

## WOMEN: AN UNDERRATED CONQUEROR

*by:*

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Having been an unspoken decree that men are superior to women; it has been embedded in humankind since the beginning of time. Limitations and restrictions are commonly imposed in different aspects of women's lives such as political, social, educational, and so on. These have been the standard way of living in the early times: women are not entitled to be at the same level and skills as men.

But as time passes by, these walls were torn down brick by brick. Queen Elizabeth II was one of the notable people to have dared cross the bridge to the world of patriarchy. With her ascension to the throne, she was welcomed with qualms and disinclination about her ability to rule. In one of her speeches, she mentioned that, though her body may be subject to human imperfections, her "body politic" was perfect and timeless and that the stability and glory of the nation will not be hindered by her womanhood. As the world closely watches her reign, she excellently displayed how she won the hearts of people and exercised her wit and vivacity in her political courtship tactics. No longer was her sex seen as a cultural liability, but as a powerful image of regal magnificence and national pride exemplified by female authority.

Continuing the ingress of womanhood as an equal to the male opposition, another woman born in the 18th century stunned everyone with her novels that depicted empowered yet unorthodox women of the English middle and upper class—Jane Austen.

Looking closely at her life, the affectionate and lively world she revolves in stimulated the characters, settings, subject matter, and other aspects of her novels. Indeed, the heroines she produced in her novels were high-spirited, intelligent, prudent, polite, and

innocent in their own ways as they journey through self-discovery. Austen's renowned novels became the early 19th century's novel of manner: a combination of entertainment, morality, domestic realism, and romantic melodrama. Jane Austen has indeed made something extraordinary out of the ordinary and circumscribed events and settings of her time.

In today's time, the world is more welcoming to the capabilities of women; misogynistic views are combatted immediately by the majority. Though there are still some with patriarchal supremacy thinking, the same importance is now given to the work done by women, and they are no longer deprived of all the opportunities they should have got. Undeniably, both Queen Elizabeth II and Jane Austen made significant contributions, not only to history but also in upholding womanhood. Their boldness exemplifies that a woman can be whom they want to be, regardless of what traditions and customs dictate.

Nora Ephron said it best: "Above all, be the heroine of your life!"

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