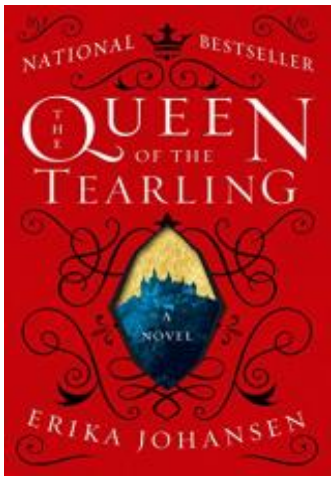
The Queen of the Tearling

by Erika Johansen



About the Book

Magic, adventure, mystery and romance combine in this epic debut in which a young princess must reclaim her dead mother?s throne, learn to be a ruler --- and defeat the Red Queen, a powerful and malevolent sorceress determined to destroy her.

On her 19th birthday, Princess Kelsea Raleigh Glynn, raised in exile, sets out on a perilous journey back to the castle of her birth to ascend her rightful throne. Plain and serious, a girl who loves books and learning, Kelsea bears little resemblance to her mother, the vain and frivolous Queen Elyssa. But though she may be inexperienced and sheltered, Kelsea is not defenseless: Around her neck hangs the Tearling sapphire, a jewel of immense magical power; and accompanying her is the Queen?s Guard, a cadre of brave knights led by the enigmatic and dedicated Lazarus. Kelsea will need them all to survive a cabal of enemies who will use every weapon --- from crimson-caped assassins to the darkest blood magic --- to prevent her from wearing the crown.

Despite her royal blood, Kelsea feels like nothing so much as an insecure girl, a child called upon to lead a people and a kingdom about which she knows almost nothing. But what she discovers in the capital will change everything, confronting her with horrors she never imagined. An act of singular daring will throw Kelsea?s kingdom into tumult, unleashing the vengeance of the tyrannical ruler of neighboring Mortmesne: the Red Queen, a sorceress possessed of the darkest magic. Now Kelsea will begin to discover whom among the servants, aristocracy, and her own guard she can trust.

But the quest to save her kingdom and meet her destiny has only just begun --- a wondrous journey of self-discovery and a trial by fire that will make her a legend?if she can survive.

This book will be a beautifully designed package with illustrated endpapers, a map of the Tearling and a ribbon marker.

Discussion Guide

1. Often in mythic tales the hero is separated from his or her parents and raised by another. What is significant about this element of the story?

2. Consider Kelsea's foster parents, Carlin and Barty. What does each contribute to her development and character?

3. A number of times Kelsea laments her isolation growing up, her not having siblings or close friends. How might this affect her behavior once she returns to the Keep?

4. Mace is a complex and mysterious character. What essential qualities does he possess? What kind of life experience might have formed these?

5. Kelsea is clearly drawn to the Fetch, despite his criminal and even violent ways. What does she see in him? How can a person who does such morally questionable things still be likable?

6. Kelsea is often said to have an "ungovernable temper." What might be the source of this anger? How does it serve her throughout the novel?

7. For much of her life, Kelsea idealizes her estranged mother, Queen Elyssa, but then finds her to be a flawed person. How does this affect Kelsea?s character?

8. It is said that Queen Elyssa wasn't evil but was weak. How are these different?

9. What is the significance of Kelsea's dreams and nightmares?

10. An epigraph from THE ARVATH ARCHIVE suggests that often, true heroic deeds are done in secret. What does such secrecy add? How might this be important to contemporary times of social media?

11. Much is made throughout the novel of Kelsea's "plain" appearance. What various effects might this lack of physical beauty have on her as a person and as a queen?

12. Consider the term "fey," seeing one's own death and exalting in it. How is it important to an understanding of Kelsea?

13. Javel assists the brutal work of Arlen Thorne as a way to possibly be reunited with Allie, his love lost to the slave trade. Does this justify his involvement? How would you describe his character?

14. Kelsea admits that Andalie possesses the qualities of a queen perhaps more than she does. What might she mean?

15. What's important about Marguerite, Thomas' beautiful slave freed by Kelsea?

16. Why is Kelsea so enamored of books and the idea of creating a new library, building a new printing press?

17. Kelsea experiences three wounds throughout the story to add to her burn scar. What's significant about these marks?

18. What do you think is next for the Queen of the Tearling?

Author Bio

Erika Johansen grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area. She went to Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, attended the Iowa Writers? Workshop and eventually became an attorney, but she never stopped writing. She lives in England.

Critical Praise

?THE QUEEN OF THE TEARLING is destined to be a fantasy classic. Johansen?s writing is assured, confident and thrilling. I can?t wait for the next book.?

The Queen of the Tearling

by Erika Johansen

Publication Date: April 14, 2015
Genres: Adventure, Fantasy, Fiction
Paperback: 464 pages
Publisher: Harper Paperbacks
ISBN-10: 006229038X
ISBN-13: 9780062290380