (*Lioness* 243). Alanna is not unaware of the feelings he has for her and she appreciates them because knowing he cares for her, both as a lover and a friend, means a lot to her.

The struggle in analyzing George and Alanna’s friendship is that for much of the time, there is romantic interest on George’s part. However, he gets to know Alanna and value her as a friend before he has feelings for her. Had she waited to reveal to him her gender, his feelings would not have moved beyond friendship. It is also hard to separate their friendship and romantic relationship because they end up in a romantic relationship at the end of the quartet. However, the growth they have both in their friendship and intimate romantic relationship means that they

can end up with one another. The trust and faithfulness that they show one another, whether or not they were in a romantic relationship is built on their original friendship. They trust one another with their lives and are willing to do anything to care for one another. Without the foundation of friendship, it is possible that their romance would have been less intense and perhaps not last.

Alanna and Liam

Although the shortest of Alanna's romances, the relationship between she and the Shang Dragon, Liam Ironarm is still significant. Unlike her other relationships, it begins as a romance and ends in friendship. From their first meeting, Alanna is overwhelmed by the attraction she feels for Liam. While they are both staying at the same inn, he sends her a drink and although she finds it appealing, she admits to herself that "although she wanted to join this man, or to indicate she was interested, Alanna didn't know how" (*Lioness* 13-14). For so long, Alanna has rarely been seen as a woman, sometimes even as sexless, so she is unaware of the rituals that come along with flirting. Liam sees her interest and approaches her. He quickly and subtly inserts himself into her life and Alanna finds that she is not upset about it. She is also interested in him beyond her romantic feelings. Alanna is shocked to find out he is the Dragon of the Shang. She has always been intrigued by the Shang warriors and wants to learn as much as she can about them and what they know.

An important part of Alanna and Liam's relationship is that he questions her in ways she is not ready for. Liam makes her question her easy use of magic and what her plans are for life. Alanna is put out when he asks about her romantic interests because she feels that it is not her place or desire to get married or have children. She questions to herself "*Why was he asking such uncomfortable questions?*" and Liam responds in a way that pushes her to think about herself

and her relationships, ““I just wondered why you feel you have to be all warrior or all woman. Can’t you be both?”” (*Lioness* 69, emphasis in original). This is an important moment for Alanna because it makes her face some of the fears she has but she and is loath to think about them. It is significant that Liam struggles with this because despite their sexual relationship, he is sometimes shocked by her feminine side.

Much like Jonathan, Liam seems to struggle with some of Alanna’s identity as a woman. Although they share a romantic relationship, Liam sees Alanna as a friend, one who shares in his strength and perseverance. He is shocked when he sees her in a dress for the first time because it seems to go against all that he knows about her. It becomes an issue between them;

‘Don’t you like it?’ [Alanna asked]. ‘It’s well enough,’ he said at last ‘Doesn’t seem practical, though.’ Would she ever understand him? ‘It isn’t *supposed* to be practical. It’s a dress. A dress that feels beautiful when you put it on.’ ‘Feeling beautiful won’t win a fight.’ His eyes were the pale grey that told her nothing about how he felt. ‘I hardly think I’ll fight anyone here, unless it’s you,’ she snapped. ‘Why can’t I wear impractical garments every now and then?’ ‘Suit yourself,’ he shrugged (*Lioness* 135, emphasis in original).

Although he later admits to Alanna that he never forgets she is a woman, that is simply because of their sexual relationship. Liam fails to see all sides of Alanna and it is an issue between them. He comes to know her better and their friendship is built on that but it means the end of their romantic relationship.

One of the clear roadblocks to Alanna and Liam’s relationship is her magic and his fear of it. While he tells her, “Since it’s *you*, kitten, I’ll make an exception,” it is clear that it is something he has an issue with (*Lioness* 68, emphasis in original). He accuses her of using her

magic as a crutch and she vehemently defends herself but she also knows she cannot make him totally understand. Although she learns that he legitimately fears magic, she always knows it will come between them. It marks the true end of their romantic relationship when Alanna allows her cat Faithful to spell Liam so he remains asleep. When they discuss it, he admits that she should use her Gift and that it is important to use all of one's tools but they cannot be together. He has his things moved to a different room and she asks "Can we be friends, still?" "I promise it." He couldn't keep the relief from his voice, which hurt Alanna more than anything he'd actually said" (*Lioness* 178). They have always known it would not last and yet the end hurts them both.

The end of their sexual relationship is the continuation of their important friendship. Because they have been romantically involved, they know a lot about each other and are able to understand one another deeply. Alanna admits it to herself when "she sometimes felt a pang of sadness when she looked at the Dragon, but she also knew their friendship would last far longer than their romance" (*Lioness* 181). Their friendship is one of the reasons that Alanna is so upset by his death. She questions whether she had any idea about his death but when she looks down at him, "Her eyes burned, but she was cried out. Helplessly she plucked at his sleeve, wishing she could bring him back. Crying would have helped" (*Lioness* 369). Alanna has rarely lost a friend and when she does she is struck deeply by it.

Alanna and Liam's friendship continues beyond Liam's death and this is one of the reasons it is so valuable. Alanna will always value their romantic time together but it is their friendship that she values the most. While she is at the Bloody Hawk tribe, one of Liam's old mentors the Shang Wildcat brings her a letter from Liam, saying he suspected his death. Alanna reads the letter to find that Liam is astute in his values and that despite their differences, she was important to him. She recognizes his worth to her as well and after she finishes the letter,

“Alanna sat and wept, letting the Dragon go at last” (*Lioness* 381). Alanna will always value their relationship, both romantic and friendly because it made her a better person. She also recognizes that he saved some of her other relationships and she is deeply grateful for that despite her pain about his death. Although it started as romance, the enduring friendship that Liam and Alanna have following that is only as strong because of their romance. They have found comfort, knowledge, learning and value in one another, not just as lovers but as people.

Conclusion

Aelred of Rievaulx believes that “only those do we call friends to whom we can fearlessly entrust our heart and all its secrets; those, too, who, in turn, are bound to us by the same law of faith and security” (Pakaluk 137). This cannot be more true in friend romances. In all friendship there is a give and take but to entrust a person’s heart and “all its secrets” is something that cannot always be accomplished without a romantic connection. Knowing someone’s heart means sharing in their love and romance is a fitting situation for that. Although friendship can be strong and authentic without romance, romance can emphasize and encourage friendship in ways that other things cannot.

Something that also has be addressed is that Alanna has no friends who are girls. Because of her disguise as a boy, Alanna is surrounded by other boys and she has to adapt at some level to be friends with them. The fact that she only has male friends means that the possibility and likelihood of a friendship romance is higher. She has so many experiences with boys that she is more comfortable with them and this comfort provides intimacy. That intimacy can easily be translated to romance, especially because Alanna knows some of the boys so well.

Being a friend means being part of a bigger unit and the same is true for romance. Modern ideas of romance suggest that each person has someone who they are meant to be with,

possibly someone who “completes” the other person. Friendship has this as well, though it is not limited just to one person. This idea that two or more people can become a singular entity is the basis of both types of relationships and therefore is another reason that friendship and romance can go hand in hand.

One of the complications of friend romances is that romance privileges certain friends. A friend who is drawn romantically to another friend is unlikely to do to this with multiple friends. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing. Because romance and friendship enhance one another, the fact that two people can be friends and romantically involved at the same time means they value that friendship highly. While it ought not to make other friendships suffer, there is that possibility. This may be one of the reasons that friend romances are so often criticized, because they can alienate other friends.

The fact that friends can also be lovers means that friendship is more significant than it may seem or than people may believe. It is vastly underrated because of the assumptions that romance and friendship have to be separate. This is a flaw in the definition of friendship. It is meant to be an inclusive relationship and that involves seeing how it takes place in diverse ways. It is another reason that friends who are romantically involved should be given more credence, there is something significant about their relationship and that should not be downplayed.

There is no way to firmly assert that romance supersedes friendship or vice versa. Rather, it is easier and entirely true to say that they are intertwined. Philosophers argue that friendship is the highest of all relationships but they discount the relation it has to romance. A friendship is a very strong foundation for romance but romance can foster friendship as well. The combination of both things makes a relationship extremely strong as well as significant. Without one side or

the other, the relationship would not be the same. This is one of the reasons that this type of friendship is overlooked which is that it is a strange combination of two kinds of relationships.

Friend romances do not discredit other friendships, rather they are their own distinct kind. They are not always possible nor are they always wise. However, Tamora Pierce presents several situations where friendships thrive in relation to romance and intimacy. Each of the relationships that Alanna has in the *Song of the Lioness* quartet exemplifies the strength that friendship provides romance and vice versa. Without one or the other, the three relationships detailed here would not be as valuable nor as strong. Pierce argues against what many believe about romance and friendship and proves that they can complement one another.

Conclusion

Friendship is a complicated concept, as philosophers and scholars have determined. Many people have a limited view of friendship based on experience but there are types of friendship that have value without being totally understood or appreciated. Each of these types is evident in Tamora Pierce's work. It is notable that she explores friendships that are often overlooked or determined to be too confusing. Animal and human friendships seem complicated, especially due to power dynamics and communication barriers but it does not make that relationship less than another type of friendship. By indicating the power of various types of friendships, Pierce is a very valuable author for young people.

Pierce has successfully determined that unusual and underappreciated friendships have power and significance. By exploring relationships like Alanna and Jon, Briar and Rosethorn and Daine and animals, she has shown how important friendship is, even if it is a type that not everyone understands or recognizes. By utilizing the fantasy genre, Pierce is able to exemplify how different types of friendship are valuable, both in real life and in fiction. Some may argue that these relationships can only exist in fiction but by exploring them to such an extent, Pierce's ideas about them make it clear that they transcend fiction and have an impact on reality.

The ability to show various types of friendship also allows Pierce to examine the good and bad parts of friendship. In the relationship between Alanna and Liam, it is clear that there are roadblocks to romantic relationships despite a strong basis in friendship. The relationship between Daine and Numair is clearly unhealthy when it becomes romantic but it also recognizes that friendship can lead to romance. The approach that Pierce takes to friendship is what allows her work to be so successful. She explores so many kinds and in so many ways that her ideas about friendship are more well-rounded and valuable than those of the ancient philosophers.

Each quartet utilized in this thesis displays various kinds of friendship that are either underappreciated or under explored. Her ability to write about these friendships and in their different settings shows that each type of friendship examined is present not just in fiction and out to be further investigated by scholars.

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